

DOSSIER · 16 OCTOBER 2026

TESLA ROADSTER

"Turns out the future does have flying cars." Everything about the unveiling of the new Roadster with SpaceX cold-gas thrusters: variants, specs, prices, timeline, comparison with earlier generations, FSD, reactions and criticism.



0.81 s

0–60 mph in the demo

>370 km/h

top speed (claim)

>480 km

range (target)

2028

planned production start

Compiled for Willem Vroom · Verified facts with sources only; Musk-only claims and unconfirmed information are labelled.
Cover photo: Tesla, [@Tesla on X](#).

AT A GLANCE

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15 Oct

Unveiled at SpaceX test site
McGregor (Texas), 7:55 pm
local = 16 Oct 02:55
Amsterdam time

3

Trims: Performance, Thrust
and Rocket (flying, invite-
only)

€50,000

Reservation amount
Performance in NL (€5,000 +
€45,000)

No

official price, battery capacity
or weight announced

Almost nine years after its surprise debut in 2017, Tesla unveiled the new Roadster in the night of 15 to 16 October 2026 (Amsterdam time). Developed together with SpaceX, it is a two-seater with a fan suction system that lets it cling to a track upside down, plus cold-gas thrusters with which a prototype jumped, did a “kickflip” over the Semi and other Teslas, and landed softly.^{[1,2,5](#)}

Musk posted a 15-second video at 03:57 Amsterdam time captioned “Turns out the future does have flying cars”; at the time of writing it had more than 24.6 million views and about 478,000 likes. Willem quoted it with “SpaceX roadster” — which fits: according to Tesla and Musk, the car is the result of Tesla and SpaceX engineers working closely together.^{[33,5](#)}

Labels used in this dossier

OFFICIAL TESLA published by Tesla **MUSK ONLY** Musk statement/promise without independent confirmation
PER MEDIA reported by media, not by Tesla **ESTIMATE** third-party estimate **UNCONFIRMED** unconfirmed / conflicting

Important: all performance figures are Tesla claims, measured by Tesla on a prototype. There are no independent tests yet.

02 THE UNVEIL



The prototype drives up a towering curved ramp, hangs upside down and jumps off. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X), ["Holy smokes"](#).

The event took place at SpaceX's test site in McGregor near Waco (Texas), was livestreamed on X and, per The Verge, lasted under 30 minutes. On stage: Elon Musk, design chief Franz von Holzhausen and Lars Moravy (VP vehicle engineering). An earlier date (1 October) was postponed due to severe weather.[4,2,43](#)

What was demonstrated

- **Driving upside down** – a fan suction system under the car (Tesla: up to 2 g) kept the prototype stuck to a vertical/inverted track. [OFFICIAL TESLA](#) [1,2](#)
- **Flight & barrel roll** – from the top the car flew forward on SpaceX-supplied cold-gas thrusters (>80 kN per the presentation), rolled and landed slowly in a white cloud.[1](#)
- **"Kickflip" over the line-up** – jumped with a twist over Model 3, Model Y, Cybertruck, Semi and Cybercab.[2,3](#)
- **0–60 mph** – first run ~1.0 s; live run 0.81 s; Tesla later posted 0.67 s "with rollout subtracted". [OFFICIAL TESLA](#) [37,38,1](#)



Jump with a twist over the Semi and other Teslas. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).



Controlled descent on cold-gas thrusters. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).

"It can basically fly like a rocket. It can do, like, crazy gymnastics... This is not necessarily a safety-optimized car, but it takes the fun meter to 11 out of 10."

Elon Musk at the event^{[1,2](#)}

Caveats about the demo

- The stunts were not human-driven: per Engadget an Optimus robot sat in the driver's seat “for show” and the car was programmed; Electrek writes nobody was in the car.^{[7](#),[9](#)}
- The flying car was a different prototype from the stage car (different wheels).^{[1](#)}
- Based on underbody frames, Electrek speculates the stunt prototype may have lacked a (full) battery.

UNCONFIRMED ^{[9](#)}

- The 0–60 times were measured by Tesla itself; method and conditions are not independently verified.^{[9](#)}

03 VARIANTS & SPECIFICATIONS

Since 2017 six (second-generation) Roadster variants have been announced: three in 2017/2018 and three at the 2026 unveil. None has been delivered so far.

The three official configurations (2026) OFFICIAL TESLA

	Performance	Thrust	Rocket
Character	Road ready	Race ready	Air ready
Seats	2	2	1
Systems	Active aerodynamics + multi-mode suction system	Suction system + rear-mounted cold-gas thrusters	Suction + perimeter-mounted thrusters: forward, upward and lateral rotation – “So...yes, it can fly”
0–60 mph	< 1.6 s	< 0.9 s	< 0.59 s
0–97 km/h (conversion)	< 1.6 s	< 0.9 s	< 0.59 s
Top speed	not stated	not stated	> 230 mph ($\approx$ > 370 km/h, conversion)
Range	> 300 miles ($\approx$ > 483 km, conversion)		
Reserve	Tesla.com/Roadster		

Source: the “Configurations” post by @Tesla on X^{36,11}. 0–100 km/h was not given by Tesla; 0–60 mph = 0–97 km/h.

How Tesla.com/roadster (NL) presents it (16-10-2026) OFFICIAL TESLA

Performance is the base (“Reserve”). **Thrust** and **Rocket** are “Augments”: Thrust = “Limited edition”, includes Performance aero + Multi-Mode Suction + acceleration thrusters; Rocket = “Invite only”, 1 seat, includes Performance and Thrust plus a full-flight system. Reservation: **€5,000 due today** (free cancellation) and **€45,000 within 10 days**; the reservation is final only after payment and is cancelled if not paid within 10 days; no refunds for changes.^{10,12}

This confirms Thrust/Rocket are add-ons on top of Performance. Source: Tesla NL site (Willem’s screenshot, 16-10-2026).

