

Project Proposal

Project Name: Item Retrieval Robotics Assistant

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Introduction

- **Problem**

When someone with a leg injury or mobility issues needs to retrieve items from another room at home, it can be quite inconvenient. Without assistance from others, they often need to rely on crutches or wheelchairs to reach the location of the item and pick it up, then return. While this may seem like a simple task, for those with limited mobility it can be very exhausting and inconvenient. Therefore, having a device that can help these individuals retrieve and deliver items they need would make their lives much easier.

- **Solution**

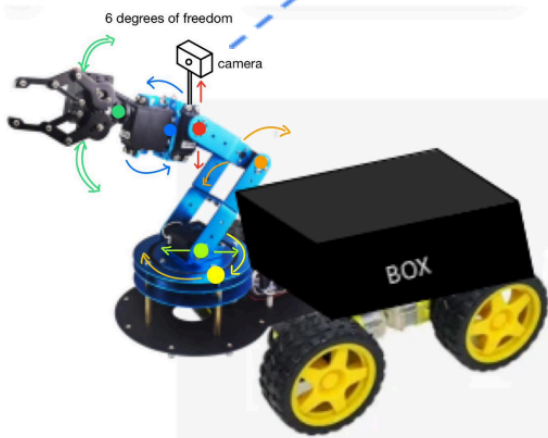
Our project is a remote-controlled car equipped with a robotic arm, designed to enable people to retrieve objects without the need to move. Users can operate the movement of the car and the robotic arm using joysticks on the controller. The remote controller features a screen that displays the camera feed from the robotic arm, allowing users to see the car's surroundings and select items they want to pick up. After the robotic arm picks up an item, it will flip backwards and put the item into the box on the car. In addition, for items stored at heights, users can utilize the telescopic function of the robotic arm to reach the item. Moreover, by rotating the gripper of the robotic arm, users can open cabinets and drawers to retrieve items inside.

- **Visual Aid**

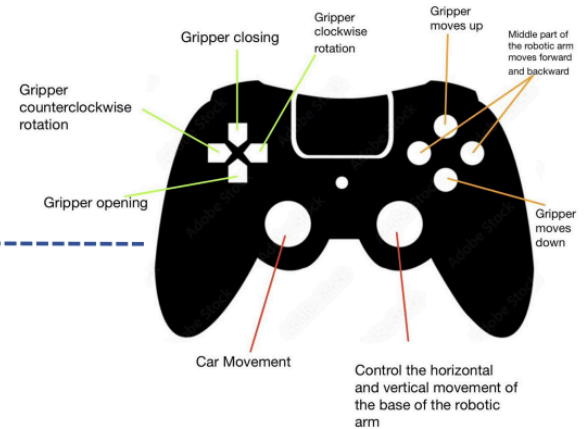


2.4GHz Bluetooth

A monitor is used to show real-time camera feed



Robotic Arm and Car



Remote Controller

- **High-level requirements list:**

- **Item Handling:**

The robotic arm must be able to successfully pick up items such as bottles, books, or small tools, weighing up to 1 kilograms(Kg) with a success rate of at least 80%. The robotic arm is equipped with a gripper capable of exerting a force of up to 20 Newtons(to hold 1 kg item) to accommodate items of varying fragility and weight, ensuring no slipping and damage during the grasp.

- **Stability:**

When the gripper holds an item, the robotic arm must maintain stability and place the item into the box on the car. To achieve this, the gripper's torque must be at

least 0.9 Newton-meters to hold an item weighing up to 1 kg without twisting. The entire process of picking up and placing an item with a success rate of at least 80%, ensuring that the gripper can securely hold the item with sufficient force and torque without twisting, slipping, or causing damage, and that the robotic arm can maintain stability when transferring the item from the gripper to the box. After determining the shape, orientation, and approximate weight of the objects, the user can easily use the controller to handle the item appropriately with the gripper.

➤ **Telescopic Function and Rotation Access:**

The telescopic function of the robotic arm must extend to at least 80 cm to retrieve items successfully placed on a table with a height of at least 40 cm. The items may be positioned up to 20 cm from the table's edge, with a success rate of at least 70%. Additionally, the gripper has 3 degrees of freedom: it can move up and down, rotate vertically, and open and close.

