

What are the most effective ways to get cars out of cities?

Level 2: Intermediate

1 Warmer

- a. These cities are the six greenest cities in the world, from an environmental point of view. Put them in order from 1 (the greenest) to 6 (the least green of the six).

New York City, USA

London, UK

Chicago, USA

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Copenhagen, Denmark

Auckland, New Zealand

2 Key words

- a. Find the following words in the text. The paragraph numbers are given to help you.

1. a noun meaning *something good that you receive because of something you have done*
_____ (paragraph 1)

2. a noun meaning *the result of making something smaller or less in amount*
_____ (paragraph 2)

3. a verb meaning *share a car with other members of your group so that you only use one car*
_____ (paragraph 3)

4. an adjective meaning *likely to be successful or very good* _____
(paragraph 4)

5. a noun meaning *a bus or train that makes frequent short journeys between two places*
_____ (paragraph 5)

6. a noun meaning *a reduction in the price of something* _____ (paragraph 6)

7. a verb meaning *change from one thing to another* _____ (paragraph 7)

8. a verb meaning *ask someone to pay an amount of money for something*
_____ (paragraph 8)

9. a verb meaning *work together with someone in order to produce something*
_____ (paragraph 9)

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10. an adjective meaning *full of traffic* _____ (paragraph 10)
11. a two-word noun meaning *a part of a road that only bicycles can use*
_____ (paragraph 11)
12. an adjective meaning *very large* _____ (paragraph 12)

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16 April, 2022

Ranked: 12 ways to reduce car use in cities

12. Apps for sustainable mobility

- 1 Mobile-phone technology is, unsurprisingly, a growing aspect of strategies to reduce car use. The Italian city of Bologna, for example, developed an app with which users could get points for walking, cycling and use of public transport and exchange these points for rewards. An impressive 73% of users said they used their car “less”.

11. Personalized travel plans

- 2 Many cities have experimented with personal travel plans for individual residents, including Marseille, France, Munich, Germany, Maastricht, the Netherlands and San Sebastian, Spain. These programmes – providing planning for city residents to walk, cycle or use (sometimes discounted) public transport – have achieved reductions of 6–12%.

10. School travel planning

- 3 Two English cities – Brighton and Norwich – have used school travel planning to encourage parents and pupils to walk, cycle or carpool to school. Norwich was able to reduce the share of car use for school trips by 10.9%.

9. Car sharing

- 4 Car-share schemes, where members can easily rent a nearby vehicle for a few hours, have shown promising results in Bremen, Germany and Genoa, Italy, with each shared car replacing between 12 and 15 private vehicles.

8. Mobility services for universities

- 5 The Sicilian city of Catania offered students a free public-transport pass and provided shuttle connections to campus. The city achieved a 24% decrease in the number of students commuting by car to campus.

7. University travel planning

- 6 The University of Bristol promoted public transport and managed parking on campus. This reduced car use among its staff by 27% while providing them with improved bike infrastructure and public-transport discounts.

6. Workplace travel planning

- 7 A major 2010 study in the UK and found that 18% of commuters switched from car to another mode of transport if their companies used travel strategies to encourage employees to end their car commutes, including company shuttle buses, discounts for public transport and improved bike infrastructure, as well as reduced parking spaces.

5. Workplace parking charges

- 8 Introducing workplace parking charges is another effective method. The Dutch port city of Rotterdam achieved a 20–25% reduction in employee car commutes through a scheme that charged employees to park outside their offices.

4. Mobility services for commuters

- 9 The most effective measure was in the Dutch city of Utrecht. Local companies collaborated to provide free public-transport passes to employees, combined with a private shuttle bus to connect transit stops with workplaces. This programme achieved a 37% reduction in the number of commuters travelling into the city centre by car.

3. Limited traffic zones

- 10 Rome, traditionally one of Europe's most congested cities, has restricted car entry to the city centre at certain times of day to residents only, plus those who pay an annual fee. This has reduced car traffic in the Italian capital by 20% during the restricted hours.

2. Parking and traffic controls

- 11 In some European cities, removing parking spaces and replacing them with car-free streets, bike lanes and walkways has proved successful. In Oslo, this reduced car usage in the centre of the Norwegian capital by up to 19%.

1. Congestion charges

- 12 Drivers must pay to enter the city centre, with the money going towards alternative means of sustainable transport. London, which was one of the first places to introduce this strategy, has reduced city-centre traffic by a whopping 33% since the charge's introduction in February, 2003.

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3 Comprehension check

a. Are these statements True (T) or False (F) according to the article? Correct any that are false.

1. 73% of drivers in Bologna say they use their car "less".
2. School travel planning in Norwich has reduced car use for school trips by 10.9%.
3. Results of car sharing in Bremen and Genoa have been positive.
4. Students in Catania, Sicily now have to walk to the campus.
5. Commuters may switch from using their cars if their companies offer them alternatives.
6. In Rotterdam, some people have to pay to park outside their offices.
7. Public transport is free in Utrecht.
8. Rome has been one of the most congested cities in Europe for a long time.
9. Parking spaces have been removed in Oslo.
10. Everyone now has to pay to enter the centre of London.

4 Key language

a. Rearrange the words to make phrases from the text.

1. most cities one Europe's of congested
2. of transport alternative means sustainable
3. decrease of number % students a the 24 in
4. car to strategies use reduce
5. travel residents for personal plans individual
6. outside a employees offices park scheme that charged to their

5 Discussion

a. Discuss these statements.

- "All public transport should be free."
- "Cars should not be allowed to enter city centres."

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6 In your own words

a. Use a search engine to find out more about congestion charges. Find examples of different cities that have introduced congestion charges.

- How much do they charge?
- What times are restricted?
- What alternative methods of transport exist?
- Which, if any, of the ideas in the article do they use?

Find more information if possible. Present your findings to the class.