

YOUR SMARTPHONE IS THE KEY FOR THE TESLA MODEL 3

The Tesla Model 3 is unique in a lot of ways, but one of the more interesting is its use of your smartphone as the only key – there's not fob, even, let alone an ignition for a traditional key. The vehicle uses the Tesla app on your smartphone to communicate your identity, unlock the vehicle, and know when it's ready to start and turn off.

The Model 3 uses Bluetooth LE to talk to your device so that it knows you're there, and in case you're ever in need of a valet or spare set, the car also ships with a pair of NFC-enabled plastic cards roughly the size and shape of red cards that can unlock and start the vehicle with a tap.

This feature might strike some as unusual or maybe even a little unnerving, but it really strikes me as more of a convenience. The only thing I'm likely not to forget in any situation is my smartphone, which is basically an extension of my very being at this point in my life. It's much easier to misplace car keys, in fact, since they're relatively occasional use devices.

There's a lot of technically interesting things going on with the Model 3 that really haven't been done that much before, including a general minimizing of physical buttons that's been pushed to new extremes among Tesla designs, and the abolishment of the instrument panel. But KO-ing keys is pretty significant, even in light of everything else.

Smart Car – Smart Future.