To open drawers, the gripper must rotate vertically to be perpendicular to the drawer handle to grasp it effectively, while the car provides enough traction and stability to pull the drawer open, with a success rate of at least 70%. Once the drawer is open, the gripper must move downwards to use its open and close function to grab an item stored in the drawer, then move upwards to pick up the item, also with a success rate of at least 70%.

➤ **Camera Integration & Delay:**

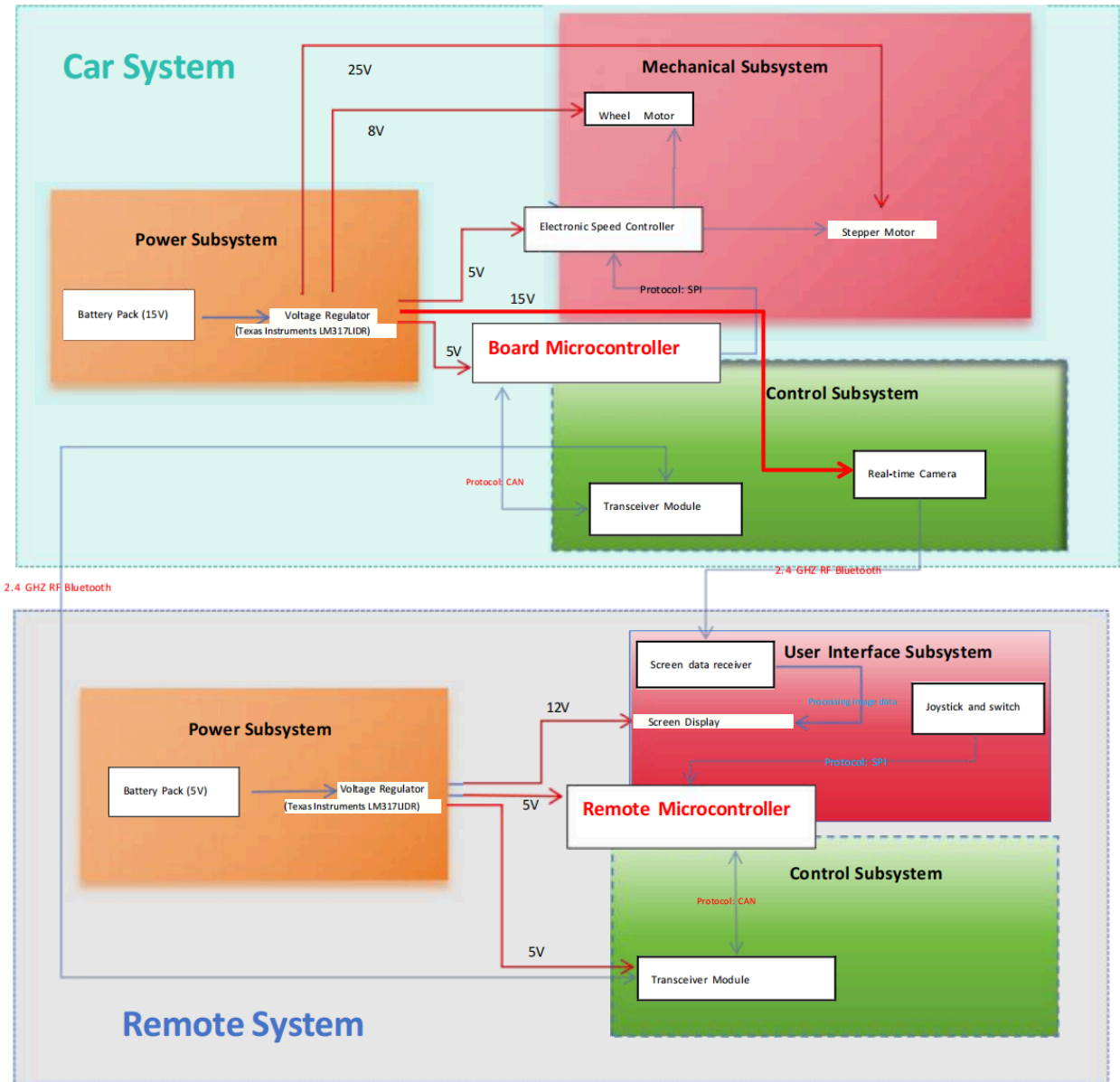
The robotic arm will rely on a camera system to identify and track items for picking, which should have a delay tolerance of up to 300 milliseconds between the visual input and the robotic arm's movement initiation. Despite this delay, we should also consider the dynamic adjustments to the arm's trajectory, ensuring accurate picking without misalignment. The robotic arm must be able to adjust for the delay in real-time to ensure smooth operation during object picking and placing tasks.

