

READING

# Smart cities

**LEVEL**

Upper-Intermediate  
(B2)

**NUMBER**

EN\_B2\_2033R

**LANGUAGE**

English

## Learning outcomes

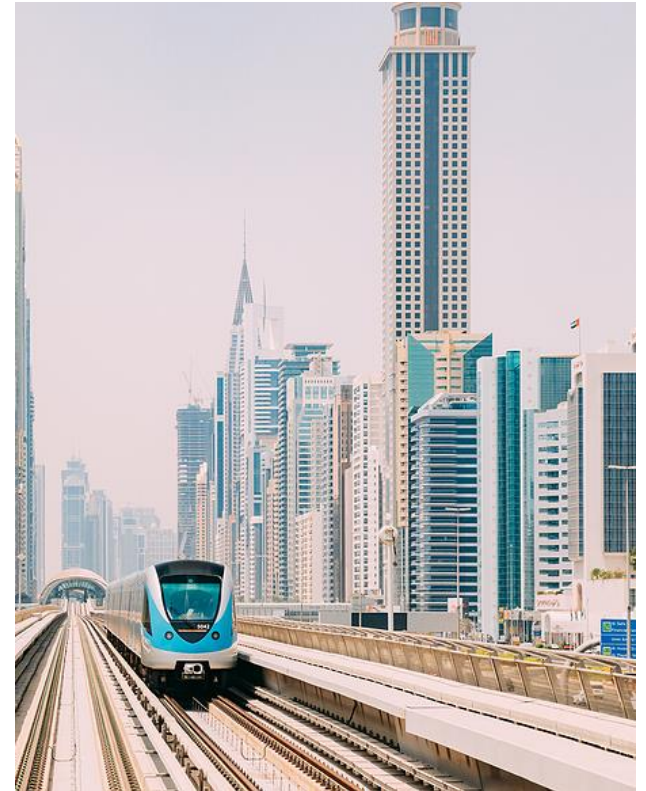
- I can read and understand the main points of a text on smart cities.
- I can explain the impact of technology on our society and discuss its advantages and disadvantages.



## Warm-up

**How can a city be  
'smart'?**

**Share your ideas with the rest  
of the class!**



# Smart cities (1/2)

**Read** the first part of the text.

Urbanisation is a trend with no end. It is estimated that up to 66% of all people will live in cities by 2050. At the forefront of potential problems that this may cause are environmental, social, and economic sustainability. The smart city is one solution.

A smart city is a framework that is mostly composed of communication technologies that allow an ecosystem of connected devices to improve our daily lives.

These devices can be, for example, your car, phone, or home. Integrating these sorts of things with a city's infrastructure can lead to decreased traffic congestion, and improved energy distribution and rubbish collection.





## Smart cities (2/2)

**Read** the second part of the text.

Wireless connectivity is changing the way we see and control traditional elements in our daily lives. Streetlights with sensors are able to detect available parking spaces and alert drivers to where they might also be able to charge their cars. Additionally, these streetlights can turn themselves off, saving energy, and turn back on when they sense a car or person in close proximity.

High-powered LEDs can alert commuters of traffic congestion and re-route them and, at the same time, provide severe weather warnings.

Rubbish bins can send data to the waste management authorities, alerting them to pick up the bins when they are nearly full, rather than the inefficient method of a weekly schedule, which may or may not be needed at all.





