

# Dubai debuts driverless minibus

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Dubai has launched a driverless ten-seater minibus service on a trial basis for a month

Dubai has unveiled its first driverless bus service, launching a month-long trial period for the electric vehicle with a view to expanding it across the futuristic Gulf city state.

The 10-seat vehicle made its first trip on Thursday along a 700-metre (2,300-foot) stretch of road in downtown Dubai, near to the Burj

Khalifa, the world's tallest tower.

Developed jointly by French group Easy Mile and Dubai-based Omnix, the minibus is powered by an electric motor and can hit speeds of 40 kilometres per hour (25 miles per hour).

But, thanks to cutting-edge guidance technology, its developers say the bus can adapt its speed to the surrounding environment and even come to a complete halt if a pedestrian were to cross its path.

It can be programmed to navigate between Dubai's main tourist attractions, including the Burj Khalifa, the Dubai Mall, Dubai Opera and the Souk al-Bahar shopping centre, the emirate's Road Transport Authority (RTA) said in a statement.

Thursday's test run was "the first and very important stage in our efforts to introduce this type of [vehicle](#) into Dubai's transport network," RTA official Ahmed Bahrozyan told AFP.

Mattar al-Tayer, the RTA's director general, said it aimed to have a quarter of all Dubai [transport](#) automated by 2030.

Dubai is a leading tourist destination in the Gulf, attracting 14.2 million visitors in 2015.

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