Design

- **Block Diagram**

Red line is power supply

Blue line are protocol and wireless transmission



Block diagram

- **Subsystem Overview**

There are two systems in the block diagram: Car System and Remote System, and each system is composed of three subsystems. So we will design two different PCBs for Car System and Remote System. The PCB of the Car system will be installed on the car with a robotic arm, and the PCB of the Remote System will be installed on the controller. The Car System is used to provide power for the PCB which is installed on the car with a robotic arm, wheel motors of the car, stepper motors of the robotic arm, and real-time camera and also the Car System controls all three subsystems to finish tasks according to instructions by the Microcontroller and Transceiver module. The Remote System is the system of the controller, which provides power for the screen which will display the image of the real-time camera and the PCB which is installed on the controller and also the Remote System controls all three subsystems to transmit the instructions of switch and joystick by the car to the Car System by the Remote Microcontroller and Transceiver module.

The Power subsystem in the Car System provides power for both mechanical subsystem and electronic subsystem. The Car MCU (Microcontroller) in the Mechanical Subsystem could give instructions to wheel motors and stepper motors of the robotic arm. What's more, the voltage regulator will change the battery voltage into the ideal voltage for the PCB of the Car system, wheel motors, stepper motors and real-time camera. And, the transceiver module in the Car System can transmit signals to and receive signals from the Remote controller, and these signals will be the input signal into the Car MCU to decide how wheel motors and stepper motors should run. Also, the real time camera will transmit the image data to the screen by bluetooth.

In the Remote System, the Power subsystem offers power to support User Interface Subsystem and Control Subsystem, and the voltage regulator will change the battery voltage into the ideal voltage for the PCB of the Remote system and screen which will display the image of the real-time camera. By the User Interface Subsystem, Item Retrieval Robotics Assistant could interface with the user; for example, the user could watch the screen to view the environment around the car by real-time camera installed on the car, and the user can use a joystick and switch to control the Item Retrieval Robotics Assistant by two transceiver modules in the Car system and Remote system. And two transceiver modules in the Car system and Remote system transmit and receive signals with each other by bluetooth. Finally, the Control Subsystem in Remote System works for transmitting and receiving signals, and it also controls the whole Remote system by the Remote MCU.

- **Subsystem Requirements**

- ❖ **Car System:**

In the Car System, there are three subsystems: Power subsystem, Mechanical Power subsystem and Control subsystem.

- **Power Subsystem:**

In the Car Power subsystem, the battery pack could provide 500 mA direct current (DC) with 15 V. The voltage regulator which uses Texas Instruments LM317LDR regulates the current, generating 25 V DC to power stepper motors which allow the robotic arm to rotate its joints, 8 V DC to power wheel motors which allow the car to move forward and backward, 5 V DC to power the PCB and 15 V DC to power the real-time camera.

- **Mechanical subsystem :**

In the Car Mechanical subsystem, wheel motors would drive the car to move, and we will use H-bridge to allow the wheel motor to rotate bidirectionally so that the car could move forward or move backward. What's more, the car could turn left or turn right by controlling the Revolutions per minute (RPM) of each wheel motor. The wheel motor that we use has a speed of 100 RPM. Stepper motors will allow the robotic arm to rotate its joints, and we will use STEPPERONLINE Nema 23 Stepper Motor. Nema 23 Stepper Motor has 2.4 Nm torque, which has enough torque to pick up and place items weighing up to 1 kgs into one box. So stepper motors with a large torque achieves the first high-level requirement. Also, Nema 23 stepper motors are able to maintain stability without twisting when the gripper holds on an item due to its large torque, so the stability requirement in high-level requirements will be achieved. What's more, Stepper motors will provide more static force when the robotic arm extends to 0.8 meters, and the torque of Nema 23 Stepper Motor will achieve the Telescopic Function requirement in the high-level requirement.