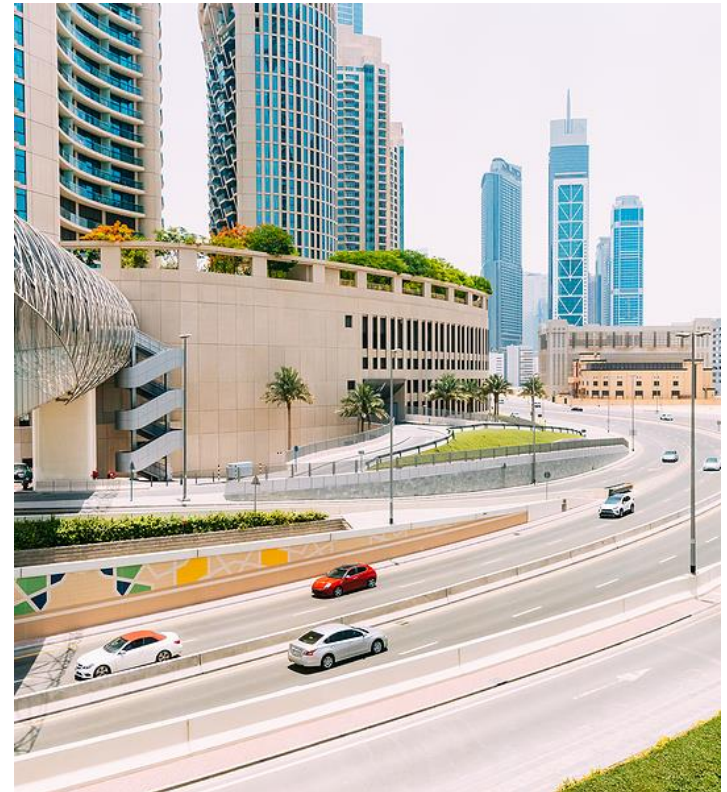
# Summarise

According to the **text**, what can each device listed below do to provide greater efficiency?

1 Streetlights with sensors

2 LEDs

3 Rubbish bins





# Discuss

Answer the questions below.

**Are there any other devices that provide greater efficiency in your town or city?**



**What are some drawbacks of smart cities?**

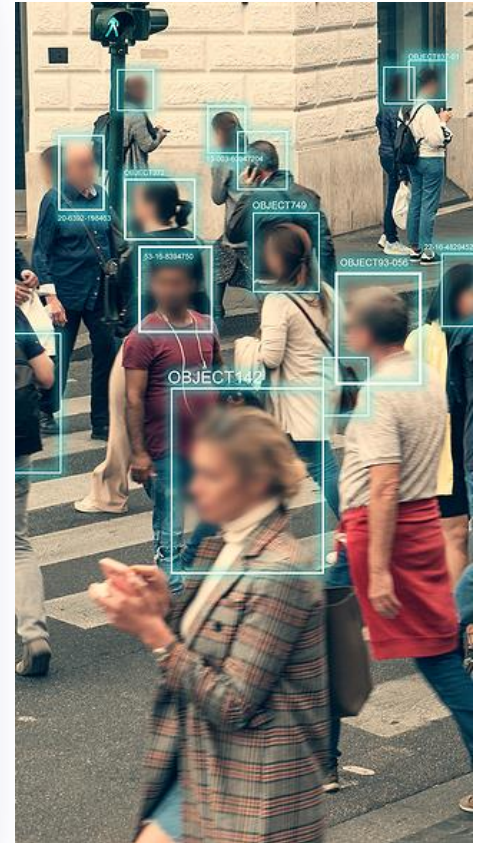


# The drawbacks of smart cities (1/2)

**Read** the second part of the text.

However, smart cities also come with their drawbacks. One argument against the implementation of smart cities is that it will cause people to become even more reliant on technology and oblivious to their surroundings. It's quite common these days to have a person walking down the street, staring into their smart phone, unaware of their surroundings. These people cross the street at a red light, bump into strangers, or even fall into dangerous construction sites!

The implementation of technologies, which requires even less human effort, could mean that we forget how to do basic tasks - like parking or finding our car in a crowded area. If this technology were to somehow go offline for several hours or days, it could cause mass confusion and disorder.





# ”

## The drawbacks of smart cities (2/2)

1. **Read** the second part of the text.
2. Then **answer** the question below.

Another argument against smart cities is data and security protection.

With so many sensor-infused devices, there is no limit to the surveillance that could take place. Your personal data, payment information, whereabouts, spending and travelling habits are all pieces of data that can be collected, processed and analysed for any number of reasons. This could lead to predictive policing, personal privacy violations and easier payment theft.



Have you, or anyone that you know, ever had your credit card information stolen?  
What happened?



# True or false

1. **Read** the statements.
2. **Decide** if they are *true* or *false*.

		true	false
1	One argument against the implementation of smart cities is that it will cause people to become hyper aware of their surroundings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	If smart technology were to somehow go offline for several hours, mass confusion could arise.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	The implementation of smart technologies could mean that we forget how to do basic tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Data and security protection are not serious concerns when it comes to the implementation of smart cities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Though pieces of personal data might be collected and analysed, payment theft is a near impossibility.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



She is totally **oblivious** to her surroundings!

Smart cities will cause people to become even more reliant on technology and **oblivious** to their surroundings.

Do you agree or disagree?



# Find out more about your classmates

1. In breakout rooms or together as a class, **ask** a classmate the questions below.

Have you ever forgotten where you parked your car?