All announced variants (incl. 2017/2018)

Variant	Key specs	Price / deposit	Availability / status
Base (2017 concept) ANNOUNCED, NEVER DELIVERED	0–60 mph 1.9 s; >250 mph; 620 mi; 200 kWh; 3 motors; 4 seats; glass roof ^{21,19}	\$200,000; reservation \$50,000 ²¹	Delivery promised for 2020; never built. Superseded by the 2026 design. ²³
Founders Series (2017) ANNOUNCED, NEVER DELIVERED	Same specs as Base per Tesla (2017) ²¹	\$250,000, paid in full upfront ^{20,21}	1,000 reservations; never delivered. How they map onto the 2026 variants has not been publicly explained. UNCONFIRMED ^{3,4}

Variant	Key specs	Price / deposit	Availability / status
"SpaceX option package" (2018) MUSK ONLY	~10 small cold-gas thrusters around the car; COPV tank replacing rear seats; ~10,000 psi; 0–60 mph around 1 s ^{23,3}	Never priced	Only via Musk tweets/podcasts. Appears to have evolved into Thrust/Rocket in 2026 (our interpretation). UNCONFIRMED
Performance (2026) OFFICIAL TESLA	2 seats; active aero + multi-mode suction; no thrusters; 0–60 < 1.6 s; >300 mi (target) ^{11,2}	Price unknown; deposit \$50,000 / €50,000 ^{12,5}	"Road ready", by reservation; reservable in NL. Production 2028. ^{10,1}
Thrust (2026) OFFICIAL TESLA	2 seats; suction + rear cold-gas thrusters; 0–60 < 0.9 s (demo 0.81 s) ^{11,2,37}	Price unknown; deposit \$250,000 / €250,000 (NL: €5,000 + €245,000) OFFICIAL TESLA ^{5,10}	"Race ready", limited release; road approval not stated. ^{11,9}
Rocket (2026) OFFICIAL TESLA	1 seat; suction + 10 thrusters all round ("full flight system"); 0–60 < 0.59 s; >230 mph ^{2,3}	Unknown	Invite only; "not approved for public road use"; not in all regions. ¹⁰

No 2026 "Founders Series" or "Signature" edition has been announced. Notably, a footnote on Tesla's page says the specifications shown reflect the "Thrust augment only", "available as an optional upgrade" – so Thrust may be an upgrade on Performance rather than a separate model. **UNCONFIRMED** ^{11,10}

Detailed 2026 specifications

Item	Value (all trims unless stated)
Demo acceleration	0–60 mph 0.81 s; 0.67 s without rollout OFFICIAL TESLA ^{37,38} NL site for Thrust: "0–100 in under 1 second" ¹⁰
Top speed	> 230 mph (> 370 km/h) OFFICIAL TESLA – The Verge/Autoblog: Rocket; TechCrunch: all trims UNCONFIRMED Musk wants to "crack halfway to the speed of sound" (Mach 0.5 ≈ 380 mph) MUSK ONLY ^{5,3}
Range	> 300 miles (> 480 km); target, not an EPA/WLTP rating OFFICIAL TESLA ^{2,3,5}
Battery / power	Not disclosed (the 2017 concept's 200 kWh does not apply) UNCONFIRMED
Weight	Not disclosed; Marques Brownlee mentioned "4000+ pound" – not official UNCONFIRMED ³
Thrusters & gas	>80 kN; two ultra-high-pressure air tanks totalling 600 litres with ~250 kg of air; 10 nozzles; self-recharging, no chemical propellant; COPVs in "every usable void"; 4–5× the force tyres can transmit OFFICIAL TESLA ^{1,2,39,40}
Suction system	Up to 2 g; holds the car upside down even when stationary. Electrek saw 4,700 kg downforce on screen and finds it doubtful. OFFICIAL TESLA UNCONFIRMED ^{10,9}
Controls & interior	Steer-by-wire yoke; manual controls; fixed seat; centre screen + two small displays; magnesium, titanium, carbon fibre; butterfly doors OFFICIAL TESLA ^{10,2,1}
Production	Start 2028 ("actually", Musk said with a laugh); Giga Texas cited by media MUSK ONLY PER MEDIA ^{1,18}

Conversions: 60 mph ≈ 97 km/h; 230 mph ≈ 370 km/h; 300 miles ≈ 483 km.

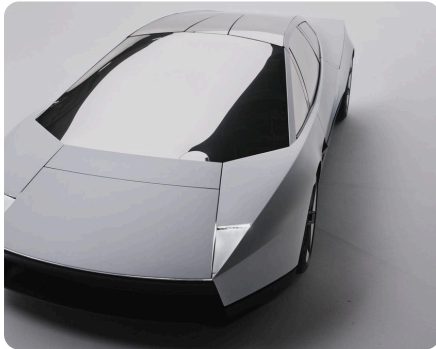
04 DESIGN & ENGINEERING



Butterfly doors, hidden headlights and a full-width light bar. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X), "[Configurations](#)".

Tesla says the design is inspired by the SR-71 Blackbird and F-35, and that its design language has evolved "from S3XY to Cybertruck, Cybercab & Optimus". Car and Driver sees a resemblance to the white Lotus Esprit S1 from the Bond film *The Spy Who Loved Me* – a car Musk owns, which was on display at the event.^{[41,1,3](#)}

Ano White paint is, per Tesla, derived from aerospace coatings (UV and cryogenic protection, electrostatic dissipation); the **gold-tinted glass** mimics spacesuit visors. The **active rear wing** has high-drag and high-downforce modes and is driven by the Optimus actuator system. In **Track Mode** the car lowers and the suspension transforms. **OFFICIAL TESLA** ^{[10,1,42](#)}



New angular design language. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).



