

A wheeled car, quadruped and humanoid robot: Swiss-Mile Robot from ETH Zurich

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Credit: Swiss-Mile

A team at Swiss-Mile, a spinoff of ETH Zurich has improved upon its ANYmal robot by giving it wheels—the result is known as the Swiss-Mile Robot. And by giving it wheels, the robot is now classified as a car, a quadruped and a humanoid robot, depending on its activity at any given time. Like the original ANYmal, the Swiss-Mile has a cartoonish look about it, as if it rolled out of one of the Pixar "Cars" movies.

It is also deceptively agile. In car mode, it rolls on the ground like a remote-controlled toy car but with much better abilities. It can roll up and down stairs and over objects it has never encountered without hesitation. It keeps on rolling with gusto, moving over any obstacle in its path, lifting up whatever wheels may need lifting, making it a rolling, stepping quadruped. But then it lifts its front end off the ground and rolls or walks on its two rear wheels, like a human on roller skates. Adding [wheel](#) lock has really given the robot a lot of options, allowing it to stop rolling, if need be, and to walk on two or four feet.

Watching the Swiss-Mile in action, such as in [this YouTube video](#) or [this one](#), one thing is very clear: Wheels are much more efficient in many instances than feet. The robot looks eager to go as it rolls around engaging in acts of nimble agility. Also, unlike Big Dog or its cousins, Swiss-Mile never seems to lose its cool or to hesitate. It never looks afraid to plow forward, like a puppy who has not yet learned that sometimes doing stuff can hurt or result in damage.

In speaking with the press, officials with Swiss-Mile, said that the point of giving the robot so many capabilities is to make it more of a viable purchase opportunity for a wide variety of customers. They suggest it could lift packages from shelves, for example, and then carry them to destinations regardless of terrain. They plan to start selling the [robot](#) some time next year, though they have not yet revealed what its price tag may be.

More information: www.swiss-mile.com/

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