

Ditching my car for Uber saves me over 6 days of time and \$11,000 a year

KATHERINE KRUG, CONTRIBUTOR
FEB. 9, 2015, 1:04 PM

In 2010 I moved from Los Angeles to San Francisco and thought I had to bring my car with me.

LA, as anyone who's ever heard anyone say anything about LA knows, is a car city. If you're going anywhere, you're going in your car.

And after living there, I was convinced that this truth wasn't limited to any one city. Owning a car was necessary wherever you lived.



Katherine Krug

The author, shown here, is done paying for tickets.

My friends placed bets on how quickly I'd ditch my beloved Volkswagen Jetta for a bicycle, telling me about the bike lanes, the BART, and so on. I patiently listened as I jingled my car keys in my pocket, confused why anyone would ever think I'd let go of such control.

When I arrived in San Francisco, I drove to work every day. Having a car was freedom. It was going wherever I wanted, whenever I wanted. But slowly it started becoming a burden, both mental and financial.

That large dent someone anonymously gifted me on my driver's side door? *I can't turn my leased car in with that. Do I fix it now or later?* Those \$68 parking tickets that amassed so quickly? *But that's more than the cost of my lease each month!* The reasons kept piling up. Skyrocketing gas prices, flat tires, overnight parking, more hit and run gifts, a speeding ticket, smashed windows. That glow of freedom? It was from a bonfire fed by a never-ending stream of my money.

My \$271 per month car lease, which had seemed affordable, actually cost much more when I amortized my total expenditures. On average, my monthly expenses looked more like this:

Item	Cost	Time	Notes
Gas	\$232	1 hour	\$58 x 4 times a month + 10 minutes to find a station and fill up + 5 minutes of dread * 4 times a month
Insurance	\$108	35 minutes	3 hours to deal with repairs, 1 hour to set up my policy every 6 months, constantly trying to unsubscribe from my insurance company's emails and playing around on competitors' sites to make sure I was getting the best deal
Parking	\$336	9 hours	\$12 per day, on average + 18 minutes a day
Car washes	\$30	40 minutes	2 car washes a month
Tickets	\$396	20 minutes	\$500 for a red light ticket, \$172 for a speeding ticket and \$68 x 5 street cleaning and parking tickets a month (Don't judge me.)
Repairs	\$145	40 minutes	4 hours of stressing about each new ding, dent, and damage, 4 hours of taking my car in for estimates and repairs
Lease	\$271	45 minutes	4 hours to pick a car and testdrive (I used Swapalease so I didn't have to make a down payment), 3 hours to transfer lease and 2 hours to turn car in)
Total	\$1,518	13 hours	

Katherine Krug

Enter Uber and Lyft. Since giving up my car in October '13 I haven't waited more than 5 minutes from the moment I thought about needing a car to buckling my seatbelt. They hydrate me, tell me great stories, or, if I want, give me the space and time to do that last bit of work before a meeting. I don't look for parking, or worry about gas, or get upset if someone cuts me off on the highway. That's real freedom.

I also use GetAround — a platform that allows people to rent their neighbors' cars when they aren't using them — to run errands for a few hours, or when I want to hit the road for a weekend. GetAround cars are closer by and cheaper than any car rental company by a longshot.

Since giving up my car, I now spend an average of \$572 per month on transportation, which comes to \$11,352 per year in savings. On top of that, I get back my time, the most valuable thing of all. I save an average of 6.5 days per year — almost a full week! — to focus on the things I want to be doing, rather than serving my car.

Last year alone I used Uber in 17 different cities, including Rio de Janeiro and Manila. There's a chance I'll never own or lease a car again. I'm hopeful that in major cities, the networks of services like Uber and Lyft will swell so that people can get direct rides for the cost of public transportation. Car shares saved me time, energy, worry, and money. Crunch the numbers, and see what they can do for you.

Katherine Krug is an entrepreneur working at the cross-section of humanizing technology + behavior change psychology to help people be their best selves. She founded BetterBack, Everest, and Fundrah, and writes about personal development and leadership on her blog katherinekrug.com and for the Huffington Post. Follow her on Twitter [@katherinekrug](https://twitter.com/katherinekrug).

NOW WATCH: [This Flying Car Is Real And It Can Fly 430 Miles On A Full Tank](#)