Super-light thin-spoke wheels. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).



Side view, doors open. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).



Ultrawhite interior with grey microsuède. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).



Yoke for steer-by-wire and centre screen. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).



COPV pressure vessel for the cold gas. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).



Four rear thruster nozzles. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).



Suspension and chassis. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).

How does it work, in short?

Suction system ("fan car"): fans create low pressure under the car, sealed by adjustable skirts, adding grip without adding mass. **Cold-gas thrusters:** compressed air from tanks is expelled through nozzles; the car refills the tanks itself with a compressor (refill time and energy use not disclosed). Per Electrek, rear thrusters aid acceleration and lateral ones might help in corners, but upward thrust adds no driving performance – it is mostly show.^{9,2}

Interior, body & seating

Item	What is known
Seating	2 seats (Performance, Thrust); 1 seat (Rocket). The 2017 concept was a 2+2. OFFICIAL TESLA ^{11,2,23}
Seats	"Fixed seat"; per The Verge the seats are molded directly into the chassis. No seat adjustment – unknown whether yoke/pedals adjust. OFFICIAL TESLA ^{11,2}
Chassis / monocoque	Willem's point "seats fixed into the monocoque" is right about seats being fixed into the chassis. Whether the chassis is a (carbon) monocoque has not been stated by Tesla – unconfirmed . Tesla only cites magnesium, titanium and carbon fibre "throughout". UNCONFIRMED ^{11,2}
Upholstery & interior colours	Ultrawhite interior with grey microsuede accents and microsuede bolsters. No other interior colours announced. OFFICIAL TESLA ¹¹
Screens & steering	Centre touchscreen + two smaller forward displays; yoke designed for steer-by-wire. OFFICIAL TESLA ¹¹
Exterior colours	Shown: Ano White (derived from rocket coatings) with gold-tinted glass. Other colours not disclosed. OFFICIAL TESLA UNCONFIRMED ^{10,23}
Doors	Upward-opening butterfly doors per coverage; Tesla names no type on its product page. PER MEDIA ¹
Roof	The 2017 concept had a removable glass roof (targa). For the 2026 car a removable roof is not mentioned – unknown. UNCONFIRMED ²³
Luggage space	Trunk and frunk volume (litres) not disclosed ; not known whether there is a frunk. Where a removable roof would be stowed: unknown (not described by Tesla, not even for the 2017 concept). UNCONFIRMED ^{11,75}

Item	What is known
Luggage without thrusters?	Tesla says the COPV pressure vessels sit in “every usable void”; per Car and Driver there are two tanks totalling 600 litres. In 2018 Musk said the tank would replace the rear seats. Performance has no thrusters and so presumably no tanks – but Tesla has not said whether that space becomes luggage room or a frunk on Performance. Per-variant difference: unknown. UNCONFIRMED 39,1,23
Tank location & rear section	MotorTrend saw on the displayed car one large black COPV sphere (exercise-ball size) directly behind the two seats , connected by two pipes to the four nozzles above the rear bumper. This supports Willem’s observation that the tank sits behind the cockpit/“monocoque”. Note: Tesla and The Verge speak of two tanks (600 L combined). That the whole rear section hinges upward as one clamshell: observed in the unveil video (Willem’s observation), not officially confirmed. PER MEDIA UNCONFIRMED 80,2



Interior: Ultrawhite and microsuède. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X), [interior photos](#).



Doors open. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X), [exterior photos](#).



Top view: roof/glass. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).

05 TECHNICAL DEEP-DIVE

Short answer: Tesla disclosed almost no powertrain or battery data at the unveil. Only the range target (>300 miles), the by-wire controls and the thruster/suction system are confirmed.

Everything else is unknown or from unofficial sources. [11,4,75](#)

Topic	Performance	Thrust	Rocket
Range	>300 miles (>480 km) as a <i>target</i> for Performance; no EPA or WLTP rating. Thrust/Rocket: not specified. OFFICIAL TESLA 11,2		
Battery (kWh, chemistry, cells)	Not disclosed by Tesla. PASMAG reports 200 kWh with 4680 cylindrical cells – that is the 2017 figure and is not on Tesla’s page. UNCONFIRMED 74,75		
Power (kW / hp)	Not disclosed. UNCONFIRMED 75,4		
Motors / drivetrain	Number and position of motors not disclosed; AWD not confirmed. No RWD variant has been announced. For comparison, the 2017 concept officially had 3 motors (1 front, 2 rear), all-wheel drive and torque vectoring. Whether the 2026 car keeps that (“tri-motor/Plaid”) is unknown. UNCONFIRMED 23,21,75		
Extra propulsion	No thrusters; suction + active aero OFFICIAL TESLA	Rear cold-gas thrusters OFFICIAL TESLA	Thrusters all round (forward, up, rotation) OFFICIAL TESLA
Charging (kW, connector, 10–80%)	Not disclosed. PASMAG cites “350 kW or more” and 15–20 min for “significant range” – not confirmed on Tesla’s page. EU connector not stated (all current EU Teslas use CCS2 – an assumption, not confirmed for Roadster). UNCONFIRMED 74,75		
Thruster tank refill	–	On-board compressor refills tanks from the traction battery; no chemical propellant. Refill time/energy unknown. OFFICIAL TESLA 1,74	
Electrical architecture	Not disclosed (no info on 400 V/800 V, 48 V low-voltage or an Ethernet ring). For comparison, Cybertruck officially has a 48 V “mid-voltage” system, an HV battery of 700 V DC nominal and an “Etherloop” network. UNCONFIRMED 75,76,77,78		
Steer-by-wire	Yes – “next-gen steer-by-wire” with yoke. OFFICIAL TESLA 11,2		
Brake-by-wire / throttle-by-wire	The Verge: steering, brakes and throttle are “by wire”. Tesla’s own page only mentions steer-by-wire; brake implementation details (e.g. no hydraulic back-up) are unknown. PER MEDIA 2,11		
Rear-wheel steering	Not mentioned – unknown whether Roadster has rear-wheel steering; no angle disclosed. UNCONFIRMED 11		

