

Just Press Go: Google's New Self-Driving Car Has No Steering Wheel or Brake

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Ever since we [started the Google self-driving car project](#) [1], we've been working toward the goal of vehicles that can shoulder the entire burden of driving. Just imagine: You can take a trip downtown at lunchtime without a 20-minute buffer to find parking. Seniors can keep their freedom even if they can't keep their car keys. And drunk and distracted driving? History.

We're now exploring what fully self-driving vehicles would look like by building some prototypes; they'll be designed to operate safely and autonomously without requiring human intervention. They won't have a steering wheel, accelerator pedal, or brake pedal... because they don't need them. Our software and sensors do all the work. The vehicles will be very basic — we want to learn from them and adapt them as quickly as possible — but they will take you where you want to go at the push of a button. And that's an important step toward improving road safety and transforming mobility for millions of people.

It was inspiring to start with a blank sheet of paper and ask, "What should be different about this kind of vehicle?" We started with the most important thing: safety. They have sensors that remove blind spots, and they can detect objects out to a distance of more than two football fields in all directions, which is especially helpful on [busy streets with lots of intersections](#) [2]. And we've capped the speed of these first vehicles at 25 mph. On the inside, we've designed for learning, not luxury, so we're light on creature comforts, but we'll have two seats (with seatbelts), a space for passengers' belongings, buttons to start and stop, and a screen that shows the route — and that's about it.

We're planning to build about a hundred prototype vehicles, and later this summer, our safety drivers will start testing early versions of these vehicles that have manual controls. If all goes well, we'd like to run a small pilot program here in California in the next couple of years. We're going to learn a lot from this experience, and if the technology develops as we hope, we'll work with partners to bring this technology into the world safely.

If you'd like to follow updates about the project and share your thoughts, please join us on our [new Google+ page](#) [3]. We're looking forward to learning more about what passengers want in a vehicle where their number one job is to kick back, relax, and enjoy the ride.

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Links:

[1] <http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2010/10/what-were-driving-at.html>

[2] <http://googleblog.blogspot.com/2014/04/the-latest-chapter-for-self-driving-car.html>

[3] <http://plus.google.com/+GoogleSelfDrivingCars>