

# Black, blue shine bright for car owners

These colours have seen their popularity increase over the years but white still a top choice

DEEPAK PATEL

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India's love affair with black and blue cars is growing stronger. Once the understated choice, black has steadily climbed the popularity ladder — from just 14.8 per cent of buyers in 2021 to 20.2 per cent in 2024. Blue cars, too, have seen their moment in the sun, with their share inching up from 8.8 per cent to 10.9 per cent during the same period, according to data from JATO Dynamics reviewed by *Business Standard*.

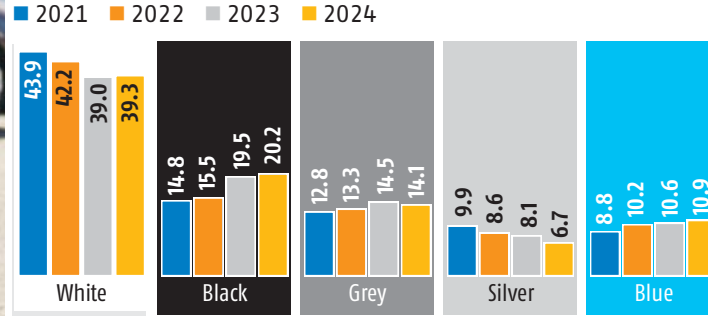
But even as darker hues gain traction, white remains the undisputed favourite, albeit with some turbulence. The share of white cars dipped from 43.9 per cent in 2021 to 42.2 per cent in 2022 and further plunged to 39 per cent in 2023. However, it made a modest recovery in 2024, reclaiming 39.3 per cent of the market.

Tarun Garg, chief operating officer of Hyundai Motor India (HMI), told *Business Standard*, "It is true that the popularity of black-coloured vehicles has



## FLYING COLOURS

Share of most popular car colours in total sales (%)



Note: December 2024 data is estimates; source: Jato Dynamics

increased over a period of time. Black colour contributed 9 per cent of HMI's domestic sales in 2021, rising to 19 per cent in 2024 (January–November 2024). However, white continues to be the most popular choice, exhibiting a steady contribution of around 54 per cent in the last four years of HMI's domestic sales."

Data from JATO Dynamics highlights a shift in Indian car colour preferences, with bold and vibrant shades gradually

gaining ground, though white continues to dominate for now. India appears to be aligning with global trends. According to a report by chemical firm BASF, black's popularity among global car buyers rose from 18 per cent in 2022 to 21 per cent in 2023, while white's share declined to 36 per cent during the same period.

Ajay Jain, head of global design strategy at Tata Motors, said, "The gradual decline in white could be due to several

reasons. Once upon a time, people would buy a car as a safe purchase, as it were, when considerations like repair costs, repainting costs, and resale value ranked high for the customer. That was the time when white was the colour most buyers would go for."

"With changes in tastes and preferences, there is an increased requirement for more expressive colours that can capture the essence of a car's boldness or premium appeal. Today,

buying a car is a much more personal and self-expressive act. People are prioritising their individual preferences and using their vehicles to stand out and express their personality," he added. He also talked about the shift towards black and blue-coloured cars in India. "The (blue and black) colours have gained traction due to their ability to project sophistication, individuality, and status. Today, black is viewed as high-fashion," Jain explained.

Ravi Bhatia, president of JATO Dynamics India, said that the 2021-2024 data shows how car buyers are balancing environmental factors, maintenance needs, and evolving tastes.

"Achromatic colours (black, white, and grey) lead with an 80.3 per cent market share. White's leadership stems from excellent heat reflection in tropical conditions. However, it shows every speck of dust, needing frequent cleaning. White's strong presence in micro cars (39.2 per cent) and hatchbacks (37.8 per cent) partly reflects its popularity in the taxi segment, where visibility and easier maintenance drive choices," Bhatia said.

On black colour's considerable rise in popularity, he observed: "Despite high heat absorption, black excels at hiding dust and minor scratches — crucial in Indian traffic. This explains its popularity in premium segments (31.18 per cent in coupés, 28.36 per cent in SUVs) where regular maintenance is feasible."

Among chromatic colours, blue leads with a 10.9 per cent share in 2024.