



# New cars are too quiet

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Most people think that cars are too noisy, but some are now saying that the newest cars are too quiet!

Many new cars are much quieter than older models, because they are hybrid cars. These cars use both electric and gas motors. When using the electric motor, the car is so quiet that it is very hard to hear it while it is driving around. It is almost silent when it is moving slowly.

This is bad news for blind people. When blind people are walking across streets, they rely on their sense of hearing to know when cars are coming. If they can't hear the car, they could be in danger of being hit.

Japan, one of the top makers of hybrid cars in the world, is now considering ways to make their quiet cars safer. They are looking at ways to add sound-making devices to their cars, so that if a pedestrian is close to the car it will make a loud warning noise.

The Japanese government might even make it a law that hybrid cars must have these sound-making devices.



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[www.englishraven.com/wnk/20090709.html](http://www.englishraven.com/wnk/20090709.html)





# A. Reading Skills

**Word Power** – Use a dictionary and write down what these words mean:

- ① hybrid           ⇒
- ② electric         ⇒
- ③ silent            ⇒
- ④ blind             ⇒
- ⑤ rely (on)        ⇒

- ⑥ sense            ⇒
- ⑦ consider         ⇒
- ⑧ device           ⇒
- ⑨ pedestrian       ⇒
- ⑩ law               ⇒

## Reading Questions

**①** What makes hybrid cars so quiet?

- A. Their size
- B. Their fast speed
- C. Their tyres
- D. Their electric motors

**②** These cars are bad news for...

- A. Blind drivers
- B. Fast drivers
- C. Blind pedestrians
- D. Noisy pedestrians

**③** Why are quiet cars dangerous for blind people?

\_\_\_\_\_

**④** How might Japan make their hybrid cars safer for blind people?

\_\_\_\_\_

**⑤** Why do you think hybrid cars are becoming so popular?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





## B. News Extra: Two-in-one cars



Listen to this News Extra! [www.englishraven.com/wnk/20090709.html](http://www.englishraven.com/wnk/20090709.html)



### Missing words help

environment | move | sources  
used to | moment | electric | hill  
time | world | means | reduce  
greenhouse | which

### Listen and fill in the gaps

Hybrid means “two” – or “two \_\_\_\_\_.” For hybrid vehicles, \_\_\_\_\_ there are two kinds of energy \_\_\_\_\_. One is the normal gas (or petrol), which we are all \_\_\_\_\_ in cars. The other is a new electric power source, \_\_\_\_\_ a special battery in the back of the car.

These \_\_\_\_\_ make the car use fuel and energy more efficiently. For example, when the car needs to go fast or \_\_\_\_\_, it can use gas – which is usually more powerful. However, when it is starting, driving slowly, or \_\_\_\_\_, the car can \_\_\_\_\_ coming from its battery.

Hybrid cars are \_\_\_\_\_, because they use less petrol and \_\_\_\_\_ gases. They are also quieter, which \_\_\_\_\_ noise pollution.

Japanese car makers are producing the most hybrid cars \_\_\_\_\_. Companies like Toyota, Honda and Nissan are selling a lot of hybrid cars \_\_\_\_\_.

### True or False?

- ① “Hybrid” means one only. T / F
- ② Hybrid cars can use both gas and electricity. T / F
- ③ Electric power is stronger than gas (or petrol). T / F
- ④ Hybrid cars create more noise pollution than regular cars. T / F
- ⑤ Japan is leading in the production of hybrid cars. T / F





## C. Talk Time!

### Person A

- ⇒ **Can you give me a lift to school?**
- B. What for? You can walk.
- ⇒ **But I'm in a hurry. I'm gonna be late for school!**
- B. Not if you run. Off you go!
- ⇒ **Run? You want me to *run* to school?**
- B. Sure! I can't remember the last time I saw you run... It'll be good for you.
- ⇒ **Good? I'll be all hot and sweaty! Can't you just drive me? Please?**

### Person B

- A. Can you give me a lift to school?
- ⇒ **What for? You can walk.**
- A. But I'm in a hurry. I'm gonna be late for school!
- ⇒ **Not if you run. Off you go!**
- A. Run? You want me to *run* to school?
- ⇒ **Sure! I can't remember the last time I saw you run... It'll be good for you.**
- A. Good? I'll be all hot and sweaty! Can't you just drive me? Please?

### Ask the class!

- ❶ Where are we?  
⇒ *At home.*
- ❷ What do I want my parent to do?  
⇒ *Drive me to school.*
- ❸ Why don't I want to run to school?  
⇒ *I'll be all hot and sweaty.*
- ❹ How did I first say "please drive me"?  
⇒ *Can you give me a lift?*

### Ask the class!

- ❶ Who am I?  
⇒ *A parent (mum or dad).*
- ❷ Do I want to drive him/her to school?  
⇒ *No.*
- ❸ I think he/she should run because...?  
⇒ *It'll be good for him/her.*
- ❹ How did I say "go now"?  
⇒ *Off you go!*





## D. Class Discussion

Questions	<p>❶ Do you think your family uses the car more often than they should? Why?</p>	<p>❷ What is good and bad about using cars for transportation?</p>	<p>❸ Do you want to buy a hybrid car when you grow up? Why/why not?</p>
<u>MY</u> Answers			
Friend 1			
Friend 2			
Friend 3			









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## Teacher's Notes

For ideas on how to apply various activities with the different lesson stages, please visit:

[http://www.englishraven.com/wnk\\_teachers.html](http://www.englishraven.com/wnk_teachers.html)



Link to archive version of news page:

[www.englishraven.com/wnk/20090709.html](http://www.englishraven.com/wnk/20090709.html)

## Answer Keys:

### A. Reading Skills

- ① D    ② C    ③ They can't hear them coming
- ④ They might add sound-making devices
- ⑤ (Open question) Example: they are cheaper, make less pollution, make less noise, etc.

### B. News Extra: Two-in-one cars

Hybrid means "two" – or "two **at the same time.**" For hybrid vehicles, **this means that** there are two kinds of energy **to make them move.** One is the normal gas (or petrol), which we are all **used to seeing** in cars. The other is a new electric power source, **which comes from** a special battery in the back of the car.

These **two power sources** make the car use fuel and energy more efficiently. For example, when the car needs to go fast or **climb up a hill**, it can use gas – which is usually more powerful. However, when it is starting, driving slowly, or **coming down a hill**, the car can **change to electric power** coming from its battery.

Hybrid cars are **better for the environment**, because they use less petrol and **put out less greenhouse** gases. They are also quieter, which **helps to reduce** noise pollution.

Japanese car makers are producing the most hybrid cars **at the moment.** Companies like Toyota, Honda and Nissan are selling a lot of hybrid cars **all over the world.**

#### True or False?

- ① F    ② T    ③ F    ④ F    ⑤ T