Comparison with Cybertruck (official)

System	Cybertruck	Roadster 2026
Steer-by-wire	Yes: “4-wheel directional steer-by-wire”, 0.94 turns lock-to-lock (340°) 76	Yes, yoke OFFICIAL TESLA 11
Rear-wheel steering	Yes (“rear steering”); maximum angle not stated in the Tesla documents consulted 79,76	Unknown UNCONFIRMED

System	Cybertruck	Roadster 2026
Brakes	ABS + EBD; wiring shows iBooster ECU and hydraulic unit (HCU/ESP) – so not fully dry brake-by-wire ^{76,78}	“By wire” per The Verge; details unknown PER MEDIA
Accelerator	Electronic accelerator (as in all EVs) ⁷⁶	“By wire” per The Verge PER MEDIA
Voltage levels	48 V MV system; HV 700 V DC nominal; Etherloop ^{76,77,78}	Unknown UNCONFIRMED

06 TOP GEAR INTERVIEW

Top Gear spent time with Tesla Chief Designer **Franz von Holzhausen** and VP of Vehicle Engineering **Lars Moravy** the day before the unveil. Presenter: **Tom Ford**. Video published 16 October 2026 (49 min).⁸⁴

["New Tesla Roadster: It's Finally Here... And It Flies!" – Top Gear, YouTube](#)

How to read this section

These are interview statements, not official specifications. Top Gear itself notes that "a few figures were updated after our filming finished" and that base Roadster specs are estimated/TBC. Speakers are not named in the captions; the technical answers come from the engineer who says "Franz and I", so very likely Lars Moravy. Timestamps are clickable. **TESLA IN INTERVIEW** = Tesla statement in the interview · **TOP GEAR** = Top Gear voice-over/question

Powertrain & performance

Topic	What is said	Who · time
Drivetrain	Rear-wheel drive only: "dual motor at the rear axle". Two motors buttoned up against each other, each with its own inverter and planetary reduction, driving each rear wheel independently. Not tri/quad motor as the internet assumed. TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla (Lars Moravy, per interview) 04:37 , 06:09
Voltage & motors	"The performance vehicles and up" get super power-dense motors at 800–1,000 volts, with cobalt steel in the laminations; the battery runs in the same 800–1,000 V range as Cybertruck and Semi. TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla (Lars Moravy, per interview) 06:12 , 11:44
Power	"over ... 1,000 kilowatts of power, 1500 horsepower, which is more than the Plaid had in three motors but only in two" (Performance and up). Check: 1,000 kW ≈ 1,341 hp; 1,500 hp ≈ 1,120 kW. TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla (Lars Moravy, per interview) 06:26
Discrepancy	Top Gear's voice-over says the standard Roadster has "1 megawatt ... 1,340 brake horsepower" and roughly 960 lb-ft; Performance "adds more torque". Tesla in the interview cites 1,500 hp for Performance and up. Which power figure belongs to which trim is therefore unclear. UNCONFIRMED	Top Gear TOP GEAR 26:47
Weight	Target , not confirmed: "team will kill me for saying this, but under 1,700 kilos, I want it to start 16"; a 2,200 kg EV can't be called a fun car. Top Gear: lightest base Roadster "likely under 1,700 kg". (Earlier report: MKBHD "4000+ pound", also unofficial.) UNCONFIRMED	Tesla (Lars Moravy, per interview) 05:39 Top Gear 17:03
Structure	Hybrid structure: aluminium at the front, carbon-fibre tub, glass and plastics; carbon-ceramic brakes. The car shown is an "alpha". TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla (Lars Moravy, per interview) 05:09
Brakes & stability	Brake-by-wire (first on Cybercab); torque vectoring at the rear for yaw control, front brakes for extra stability control. TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla (Lars Moravy, per interview) 06:46

Topic	What is said	Who · time
Tyres	Split fitment: 295/30 front, 335/30 rear; wheel diameters 20" front / 21" rear (as heard in captions). TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla 09:28
Top speed	"214 miles per hour for now" (≈344 km/h); a 330 mph (≈531 km/h) version is coming because "the boss threw down the gauntlet" – "just gearing". Differs from the official ">230 mph" in section 03. UNCONFIRMED	Tesla 26:29
Production	Tom asks "Texas from 2027?" – Tesla: "28 28 28 ... this is the production car." Consistent with 2028 elsewhere in this dossier. TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla 03:44

Battery, range & charging

Topic	What is said	Who · time
Battery	Battery in the floor, Tesla in-house cells: still nickel-based lithium-ion, bespoke chemistry for high power throughput, "just for this program"; cylindrical cells cooled on both sides. Capacity (kWh) not given – "Tesla won't confirm". TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla (Lars Moravy, per interview) 11:44–13:24
Range	"about like 310 320 mi" (≈500–515 km). Consistent with the official ">300 miles" target; the 2017 1,000 km (620 mi) pitch is now called unnecessary. TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla 13:27
Charging	"our fastest charging battery ... hoping to do 15–85 in 10 minutes" (captions: "1585"); over 800 V on Gen 4 Superchargers "over 500 kW". Megawatt charging (MCS) stays with Semi. Top Gear voice-over says "500 kW ... less than 15 minutes, 15 to 80%" – exact window and time uncertain. UNCONFIRMED	Tesla 13:43 , 14:09 Top Gear 17:08

