XPeng to launch two-seat flying vehicle in China

LEVEL A2/B1


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I. WARM-UP

1. Have you ever flown in a helicopter or small plane?
2. Would you try a new kind of transport? Why or why not?
3. Have you ever seen a drone? What was it doing?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

autopilot
a system that flies a vehicle by itself after you set a route

rural
relating to the countryside, not the city

emergency
a serious and sudden problem that needs quick action

drone
an aircraft that can fly without a pilot controlling it

joystick
a control stick you move with your hand to steer

propeller
a set of spinning blades that push air to lift or move a vehicle

prototype
the first working model of a new product

approve
to officially say something is allowed

III. READING

Chinese company XPeng says a two-seat 'flying car' could be used from summer 2027. Deli Zhao, who leads XPeng's flying-car company Aridge, said the $300,000 low-altitude device is for recreational users in rural areas and emergency services.

After ten years of trials in Guangzhou, China's civil aviation authority has approved it for limited use. The cockpit is about the size of a Fiat 500. Six battery-powered propellers lift the vehicle, and a joystick steers it. It can fly on autopilot to a set destination.

The vehicle has no wheels and is a helicopter-style drone. It unfolds from a six-wheel van, 'just like the Transformers'. A prototype drew large crowds at the Web Summit in Lisbon. XPeng says no one has been hurt in tests.

The range is 30km and it can cruise up to 1km high, but flights must stay in approved park areas or be for rescue work in hard-to-reach places.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **The Guardian***: "'Flying cars' could launch in China next...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. When does XPeng say the vehicle could start being used?
2. Who are the first users XPeng is targeting?
3. Which authority has approved the vehicle for limited use?
4. How is the vehicle lifted and steered?
5. Where will flights be allowed, according to the plan?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Would you feel safe in a vehicle on autopilot? Why or why not?
2. Should these vehicles cost less to reach more people?
3. Where in your country could a 30km range be useful?
4. What rules would you have to make for flying vehicles?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Have to

Use have to to show necessity. Form: I/you/we/they have to + verb; he/she/it has to + verb. Negative: don't/doesn't have to = no need.

> *"By law, pilots* **have to stay** *in approved park areas."*
> *"Recreational users* **don't have to** *be emergency staff."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with have to / has to (or the negative).

1. Before takeoff, pilots (complete) ___ a safety check. _____
2. For rescue work, a pilot (reach) ___ remote places fast. _____
3. During training, trainees (practise) ___ with the joystick. _____
4. To use autopilot, users (set) ___ a destination. _____
5. In training, pilots (not/carry) ___ passengers. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 8 minutes vocabulary, 10 minutes reading, 10 minutes comprehension, 8–10 minutes grammar, 10 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach brand and place names by saying XPeng is a Chinese company and Lisbon is a city in Portugal; use images of a joystick and propeller to support meaning.
- For reading, set a gist task (What is XPeng launching and when?), then scan for numbers (price, range, height) and uses; pair-check before whole-class feedback.
- In discussion, keep the focus on transport and safety rules rather than personal flying experiences; allow students to answer about their town or a nearby rural area if they prefer.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Elicit quick fears first, then ask for one safety feature that would change their mind.
2. If most say yes, pair them with a partner who disagrees and swap reasons.
3. Have students name a real route near them and check if 30km covers it.
4. Board three rule areas (where, who, how). Ask each group to write one clear rule.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Writing: In pairs, write a 60-word safety notice for an approved park area where the craft can fly.

Debate: Half the class argues for city use in the future, half argues to keep it to rural parks; 6 minutes prep, 6 minutes debate.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Have to

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. When does XPeng say the vehicle could start being used?
   From summer 2027.
2. Who are the first users XPeng is targeting?
   Recreational users in rural areas and emergency services.
3. Which authority has approved the vehicle for limited use?
   China's civil aviation authority.
4. How is the vehicle lifted and steered?
   By six battery-powered propellers and a joystick.
5. Where will flights be allowed, according to the plan?
   In approved park areas or for rescue work in hard-to-reach places.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Use have to to show necessity. Form: I/you/we/they have to + verb; he/she/it has to + verb. Negative: don't/doesn't have to = no need. (Examples constructed.)

> *"By law, pilots* **have to stay** *in approved park areas."*
>
> *"Recreational users* **don't have to** *be emergency staff."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with have to / has to (or the negative).

1. Before takeoff, pilots ___ a safety check. **have to complete**
2. For rescue work, a pilot ___ remote places fast. **has to reach**
3. During training, trainees ___ with the joystick. **have to practise**
4. To use autopilot, users ___ a destination. **have to set**
5. In training, pilots ___ passengers. **don't have to carry / do not have to carry**