



## Internationale Auto Ausstellung (IAA) 2025

### The mobility of the future

Carshow | The Internationale Auto Ausstellung was an important European car show for decades. Car enthusiasts flocked for new models, exotic sports cars and futuristic concept cars. For several years now, the IAA no longer takes place in Frankfurt, but in Munich. And since then, it has been more of a trade fair than a consumer car show. However, the IAA still paints a picture of the mobility of the future. What does that future look like?

A glance at the floor plan of the IAA gives a first impression. More than half of all exhibitors are Chinese. And once on site, the most popular language in the corridors of the expo building turns out not to be German or English, but Chinese. The unveiling of Leapmotor's latest model even takes place in Chinese, as this presentation is being live broadcasted in China.



Leapmotor already offers economical electric-powered alternatives in the segments where there is most demand. After the small T03 and the mid-sized C10, the brand is now introducing the B05: a compact SUV. The design of the B05 has taken the European market more into account from the outset and therefore its

appearance is much more appealing than that of existing models.

## AITO

The Chinese brand "AITO" had big plans for the European market. When the European Union decided to impose import duties on Chinese cars, those plans were postponed. However, the booth at the IAA was already booked. Therefore, AITO is present mainly to get the opinion of European consumers.



AITO's models are available as plug-in hybrids and all-electric cars. The brand has copied BMW's chassis technology (the spokesperson was surprisingly honest about this) and promises richer equipment than the current brands. The AITO 9, the provisional flagship model, has its world premiere in Munich.

## XPeng

XPeng operates in three areas: airplanes, robotics and mobility. To make that clear, it is bringing a passenger drone, many robots and its entire range of cars to Germany. The new P7 debuts at the IAA, but the manufacturer has not yet decided whether this large sedan will come to Europe. Luxury cars and/or enthusiast cars in particular are bought with sentiment, and Chinese brands do not yet have the image to capitalise on that.



In addition to the P7, XPeng is also showing the updated G6 and G9. Both models feature a new powertrain (faster charging, lower power consumption), updated looks and a new infotainment system.

## BAW

The "BAW" (Being Auto Works) brand takes stealing to a whole new level with the "212 T01". This large off-road vehicle combines the basic shapes of the classic Land Rover Defender with the face of the Toyota Land Cruiser. BAW also combines the drive technology of those models to achieve serious off-road capabilities. The T01 comes with diesel and petrol engines.



## Volkswagen

Traditionally, German carmakers save their most important new cars for the IAA and this is also the case in 2025. The Volkswagen ID.2 is another step closer to production after many delays and will bear the name ID.Polo. The appearance has been adjusted accordingly, as the ID.Polo looks much more like a familiar Polo than the more futuristic ID models. The ID.Polo will also be available as a GTI. Volkswagen confirms that the base version of the ID.Polo will cost less than 25,000 euros; less than the current petrol-engined Polo.



Based on the same platform and technology, Volkswagen will also introduce a compact SUV: the ID.Cross. The model is still being shown as a "concept" in Munich, but the whole thing looks production-ready.



## Skoda

Skoda is also looking ahead to a compact SUV with electric drive: the Epiq. The technology is similar to that of the Volkswagens ID.Polo and ID.Cross. The Epiq is the first Skoda to employ a new house style called "Modern Solid". This creates a modern and confident look, while retaining Skoda's friendly and approachable character. The Epiq will have a similar price tag to the current Skoda Kamiq and will go into production in 2026.



## Volvo

Volvo was the first brand to decide not to participate in car shows many years ago. However, the Swedish manufacturer had enough news to be present in Munich anyway. The ES90 will have its European premiere here. In addition, Volvo shows the EX30 in "Cross Country" trim.



## Mercedes-Benz

The new Mercedes-Benz GLC has its world premiere at IAA 2025. The new GLC is an electric car and its introduction is scheduled for the first half of 2026. As with the other new Mercedes-Benz models, the large display screen takes centre stage (with optional passenger display). For the GLC, MB-UX (Mercedes-Benz User interface) has again been modernised with more artificial intelligence. The electronics are therefore said to better sense what the driver wants. From now on, the interior is always vegan. At the same time as the new GLC, Mercedes-Benz is introducing its own charging platform, including the ability to deliver energy to the grid.



## Vauxhall

At Vauxhall, the Mokka GSE and Corsa GSE Vision Gran Turismo take centre stage. If one ignores the spoilers and other racing accessories, the latter will give an

impression of the new Corsa. Those who want can drive the Corsa GSE virtually, as the car is available in the game "Gran Turismo".



The Mokka GSE is not a concept car, but a sporty version of the electric-powered Mokka. Based on the rally car, the GSE is not only much faster (280 hp) than a standard Mokka, but above all more capable. The suspension has been adapted for intensive use and driver communication has been improved for an intense experience.

## BMW

At BMW, the new iX3 takes centre stage. With the iX3, BMW opts for a whole new style. The shapes are rounder and more harmonious, although the front still has an odd look. In fact, BMW sticks to the "kidney grille" for the sake of recognisability, while electric cars do not need a grille at all. Instead, the new style is very modern, making it clear that the iX3 is a new-generation car.



While most car manufacturers have very small booths, BMW packs the biggest of all brands. Highly recommended is the "virtual panoramic drive": a real cinema in which visitors can take a ride in a giant BMW.



## Exhibition

As indicated earlier, the IAA is now more of a trade fair than a consumer car show. That is why there are mainly many suppliers of car parts to be found. This clearly shows that electric driving is the future, as combustion engines, spark plugs, exhaust pipes or gearboxes are simply no longer on offer. Without exception, the suppliers focus on batteries, electric motors and computers. The latter control the electric powertrain, provide extra safety and/or offer artificial intelligence in the car.

The component suppliers are also largely Chinese, so even European cars are gradually becoming Chinese under the skin. However, because the European Union wants to become strong and independent, European

pavilions have been set up. Here, manufacturers by country can present themselves to car makers.



The Netherlands for example has an orange pavilion. VDL, best known as a Dutch car factory, is presenting itself here as a supplier for self-driving cars. "SEKISUI" is a half-Japanese and half-Dutch company developing the car interior of the future. According to Seisaku, it is a waste that cars spend 80% to 90% of the time not being used, and it would therefore be better to put this space to good use. Seats can rotate, while buttons, screens and speakers have even been made invisible. This creates a useful extra space in which to work or relax.

## Conclusion

What does the future of mobility look like? Judging from the IAA 2025, it will be electric and Chinese. Although the German manufacturers are bravely soldiering on, their products are too little and too late. Chinese offerings are invariably more innovative and cheaper. On the other hand, sales figures show that European consumers are sticking with the familiar brands for now, which may explain why they are changing less rigorously.

The IAA is more of a trade fair than an event for car enthusiasts. Conversations with the many component suppliers also give the impression that electric driving is the future and that Chinese manufacturers are best placed to respond. ■