Variants, aero & thrusters

Topic	What is said	Who · time
Four variants	"There's a roadster ... a performance Roadster ... a thrust version ... a rocket version." So there is also a base Roadster below Performance – not (yet) listed on tesla.com. They build on each other in power and hardware. TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla 07:15
Ground effect	Fans plus movable side, front and rear skirts; at speed the front/rear skirts lift. Per Top Gear, Performance adds the fans, adaptive suspension and more torque. TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla 17:16–19:48 Top Gear 26:56
Thrust	200-litre cold-gas tank; current fill time 2–6 hours, aiming for under half an hour. One fill = one run of about 5 s: "It's one time." 0–60 mph "under a second", ~0.85 s (Top Gear: ".85 of a second") – consistent with official <0.9 s and the 0.81 s demo. TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla 22:45–23:26 Top Gear 27:02
Rocket	One seat; "the second seat is a 400 L cold gas tank", plus six more thrusters (one each corner pushing up, two at the front for yaw). Top Gear voice-over says "a 600 L tank" – possibly 400 L + Thrust's 200 L, but not stated explicitly. UNCONFIRMED	Tesla 27:30 Top Gear 27:12
Legality	Rocket: "off-road use only". Thrust is to be fully certified (crash) and road-driveable, but the thruster system can't be used on public roads (gravel, cold gas). TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla 24:44

Design & interior

Topic	What is said	Who · time
Inspiration	Tom finds the side view "almost lotusy". Tesla: "that was part of the inspiration ... we had the submarine version, the Lotus, in our studio ... drawing inspiration from that." Context: the Lotus Esprit submarine car "Wet Nellie" from the James Bond film <i>The Spy Who Loved Me</i> (1977), bought by Elon Musk at auction in London in September 2013 for £616,000. TESLA IN INTERVIEW 82,83	Tom 09:52 Tesla 10:02–10:22
Headlights	Full headlights with low and high beam, slightly slimmer than Cybertruck's ~20 mm. "Pop-up/pop-down" is only Tom's wording; Tesla says "Okay" without confirming. TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla (Lars Moravy, per interview) 07:47 Tom 07:39
Roof & doors	Removable T-top roof panels (Tesla: "T-top, but you get the open air feel"). The front part of the roof stays in place, so it is more targa-like than a fully open roadster. Butterfly-type doors as on Cybercab, with a pad on the sill to slide in. Almost every panel moves: lift gate, doors that split the roof, barge doors, hood vent. TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla 10:35 , 33:11
Aero & charge port	Flaps behind the chin spoiler open up to 80° for low drag. Hidden charge port: "You open the wing to charge." TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla 29:13 , 32:51
Interieur	"The seat is the structure" – fixed, low seats; pedals move instead ("cheaper and lighter"). Yoke on steer-by-wire with no mechanical connection; exposed column. Tom calls it a "2 plus 2". TESLA IN INTERVIEW	Tesla 34:57 , 35:36 Tom 11:23
Bagage	Without the thruster system (standard Roadster) the tank area is "just open space for luggage". TOP GEAR	Tom 24:31

What changes vs. earlier sections?

- **New:** RWD dual motors, 800–1,000 V, >1,000 kW, brake-by-wire, <1,700 kg target, >500 kW charging, a base Roadster below Performance – all per Tesla in interview, not yet official specs.
- **Confirmed:** range >300 mi (now "310–320"), production 2028, Thrust 0–60 <1 s, Rocket single-seat and off-road only.
- **Conflicting:** top speed (214 mph "for now" / 330 mph version vs official >230 mph), power per trim (1,340 vs 1,500 hp), charging window (15–85% vs 15–80%), Rocket tank (400 vs 600 L).

07 PRICES & RESERVATIONS

Key point

Tesla has announced **no purchase price** for the new Roadster – neither in the US nor in the Netherlands. Only reservation amounts are known.^{4,23}

Official amounts

What	US	Netherlands	Status
Reservation Performance (post-unveil)	\$50.000 ^{5,23}	€5,000 today (free cancellation) + €45,000 within 10 days = €50,000; lapses without timely payment ^{10,12}	OFFICIAL TESLA
Reservation Thrust	\$250.000 ^{5,23}	€5,000 today (free cancellation) + €245,000 within 10 days = €250,000; limited availability, max. one order per customer ^{10,12}	OFFICIAL TESLA
Rocket	Invite only; no amount ^{10,23}		OFFICIAL TESLA
Reservation before the unveil (Sep 2026)	–	€4,000 + €39,000 = €43,000; cancellable free of charge ^{15,14}	PER MEDIA
Purchase price 2026 trims	Not known		UNCONFIRMED



Rear view with the four thruster nozzles above the bumper, as shown on tesla.com/roadster (NL). Photo: Tesla, via tesla.com/roadster.

Thrust terms (Tesla NL) OFFICIAL TESLA

Due to limited availability only one Thrust order per customer is allowed; duplicate orders via the same account, phone number, payment or address details may be cancelled. Availability depends on legal requirements per region. Reservation final only after payment; cancelled if not paid within 10 days; no refunds for changes.^{10,12}

Source: tesla.com/roadster (NL), Willem's screenshots 16-10-2026 13:40.