- **Control subsystem :**

What's more, the Electronic Speed controller could give instructional signals to control whether wheel motors and stepper motors rotate or not and how wheel motors and stepper motors rotate. The Electronic Speed controller interfaces with the Car Microcontroller (MCU), and the Board Microcontroller inputs signals into the Electronic Speed controller to make it interface with wheel motors and stepper motors. In the Car Control subsystem, the transceiver module transmits signals to and receives signals from

the transceiver module in Remote System by the bluetooth with 2.4GHZ, and ESP 32 will provide bluetooth connectivity. Then, when the transceiver module receives signals of instructions from the remote controller, the transceiver will interface with the Car MCU to make the Car MCU input correct instructions which are consistent with the user's operations to other modules by the communication protocol Controller Area Network (CAN).

Finally, the battery pack should provide 500 mA direct current (DC) with 15 V, and the voltage fluctuation that the battery provides should be smaller than 1 V. Also, the voltage regulator needs to provide voltages stably even with different loads. The protocol: bluetooth with 2.4GHZ, SPI and CAN need to be stable and set correctly; otherwise, some subsystems in the Car System would fail to function.

❖ **Remote System:**

In the Remote System, there are three subsystems: Power subsystem, User Interface Subsystem and Control subsystem.

➤ **Power Subsystem:**

In the Remote Power subsystem, the battery pack could provide 200mA direct current (DC) with 5 V. The voltage regulator which uses Texas Instruments LM317LIDR regulates the current, generating 12 V DC to power the screen which will display the image of the real-time camera and 5 V DC to power the PCB.

➤ **User Interface Subsystem:**

In the User Interface Subsystem, joystick and switch as peripherals interface with the Remote MCU by Serial Peripheral Interface (SPI) so that any operations on the joystick and switch by the user could be received by the Remote MCU. Then the Remote MCU interfaces with the Car MCU by transceiver modules, and the Car MCU input correct instructional signals to other modules like wheels motors and stepper motors so that the movement of the car and the rotation of the robotic arm could be consistent with the user's operation on the joystick and switch. And the user could control the robotic arm to rotate at least 90 degrees and successfully open cabinets or drawers by the joystick and switch.

What's more, the Real-time camera will send image data into the screen data receiver by the bluetooth with 2.4GHZ, and the screen data receiver could receive and process image

data, and display it on the screen, so the user could view the environment around the car. Also, we would use image techniques like compressing and so on to have a delay tolerance of up to 300 milliseconds between the visual input and the robotic arm's movement initiation, which achieve the camera delay requirement in high-level requirements.

➤ **Control Subsystem:**

In the Remote Control subsystem, when the transceiver module receives the signal of instructions through Controller Area Network (CAN) from the Remote MCU, the transceiver module transmits the signal of instructions to the transceiver module of the Car System by the bluetooth with 2.4GHZ, and ESP 32 will provide bluetooth connectivity. Then the Car MCU will receive the signal and input the instructional signal to other modules of the Car System. Then the Car System will execute correct instructions and finish tasks successfully.

Finally, the battery pack should provide 200 mA direct current (DC) with 5 V, and the voltage fluctuation that the battery provides should be smaller than 0.5 V. Also, the voltage regulator needs to provide voltages stably even with different loads. And the camera delay should not be larger than 300 milliseconds. The protocol: bluetooth with 2.4GHZ, SPI and CAN need to be stable and set correctly; otherwise, some subsystems in the Car System would fail to function.

● **Tolerance Analysis**

➤ **Camera connection**

One aspect of our design that poses a risk to successful completion of the project is the image data transmitting from the real-time camera to screen data receiver. When the car with a robotic arm is driven far away from the computer, some image data may be lost during the process transmission from the real-time camera to screen data receiver through bluetooth 2.4GHZ protocol, which causes the problem of unclear or discontinuous pictures appearing on the screen of the computer.

