

# 'Driverless driving' envisioned for Japan in early 2020s

July 5 2012, The Yomiuri Shimbun

---

In just 10 years or so, Japanese motorists may be traveling around comfortably, free from traffic jams and accidents, in a vehicle that drives itself.

Japan's the Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Ministry will soon embark on a project to realize an "autopilot system" for automatic driving, a system for guiding motor vehicles on expressways without human assistance.

The system is expected to contribute significantly to such goals as alleviating drivers' fatigue, preventing [road accidents](#) and easing [traffic congestion](#). It would be for vehicles referred to as self-driving cars capable of sensing their environment and navigating by themselves, with people not required to perform any mechanical operation besides choosing their destinations.

With a view to making an autopilot system a reality in the early 2020s, the ministry will launch a study panel of experts this year, to start full-scale discussions about a self-steering vehicle control project.

The ministry envisages an [autonomous vehicle](#) system in which, after leaving your home, motorists would enter an interchange of a nearby expressway while manually operating their cars.

When pulling into the expressway's lane exclusively for the autopilot system, the driving mode would change to "automatic driving" and input

your destination into the system. Motorists would take their hands and feet off the [steering wheel](#), gas pedal and brake.

Drivers would again be on their own only after reaching an intersection near their destinations. Until then, all driving tasks would be left to the self-steering system.

The system would prevent [human error](#) from causing road accidents in the automatic driving areas. It also would enable the elderly, who sometimes have difficulty making quick judgments and keeping attentive while driving, to use expressways safely.

(c)2012 The Yomiuri Shimbun (Tokyo)  
Distributed by MCT Information Services

Citation: 'Driverless driving' envisioned for Japan in early 2020s (2012, July 5) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-07-driverless-envisioned-japan-early-2020s.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.