Estimates and rumours

Before the unveil Autoblog.nl reported rumours that a “SpaceX Package” version could cost “more than 1 million euros” – a rumour, not a substantiated estimate. The \$250,000 Thrust deposit implies that trim will cost at least that much (our inference). ESTIMATE ¹⁴

Price history across generations

Generation	Price	Deposit
1st generation (2008–2012)	approx. \$100,000 (US) PER MEDIA ²²	up to \$50,000 (US); €3,000 in Europe (2010) ²²

Generation	Price	Deposit
2nd-gen concept (2017)	from \$200,000; Founders \$250,000 ^{21,19}	\$50,000 (first \$5,000 immediately); Founders in full ^{23,21}
New Roadster (2026)	Not known UNCONFIRMED	\$50,000 Performance / \$250,000 Thrust ⁵

Production and sales volumes

Topic	What is known
2017 plan	Production from 2020 with 10,000 units ANNOUNCED, NEVER DELIVERED ²³
Founders Series (2017)	First 1,000 units ^{21,23}
2026 Roadster volume per year	Not disclosed by Tesla. Thrust: "limited release"; Rocket: "invite only". A secondary source cites "fewer than 10,000 per year" – unconfirmed. UNCONFIRMED ^{2,81}
Reservation count	Never disclosed UNCONFIRMED
Factory	Giga Texas (Austin): named by Musk for Roadster in 2022; media also cite Giga Texas in 2026. No official production-line details. MUSK ONLY PER MEDIA ^{23,18}
Analysts	CNBC: high-end, low-volume model, no material financial impact expected. No concrete analyst volume estimates found. ESTIMATE ⁴

Taxes and a worked example follow in the next chapter.

08 DUTCH TAXES

What would a Roadster cost in Dutch BPM, road tax and (company-car) *bijtelling*? Because Tesla has not disclosed price or weight and production only starts in 2028, the amounts below are **worked examples** based on 2026 rules and adopted policy for later years. [ESTIMATE](#)

1. BPM

For a zero-emission passenger car (0 g/km CO₂) the 2026 BPM is a **fixed €687**, regardless of price. The amount is indexed annually; the 2027/2028 rate has not been published. For the Roadster this means BPM is negligible relative to the price – even for a very expensive Thrust. [OFFICIAL SOURCE](#) [32,73](#)

2. Motor vehicle tax (road tax)

MRB depends on weight, fuel and province. A fully electric passenger car pays a percentage of the petrol rate (national part and provincial surcharge). Since 1 July 2026 the *mass in running order* counts. [67,66,68](#)

Year	EV discount	You pay
2026–2028	30%	70% of the rate
2029	25%	75%
from 2030	0%	100%

[OFFICIAL SOURCE](#) Source: Rijksoverheid [65,66](#). A Roadster registered in 2028 thus gets 30% for one year, then 25%, and full rate from 2030.

Worked example [ESTIMATE](#) – Tesla has not disclosed weight. Marques Brownlee mentioned “4000+ pound” (≈ 1,815 kg, unofficial); so we use an *assumed* mass in running order of 1,900 and 2,000 kg. Amounts per quarter, 2026 rates (later years are indexed).³

Weight · province	Petrol rate	EV 2026–28 (70%)	EV 2029 (75%)	EV per year (70%)
1,900 kg · Noord-Holland (82.1 opc.)	€ 333.99	€ 233.80	€ 250.50	€ 935
1,900 kg · Utrecht (86.4 opc.)	€ 339.98	€ 237.99	€ 254.99	€ 952
1,900 kg · Gelderland (98.3 opc.)	€ 356.55	€ 249.59	€ 267.41	€ 998
1,900 kg · Zuid-Holland (104.4 opc.)	€ 365.05	€ 255.53	€ 273.79	€ 1,022
2,000 kg · Noord-Holland (82.1 opc.)	€ 360.85	€ 252.60	€ 270.64	€ 1,010
2,000 kg · Utrecht (86.4 opc.)	€ 367.34	€ 257.14	€ 275.51	€ 1,029
2,000 kg · Gelderland (98.3 opc.)	€ 385.30	€ 269.71	€ 288.98	€ 1,079
2,000 kg · Zuid-Holland (104.4 opc.)	€ 394.51	€ 276.16	€ 295.88	€ 1,105

Calculation: petrol national part (Art. 23 MRB Act 1994: €64.24 at 1,000 kg + €17.27 per 100 kg) + provincial surcharge on the Art. 222 Provinces Act base (€45.81 at 1,100 kg + €11.68 per 100 kg) × 2026 surcharge rate. The Belastingdienst calculator is authoritative; rounding per weight class may differ by a few euros.^{69,70,68}

3. Bijtelling (company car only)

If you drive a Roadster as a company car (>500 km private use per year), a percentage of the list price is added to your income. First registration 2026: 18% on the first €30,000 and 22% above. Under adopted policy this becomes 20%/22% in 2027 and 22% on the full value from 2028. The rate is fixed for 60 months. Because Roadster arrives in 2028 at the earliest, **22% on the full list price** is expected to apply.^{71,72}

List price (HYPOTHETICAL)	BPM (2026 amount)	Bijtelling/yr if reg. 2026	DET 2027	DET 2028
Performance – hypothetical: € 200,000	€ 687	€ 42,800	€ 43,400	€ 44,000
Thrust – hypothetical: € 350,000	€ 687	€ 75,800	€ 76,400	€ 77,000
Rocket	Not approved for public roads → no registration, so no BPM/MRB/bijtelling as a passenger car. ¹⁰			

