BBC LEARNING ENGLISH
Take Away English 随身英语
Driverless cars 无人驾驶汽车

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Vocabulary: technology 词汇: 科技

I passed my driving test at the fourth attempt. You might think that means I'm not as safe as someone who passed first time. But would you feel safer with no driver at all? Maybe not, and it's for this reason that **automotive** firms have included **driver-assist** functions in their **prototype** driverless cars. This allows the human driver to take over if there is a problem.

Google is one **manufacturer** that has prototype driverless cars. These have been

Where's the driver?!

retrofitted with steering wheels and **conventional** controls to allow normal driving. But this is just a stage – the **vision** is to have fully automated cars very soon. The director of Google's self-drive project, Chris Urmson, hopes his 11-year-old son will never have to take a driving test. To achieve that, the cars need to be on the roads in five years. He says driverless cars will **drastically** reduce accidents and traffic jams.

According to Chris "Some 1.2 million people are killed on the roads around the world each year. That number is **equivalent** to a jet falling out of the sky every day."

He thinks gradual changes to existing car designs are not enough to deal with the problem. "If we are really going to make changes to our cities, get rid of parking lots, we need self-drive cars," he says.

Google's prototypes have **racked up** over a million kilometres on the road. They have also had to deal with unexpected situations, such as a child driving a toy car in the road, and a woman in an electric wheelchair chasing a duck. In each case, the car reacted safely.

Some are not convinced. Sven Beiker of Stanford University thinks driverless cars will still need human input in **extreme circumstances**. He also worries that people may forget how to **operate** their vehicles if they do not do it regularly. I guess I shouldn't throw away my driver's licence just yet.

词汇表请参看答案与词汇部分

Quiz 测验
阅读短文并回答问题。

1. How many times did the writer take a driving test?
2. What allows a human driver to take over in a driverless car?
3. What does Chris Urmson hope his son will never have to do?
4. How many people die in road accidents every year?
5. Who thinks people may forget how to drive if they don't do it regularly?

Exercise 练习
请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。从每个表格中选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. Ten miles is roughly _____ to 16 kilometres.

equivalent	driver-assist	automotive	conventional

2. I will only lend people money in _____ .

prototype	extreme circumstances	equivalent	vision

3. We _____ £200,000 in sales last year.

operated	racked up	retrofitted	assisted

4. We are building a _____ for a new type of bicycle.

prototype	equivalent	vision	automobile

5. The new cars will really boost the American _____ industry.

automotive	driver-assist	manufacturer	conventional

Answers and Glossary 答案与词汇

Quiz 小测验

1. How many times did the writer take a driving test? **Four.**
2. What allows a human driver to take over in a driverless car? **Driver-assist functions.**
3. What does Chris Urmson hope his son will never have to do? **Take a driving test.**
4. How many people die in road accidents every year? **1.2 million.**
5. Who thinks people may forget how to drive if they don't do it regularly? **Sven Beiker.**

Exercise 练习

1. Ten miles is roughly **equivalent** to 16 kilometres.

2. I will only lend people money in **extreme circumstances**.

3. We **racked up** £200,000 in sales last year.

4. We are building a **prototype** for a new type of bicycle.

5. The new cars will really boost the American **automotive** industry.

Glossary 词汇表

automotive	汽车
driver-assist	司机助手
prototype	全真模型
manufacturer	生厂商
retrofitted	重装
conventional	传统的
vision	愿景，目标
drastically	彻底地，大大地
equivalent	相当，等同
racked up	积累起来
extreme circumstances	极端条件（环境）
operate	运作，操作