Suppose we use the computer to display a video with 640*480 resolution with 25 Frame Rate Per second(fps)

We can use this formula to calculate the video bitrate:

Video Bitrate Per Second (bps) = Target pixel count/resolution × Frame rate × 1/2/4
(depending on how dynamic your video is) × 0.07

Video Bitrate = 640 * 480 * 25 fps * 2 * 0.07 = 1.0752 Mbps

Usually, the maximum bluetooth 2.4 GHz data rate is around 3 Mbps to guarantee stable communication.

Our data rate result is for video with 640x480 resolution is 1.0752 Mbps which is within the bluetooth 2.4 GHz data rate

Therefore, this should not cause any problems.

➤ **Motor Performance**

Another aspect of our design that poses a risk to the successful completion of the project is that the voltage assigned to the motor by the voltage regulator might fluctuate, impacting the motor's performance.

According to the LM317L 3-Terminal Adjustable Regulator DataSheet, the output voltage(V) regulation is 0.5%. In our block diagram, the voltage regulator assigned 25V to the stepper motor and 8V to the wheel motor. Based on the description of stepper motor and wheel motor, the driving voltage of stepper motor is at least 24 volts, with a range between 24-48V, and the driving voltage of wheel motor is at least 6V.

The voltage of stepper motor = $25V \pm 0.5\% = 24.875V \sim 25.125V$

The voltage of wheel motor = $8V \pm 0.5\% = 7.96V \sim 8.04V$

The the voltage of stepper motor 24.875V ~ 25.125V is within the range 24V ~ 48V,

And the voltage of wheel motor is greater than 6V

Therefore, even if the voltage allocated by the voltage regulator fluctuates, these are still within the effective voltage range of the motor, so there won't be any problems.

➤ **Stepper Motor Torque**

Another aspect of our design that poses a risk to the successful completion of the project is the stepper motor might not be able to provide enough torque for the gripper to pick up an item weighing 1kg. Without enough torque, the stepper motor may miss steps or stall causing the gripper to fail in lifting the item and leading to the project failure.

According to the information of stepper motor, it can provides a torque up to 2.4 Newton*Meter(NM).

To find the actual torque we need to use to pick up an item with 1kg weight, we can use this formula $T = F * (r * \sin(a))$ where

T is torque

F is Force

r is the the radius of the applied force

a is the angle of the force applied

In our case, force is based on our item that $F = m * g = 1kg * 9.81m/s^2 = 9.81 N$

Assume the length of our gripper is 10 cm = 0.1m then $r = 0.1 m$

Also, since we need to pick the item up so the force is perpendicular to the ground then the value of $a = 90$

Finally, put them together $T = 9.81\text{N} * (0.1\text{m} * \sin(90)) = 0.981\text{ Nm}$

Therefore, the final torque required to pick up an item weighing 1 kg is 0.981 Nm, which is less than the 2.4 Nm torque provided by the stepper motor. This means that the stepper motor can provide enough torque to pick up the item without failure.

Ethics and Safety

According to IEEE Code of Ethics and ACM Code of Ethics, our project addresses several key ethical principles:

1. Privacy Protection

The device's use of a camera for navigation could violate user privacy. To comply with the ethical principle of IEEE code 1 that protects the privacy of others, the camera feed is directly connected to the screen on the controller which is exclusively used by the user. Since the video feed is not transmitted externally and the camera doesn't have a video recording function, this can only be viewed by the user which minimizes the risk of unauthorized access or misuse of the camera system.

2. Public Safety

We commit to ensuring that our project "Item Retrieval Robotic Assistant" prioritizes the safety and health of its users. This aligns with the ethical principle of IEEE code 1 that holds paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public. The robotic arm is controlled directly by the user and will be equipped with force-limiting features to prevent excessive force when handling items. This could reduce the risk of injury to items, furniture and humans.

3. Respect for Others

In the development process, we will ensure that all team members and contributors are treated fairly and respectfully. This aligns with the ethical principle of treating all persons fairly and with respect. Our project ensures that the design is inclusive and accessible to all users, particularly those with disabilities.

4. Improving Understanding of Emerging Technologies

Our project contributes to improving society's understanding of how emerging technologies can enhance the quality of life for individuals with mobility issues. This aligns with the ethical principle of IEEE code 2 which is enhancing individuals' and society's understanding of the potential and societal impacts of both conventional and emerging technologies, including intelligent systems.

