
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute English

New transport on two wheels



Note: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Finn

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English. I'm Finn...

Neil

... and I'm Neil. Hello.

Finn

Today we're talking about one of the latest forms of transport on two wheels.

Neil

Yes. We're not talking about bicycles here.

Finn

No, we're talking about a... self-balancing transport **device**. What a complicated name! Now a device is an object which has been created for a particular purpose. But yes, you need to **balance** on this device which means you need to stand on it and not fall over.

Neil

Well this device has other names as well. It's called a **rideable** because you ride on it like you ride on a bicycle – or you can call it a self-balancing **scooter** - or others call it a hoverboard.

Finn

That's perhaps because it looks like a **skateboard** perhaps... but it's different, isn't it?

Neil

Yes it is, it is a bit different. And we'll be finding out more about hoverboards in a moment, but first it's time for our quiz question. I'm going to make a statement and I want you to tell me Finn if it is true or false. OK?

Finn

OK.

Neil

Here in the UK, it's **illegal** to ride a hoverboard on the **pavement**. Is that true or false, Finn? What do you think?

Finn

Well, I've actually seen someone riding a hoverboard on the pavement so I'll say it's false. I think it's legal to ride one on the pavement.

Neil

OK, then. We'll see if you're right at the end of the programme.

Finn

OK. So, Neil have you ever tried riding on a hoverboard?

Neil

No, I haven't, but I would like to give it a go. It looks like a skateboard, but it is different – it moves differently – and it goes in a different direction – it goes... sideways.

Finn

Yes. And, you know, the other big difference is that it is motorised. And when you change your balance the wheels turn. So when you lean forwards – you move forwards – and when you lean back you slow down and stop... and if you lean even further back, then you actually move backwards.

Neil

Yes. So it's hard to keep your balance. Like a skateboard, you need to practise to get good at this.

Finn

And I'm no good at skateboards. And I think, you know, if you don't practise you'll fall off the hoverboard lots of times.

Neil

BBC reporter Emma Ailes has tried a hoverboard. Who else has tried one of these rideables? Listen to her report.

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Emma Ailes, BBC Reporter

So you may have seen in recent weeks **celebrities** like Justin Bieber and Lily Allen riding one of these. It's a self-balancing transportation device or some people call them rideables. I've never had a go but I am going to **integrate** one into my life for the next couple of days and see how I **get on**.

Neil

And that was the BBC reporter Emma Ailes. She said that she's going to **integrate** riding a hoverboard into her everyday life and so perhaps she'll travel to the BBC on a hoverboard. Now to integrate means to combine things to make them more efficient.

Finn

Or maybe she'll go shopping on a hoverboard. Now she talked about **celebrities** – famous people - who are using a hoverboard.

Neil

Yeah. She mentioned two celebrities – singers Lily Allen – who's British. And Justin Bieber - he's from Canada. So people are using hoverboards all over the world.

Finn

Neil, you were telling me about a guy you saw last weekend.

Neil

Yes, I was at a shopping centre and there were all these kids – teenagers - watching this guy using a hoverboard. Of course they all wanted to try it. You could hear them shouting, "Can I have a go? Can I have a go? Can I **have a go**?" Now, to have a go means to try something.

Finn

Yes. Now what was our reporter's experience of using a hoverboard? How did she get on? Did she learn how to use it? Did she enjoy using it?

INSERT

Emma Ailes

So overall this is really good fun and I definitely recommend **giving it a go**. But there are some **downsides**. It's really heavy, it's illegal to use it on the pavement and it's quite embarrassing being stared at. So are two wheels better than two legs? For me, probably not.

Finn

So that was the BBC reporter Emma once again. And she tried to use the two wheels of the hoverboard to move around but she said she prefers moving with her two legs.

Neil

But she did say this about using a hoverboard – it's good fun and she definitely recommends that people try it – they should **give it a go**!

Finn

But she said there are also some **downsides** – some bad things. First, it's heavy.

Neil

Yes, it's not very easy carrying a heavy hoverboard.

Finn

Also when she uses it everyone looks at her and they don't stop looking – they stare at her and she says that's embarrassing.

Neil

And there is one more downside about using a self-balancing scooter. And this is also the answer to our quiz question... I asked if it's true or false that it's illegal to ride a hoverboard on the pavement in the UK.

Finn

And I said that it's false.

Neil

And you are... wrong. It's illegal. There is a law here about that.

Finn

Yes, I realised I guessed the wrong answer when I heard that clip from Emma's report there.

Neil

Yes. Their use is illegal under Section 72 of the Highway Act 1835 for use on the public pavements and roads in the UK.

Finn

Oh, very impressive, Neil. Now, you can use a hoverboard, I've heard, on **private property** if you have permission from the owner but **NOT** on public pavements and roads.

Neil

OK. Well, next time you see your friend Justin Bieber, Finn, tell him that.

Finn

I will. Now, that's all for today. Please do join us again soon.

Neil

Please do. And let's hear the words before we go.

Finn

OK. We heard:

device

balance

pavement

scooter

skateboard

celebrities

to get on

to have a go

illegal

and private property

That is it now. And we'll see you next time.

Neil

Goodbye!

Vocabulary

device

an object invented for a certain purpose

to balance

to stand (on something) without falling over

pavement

the hard path you walk on next to a road ('sidewalk' in American English)

scooter

a board with wheels and handlebars you stand on with one foot and push with the other to travel

skateboard

a board with wheels you stand on with one foot and push with the other to travel

celebrities

famous people, for example pop stars

to get on

(here) to be successful, to manage

to have a go

to try to do something

illegal

not legal, against the law

private property

land and/or buildings that belong to someone, not to the public