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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## News Report

### If cars could run themselves

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Would you buy a car if you didn't have to drive it?

Would you travel in a car if there weren't a driver?

**Driverless cars** used to exist only in our dreams and in films. Now, they are **a reality**.

In 2014 the British government **approved trials** of driverless cars in four British cities.

This could, in time, lead to a revolution in the way we think about cars and car ownership.

Mike Hearn is a software developer who used to work for Google. He has **speculated** that if driverless cars became **commonplace**, most people wouldn't want or need to own a vehicle anymore.

He suggests that driverless cars may even own themselves. If, for example, self-driving taxis were **autonomous**, rather than being owned and run by big companies, journeys would become cheaper. The money they received would be used for their **running costs** plus a little extra for **upgrades**.

He imagines a time when these cars might work together and **pool their profits** to get a new car built to join them. In a way, as if the cars agree with each other to have a child.

At the moment these suggestions are purely **blue-sky thinking**, but the technologies that would be needed are likely to become available in the next 10 to 20 years.

How would you feel if your car had a baby?

### Vocabulary

#### **driverless cars**

cars that don't need a human to drive them

**a reality**

something that exists, is real

**approved trials**

officially agreed to tests

**speculated**

made a guess about what might happen

**commonplace**

not unusual

**autonomous**

independent, without an owner

**running costs**

day to day expenses such as fuel, parts and insurance

**upgrades**

improvements

**pool their profits**

add together the extra money they make

**blue-sky thinking**

theoretical, imaginary

This story is based on an original BBC News story:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-30998361>