

What Is Next for the Future of Cars?

Welcome back to As It Is. I'm Kelly Jean Kelly.

Today we are talking about the future. More specifically, about the future of cars and driving.

VOA reporter Mike O'Sullivan visited the Los Angeles Auto Show in California. He says that technology is transforming cars.

For instance, the costly car company BMW is now selling electric vehicles.

The electric i3 model is made with lightweight carbon fiber. It also has the latest electronics to make driving safer.

The i3 includes a camera that lets the driver see the area behind the car. The camera also helps drivers with parking and changing lanes. The electronic system can also prevent drivers from crashing their car.

Theresa Moriarty works for BMW. She drove reporter Mike O'Sullivan through Los Angeles. She says using the brakes to stop or slow down helps add power to the battery.

"Any time you're not accelerating, the regenerative braking kicks on and the car will slow, adding some energy back to your

"Blue tooth is connecting."

The company General Motors, or GM, has built a Cadillac model that uses both gasoline and electricity. Stuart Fowle works for GM. He says the system lets drivers start the car when they are away from it. It also lets them see what is happening with the car from anywhere in the world.

"The smart phone app we have allows you to check your tire pressures, check your oil level or your oil life. It allows you to check your fuel level, how much range you have on that tank of fuel."

Owners of large groups of cars or trucks -- called fleets -- use technology to stay in contact with their vehicles. Joshua Turner works at Sprint Velocity, which helps create those connections.

“If, for instance, a fleet vehicle were to experience a flat tire, the system in the vehicle would be able to transmit that to the appropriate repair technician, and then also alert fleet management when that vehicle was able to come back online.”

Cars can already tell drivers where they can get fuel, as well as the cost of the fuel. David Jumpa works for Airbiquity. His company sells online vehicle services in 50 countries. Mr. Jumpa says cars will soon be able to share information with each other.

“Information that there’s ice on the road ahead, right, based on the information the previous car just passed up.”

Cars cannot yet talk to one another. But Mr. Jumpa says they will be able to in the future, as they become even more connected.



And that's As It Is. I'm Kelly Jean Kelly.

Thanks for listening. If you would like reach us, send an email to learningenglish@voanews.com.