Note

The list prices of €200,000 and €350,000 are **hypothetical** and only illustrate the calculation; they are not price expectations from Tesla or from us. Bijtelling is added to gross income; net cost depends on your tax bracket. VAT (21%) is included in the list price. **ESTIMATE**

09 EU TYPE APPROVAL

Can the Roadster be driven on Dutch roads? That requires European (or national) approval. Tesla has said nothing yet about EU homologation or an EU delivery date.^{61,62}

Facts

- New cars in the EU must be approved in advance under Regulation (EU) 2018/858. Routes: EU whole-vehicle type approval (WVTA), EU small series (max. 1,500 passenger cars per year), national small series, or individual approval. **OFFICIAL SOURCE** ^{60,57,58}
- A manufacturer chooses which EU approval authority to apply to; the approval then applies EU-wide. In April 2026 the RDW was the first in Europe to approve Tesla's FSD Supervised (provisionally valid in NL).^{58,27,29}
- For technology the rules don't cover, there is the Art. 39 procedure (new technology, with an EU vote); the RDW explained it in 2025 in response to Tesla.⁵⁹
- Precedent: the Cybertruck has no EU type approval (parliamentary questions).⁶³
- Tesla NL itself says Rocket is "not approved for public road use" and not available in all regions. Reservations are open in NL; Performance is called "road ready". **OFFICIAL TESLA** ^{10,12}

Expectations and possible hurdles **ESTIMATE**

- **Which authority?** The RDW is an obvious candidate given Tesla's European HQ in NL and the FSD approval, but this is **unconfirmed** for the Roadster. **UNCONFIRMED**
- **Cold-gas thrusters:** there are no specific EU rules for thrusters on a car; high-pressure tanks (~250 kg of air) and exhaust near bystanders are open questions. French media expect mainly Performance to have a chance at road approval; Thrust/Rocket possibly track/private land only. "Flying" would bring aviation law into play.^{61,62,9}
- **Pedestrian protection & safety systems:** the sharp, angular design and mandatory EU assistance systems (General Safety Regulation) must be accommodated – as with Cybertruck, which still lacks EU approval.^{61,63}
- **Steer-by-wire & noise:** steer-by-wire must meet UN/ECE steering rules; the powerful suction fans may matter for noise limits. Tesla has said nothing about this.⁶¹ **UNCONFIRMED**

What does this mean for Dutch buyers?

You can reserve now (Performance €50,000, cancellable free of charge per Tesla), but there is no guarantee or date for EU approval. Production only starts in 2028; European deliveries realistically won't come earlier. How EU consumer law treats such large deposits is untested.^{12,15,64}

10 THREE GENERATIONS COMPARED



1st generation (2008–2012). Photo: Tesla Motors, [Wikimedia Commons](#).



2nd-gen concept (2017). Photo: Steve Jurvetson, CC BY 2.0, [Wikimedia Commons](#).



New Roadster (2026). Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).

	1st generation	2nd-gen concept 2017	New Roadster 2026
0–60 mph	3,9 s (Sport 3,7 s) ²²	1,9 s ANNOUNCED, NEVER DELIVERED ²¹	<1.6 s (Performance); demo 0.81 s OFFICIAL TESLA ^{11,37}
Top speed	201 km/h (125 mph) ²²	>400 km/h (>250 mph) ANNOUNCED, NEVER DELIVERED ²¹	>370 km/h (>230 mph) OFFICIAL TESLA ²
Range	393 km (244 mi, EPA) ²²	1.000 km (620 mi) ANNOUNCED, NEVER DELIVERED ²¹	>480 km (target) OFFICIAL TESLA ²
Battery	53 kWh ²²	200 kWh ANNOUNCED, NEVER DELIVERED ²¹	Unknown UNCONFIRMED
Drivetrain	1 motor, rear-wheel ²²	3 motors, AWD ANNOUNCED, NEVER DELIVERED ²³	Unknown UNCONFIRMED
Seats	2	2+2	2 (Rocket: 1)
Price	approx. \$100,000 PER MEDIA ²²	\$200.000 / Founders \$250.000 ²¹	Unknown; deposit \$50k/\$250k ⁵
Production	2008–2012, approx. 2,450 units ²²	Never built	From 2028 (Musk) MUSK ONLY ¹
Notable	Lotus Elise-based; first series EV with Li-ion cells; one was launched into space in 2018 (Falcon Heavy) ^{22,55}	Removable glass roof; later “SpaceX option package” promised ²³	Suction system, cold-gas thrusters, steer-by-wire, fixed seats ¹¹

The difference in short: the first Roadster proved an electric sports car could exist (converted Lotus, one motor). The 2017 concept promised a record-breaking 2+2 GT with 200 kWh and 1,000 km – and was never built. The 2026 version is a radically different, lighter two-seat (or one-seat) design in which suction and SpaceX thrusters, not the battery, take centre stage; the ambitious 2017 range has given way to “>300 miles”.



Musk's own 1st-gen Roadster with "Starman", launched 6 Feb 2018.
Photo: SpaceX, CC0, [Wikimedia Commons](#).