Do you check your phone while walking?

Are there security cameras installed in the town or city where you live?

What is the 'smartest' technology in your town or city?



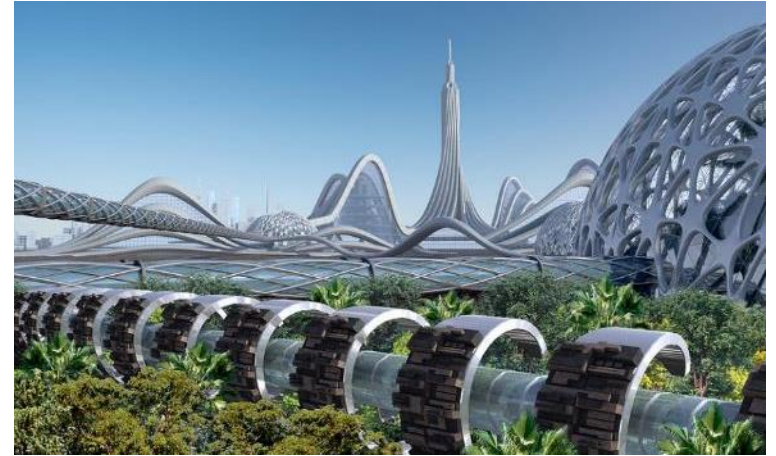




# Discuss

Answer the questions below.

**What do you think your city will look like in 50 years?**



**Zero-waste, sustainability, infrastructure.**

**How do you think smart cities will address these issues?**



# End of the lesson

Idiom

***to pull the plug***

**Meaning:** to stop something immediately

**Example:** Unfortunately, I've decided to pull the plug on this project.



# Additional practice

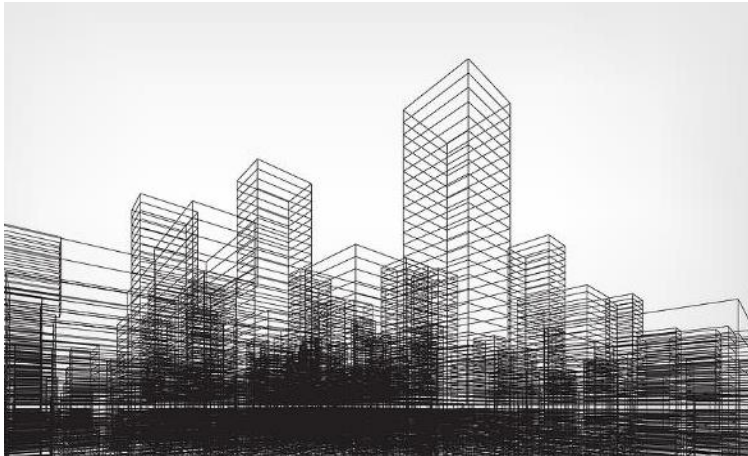




# Discuss

**Answer** the two questions below.

**Do you think people were more aware of their surroundings 50 years ago?**



**What do you think is the smartest city in the world? Why?**



# Your smart city

It's time to develop your own smart city!

1. **Answer** the questions below.
2. **Share** your smart city with the rest of the class.

1 What is your smart city known for?

2 How do people in your smart city commute?

3 What kind of job opportunities are there in your smart city?





# Reading

1. **Read** the text.
2. **Answer** the question below.

While there will always be sceptics when it comes to technology and smart cities, what's clear is that governments and companies will have to convincingly demonstrate that data gathering is used only to enhance and improve our quality of life.

While the sky may be the limit for the technology, it will be interesting to see how it evolves and expands in the near future.



How do you think governments and companies can demonstrate that data gathering will enhance our quality of life?



# Answer key

**p.10:** 1.) f 2.) t 3.) t 4.) f 5.) f





# Summary

## Smart cities

- *urbanisation; sustainability; devices; to integrate; connectivity; infrastructure; sensor*
- *Streetlights with **sensors** are able to detect available parking spaces.*
- ***Integrating** technology into a city's **infrastructure** can lead to decreased traffic congestion.*

## Describing drawbacks to smart cities

- *To cause someone to; oblivious; over-reliant; confusion; disorder; surveillance*
- *If this technology went offline for several days, it could **cause** mass **confusion** and **disorder**.*
- *There is no limit to the **surveillance** that could take place.*



# Vocabulary

sensor

drawback

oblivious

zero-waste

sustainability

infrastructure

