

Hyundai to test self-driving car service in California

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Hyundai, the South Korean auto giant, is the latest to unveil plans for autonomous ride-sharing in the United States

Hyundai on Friday announced that it will begin testing a self-driving ride service in Southern California next month.

The South Korean automaker said that it collaborated with technology group Pony.ai and rideshare firm Via for an on-demand service called BotRide that will offer free rides in [autonomous vehicles](#) in the city of Irvine starting on November 4.

"The pilot introduces BotRide to several hundred Irvine residents, including [college students](#)," said Hyundai Motor Company head of business development, strategy and technology Christopher Chang.

"The goal is to study [consumer behavior](#) in an autonomous ride-sharing environment."

People taking part in the pilot will be able to use a BotRide smartphone app to hail autonomous Kona electric sport utility vehicles, according to Hyundai.

Via software will coordinate shared rides from designated pick-up or drop-off points, and vehicles will be outfitted with Pony.ai self-driving technology, Hyundai said.

The area being covered by BotRide includes residential, commercial, and "institutional points of interest," according to the company.

"The BotRide pilot represents an important step in the deployment and eventual commercialization of a growing new mobility business," said Hyundai Motor America advance product strategy manager Daniel Han.

Hyundai is the latest to deploy autonomous rides in the US market.

Services in various stages of deployment are in the works from former Google car unit Waymo, General Motors' autonomous car division Cruise and electric carmaker Tesla.

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