11 TIMELINE

- **2008–2012**
1st generation: approx. 2,450 Roadsters delivered.^{[22](#)}
- **16-11-2017**
Surprise 2nd-gen reveal after the Semi event; delivery promised for 2020, \$200,000.^{[23](#)}
- **06-02-2018**
Musk's own Roadster is launched on Falcon Heavy.^{[55](#)}
- **06-2018**
Musk: "SpaceX option package" with ~10 cold-gas thrusters.^{[23](#)}
- **2020–2021**
Production pushed to 2021, then 2022, then 2023.^{[23](#)}
- **2023–2024**
Target slips to 2024, then 2025.^{[23](#)}
- **11-2025**
Musk: unveil 1 April 2026, production 12–18 months later.^{[23](#)}
- **22-04-2026**
Musk on the Roadster as a car to drive yourself (Q1 call).^{[24](#)}
- **12-09-2026**
Tesla: "Go for launch" – event announced for 1 October.^{[46](#)}
- **19-09-2026**
NL reservations reopened: €43,000.^{[14](#)}
- **28-09-2026**
Event postponed to 15 October (weather).^{[43](#)}
- **15/16-10-2026**
Unveil in McGregor; three trims; production 2028. Musk: "Turns out the future does have flying cars".^{[1](#)}
- **2028**
Planned production start.^{[5](#)}

12 FSD & SELF-DRIVING

Does Roadster get FSD? Tesla has **not announced** it. Musk positions the Roadster as a car you drive yourself – “the last best driver’s car”.^{[2](#),[26](#)}

- On the Q1 call (22-04-2026) Musk described Roadster as a car about driving yourself, in a future where other Teslas become autonomous; media summarised it as “the only Tesla you actually drive”. **MUSK ONLY** ^{[24](#),[25](#),[26](#)}
- Tesla’s product page mentions no Autopilot, FSD or FSD computer (HW4/AI5); it does mention manual controls and a fixed seat. **UNCONFIRMED** ^{[10](#),[11](#)}
- The stunts were performed by the car itself (programmed), with an Optimus “for show” at the wheel – which says nothing about FSD in the production car.^{[7](#)}

FSD status in NL/EU

On 10 April 2026 the RDW approved FSD Supervised as a European type approval with provisional validity in the Netherlands – a European first. EU-wide recognition requires a vote in the Brussels committee (TCMV); at the 6 October 2026 meeting no vote took place.^{[27](#),[28](#),[29](#),[30](#),[31](#)}

13 REACTIONS & CRITICISM



Prototype on the ramp. Photo: Tesla (official press image via @Tesla on X).

"Candidate for greatest product demo of all time"

@elonmusk beforehand⁴⁵

"My OG Roadster is still orbiting Mars and Earth"

@elonmusk, 16-10-2026⁴⁷

Critical notes

- **Nearly a decade of delays:** Tesla missed every earlier delivery date; \$50,000 deposits (and \$250,000 for Founders) have been held since 2017. Autoblog.nl says many waiting customers cancelled in disappointment.^{4,14}
- **Show vs. product:** Electrek asks whether the claims are "full of cold gas": upward thrust doesn't help driving, 4,700 kg downforce is doubtful, and the stunt prototype may have lacked a full battery.⁹
- **No driver:** the stunts were programmed; an Optimus sat in "for show".⁷
- **Financially small:** CNBC expects no material impact on Tesla's results.⁴
- **Missing specs:** no price, battery, power or weight.^{4,75}
- **Safety:** Musk himself: "not necessarily a safety-optimized car".^{1,2}

14 VIDEOS

All links checked on 16-10-2026 (YouTube oEmbed: HTTP 200). Click title or URL.



Livestream replay of the Roadster event

@Tesla · X **OFFICIAL TESLA**

<https://x.com/i/broadcasts/1yKAPwNggRaxb>



"Turns out the future does have flying cars"

@elonmusk · X · 15 s

<https://x.com/elonmusk/status/2110913107094606330>



Roadster Event

Tesla · YouTube **OFFICIAL TESLA**

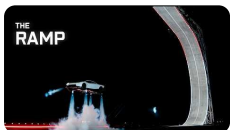
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qt5p-_tE8d0



Roadster | The Last Best Driver's Car

Tesla · YouTube **OFFICIAL TESLA**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvKIR-c1SsU>



The Ramp | Roadster

Tesla · YouTube **OFFICIAL TESLA**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7p5LxFdc-Qg>



The Kickflip | Roadster

Tesla · YouTube **OFFICIAL TESLA**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5vsHHPVhJg>



Tesla's Flying Roadster Revealed: Everything That Happened in 10 Minutes

CNET · YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TWHXrLzUKJc>



I Went To The Tesla Roadster Unveil! Insane Stunts, Battery & Motor, Interior, Design

Out of Spec Reviews · YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7oFL2ObpM08>



INSIDE LOOK! I saw the Flying Tesla Roadster in Person and it was CRAZY

DragTimes · YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_lq-DpCE9rU



Tesla Unveils 'Flying' Roadster with SpaceX Thrusters

VideoFromSpace · YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eqOfmtTJD1A>



Tesla Semi & Roadster Unveil (2017)

Tesla · YouTube **OFFICIAL TESLA**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RRmepp7i5g>



New Tesla Roadster: It's Finally Here... And It Flies! (Tom Ford, Franz von Holzhausen, Lars Moravy)

Top Gear · YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JdklOhFmbKI>

15 UNCLEAR & UNVERIFIABLE

- Purchase price of all trims (US and NL).
- Battery capacity (kWh) and official weight. Drivetrain, voltage, power and charging are only stated in the Top Gear interview (see 06), not as official specs; power per trim conflicts (1,340 vs 1,500 hp).
- Whether >230 mph applies to all trims or only Rocket (sources conflict).
- Whether Thrust is a separate trim or an optional “augment” on Performance (Tesla footnote).
- What happens to the 2017 reservations and Founders Series.
- One or two pressure vessels; whether the rear opens as a clamshell; luggage per trim; removable roof.
- Rear-wheel steering and brake-by-wire implementation.
- EU type approval: authority, route and date; road legality of Thrust.
- Whether the demo car had a full battery; independent measurement of 0–60 and downforce.
- 2028 production start is a Musk statement; earlier dates were all missed.

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