5. Support for Colleagues and Upholding Ethics

During the development of our project, we commit to supporting all team members in adhering to the ethical standards, aligning with the principle of IEEE code 10 that assisting colleagues in adhering to this code of ethics, work to ensure its enforcement, and refrain from retaliating against those who report violations.. We will create an open and respectful environment where ethical issues can be resolved without the fear of retaliation.

6. Honesty and Trustworthy

Regarding ACM code 1.3 that a computing professional should be open and fully disclose all relevant system capabilities, limitations, and potential issues to the appropriate stakeholders. Our project team will provide clear documentation on how the device functions, including potential risks or limitations. In addition, users will be fully informed about the device's operational boundaries, ensuring they can make the right decisions when using the system

References:

IEEE. (n.d.). IEEE Policies, Section 7 - Professional Activities (IEEE-USA), Part 8 - Statement on Communications with U.S. Executive Branch Officials. IEEE.

<https://www.ieee.org/about/corporate/governance/p7-8.html>

Association for Computing Machinery. (n.d.). Software engineering code of ethics. ACM Ethics.

<https://ethics.acm.org/code-of-ethics/software-engineering-code/>

LM317L 3-Terminal Adjustable Regulator DataSheet:

https://www.ti.com/lit/ds/symlink/lm317l.pdf?HQS=dis-dk-null-digikeymode-dsf-pf-null-ww&ts=1727871300761&ref_url=https%253A%252F%252Fwww.ti.com%252Fgeneral%252Fdocs%252Fsuppproductinfo.tsp%253FdistId%253D10%2526gotoUrl%253Dhttps%253A%252F%252Fwww.ti.com%252Flit%252Fgpn%252Flm317l

Robotic Arm Image:

https://www.amazon.com/LewanSoul-Robotic-Arduino-Software-Tutorial/dp/B074T6DPKX/ref=asc_df_B074T6DPKX/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=693127141886&hvpos=&hvnw=&hvtw=g&hvrand=6361716725545370389&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9022196&hvtargid=pla-457916789698&psc=1&mcid=c114f40a0aa439cb99846c5906c0a51a

Robotic Car Chassis:

https://www.amazon.com/Platform-Raspberry-MicroBit-Electric-Magnetic/dp/B08WLRR1MQ?source=ps-sl-shoppingads-lpcontext&ref_=fplfls&psc=1&smid=A2G0XYYCYKIQFO

Stepper motor: STEPPERONLINE Nema 23 Stepper Motor 2.4Nm(339.79oz.in) 4.0A 8mm Shaft 57x57x82mm 4 Wires

https://www.amazon.com/STEPPERONLINE-Stepper-Motor-339-79oz-57x57x82mm/dp/B091C37FJ2/ref=asc_df_B091C37FJ2/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=692875362841&hvpos=&hvnw=g&hvrand=2933606797747660043&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9022185&hvtargid=pla-2281435180498&psc=1&mcid=18a4921dffa735b294db4c348a48cdef&hvocij=2933606797747660043-B091C37FJ2-&hvexpln=73

Voltage regulator: Texas Instruments LM317LIDR, output voltage range: 1.2v-38v

<https://www.digikey.com/en/products/detail/texas-instruments/LM317LIDR/1143643>

Car motor: DC 6V DIY Encoder Gear Motor with Mounting Bracket 65mm Wheel Kit Micro Speed Reduction Motor Mini Motor for Smart Car Robot Model DIY Engine Toy(100RPM)

https://www.amazon.com/Encoder-Mounting-Bracket-Reduction-Engine/dp/B07X95BXZ6/ref=asc_df_B07X95BXZ6/?tag=hyprod-20&linkCode=df0&hvadid=693364637991&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=4962186909899354389&hvpon=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=9022185&hvtargid=pla-1727180489477&psc=1&mcid=45fed642d73136c59f6d142112822faa

Adobe Stock Remote Controller Image

[image:https://stock.adobe.com/search/images?k=controller&asset_id=831510872](https://stock.adobe.com/search/images?k=controller&asset_id=831510872)

Adobe Stock Monitor Image

<https://stock.adobe.com/search?k=monitor>