

# GO-KARTS, WELL, WHAT ARE THEY?



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Go-karting is a fun activity for people to blow off steam, regardless of whether they are a car enthusiast or a first-timer, or even someone who has never driven a car. Go-karts are simple, small, nimble, open-wheeled cars with a low centre of gravity that you can abuse around a track without



breaking your wallet.

Surprisingly, many professional drivers from F1 and NASCAR started their careers with go-kart racing. It is entry-level motorsports racing with low barriers and is easy to get into. F1 legend's like Lewis Hamilton, Ayrton Senna, Michael Schumacher and many more started their dominant careers from go-karts.

Even though go-karts are very simple compared to sophisticated racing cars, people are usually intimidated by barebones go-kart racing. Fear not, for this week, we ran down the absolute basics that you should expect. While go-karts contain complex parts like engines and braking systems that may be hard to understand at first, it does get easier once you are familiarised with the essential parts and features. Seats

Go-karts usually have bucket seats that are designed to wrap around your back for extra support. The shape of the seat prevents the drivers from being flung out of the kart when turning into a corner at high speed or holding you in when you are bumped onto. Recreational karts often have padded seats for comfort but on the competition side, they are made to be as

light as possible, so the seats are usually made of plastic or fibreglass to reduce overall weight.Steering

A straightforward steering wheel is used, which is usually made out of aluminium. They are usually around 10-12 inches in diameter and come connected to the steering shaft with three mounting holes. The steering shaft is attached to two tie rods which are joined to the spindles held by a kingpin bolt. The spindles turn when you turn your steering wheel, ensuring basic handling of turning left and right.Tires

Go-karts tires are around 10-12 inches tall and 5-8 inches wide. Normally, there are wider tires on the back of the



kart as the weight is mostly distributed towards the rear end. These tires have to be small in height and wide to keep the centre of gravity low. Just like racing cars, they have three different tires for three different occasions. There is a slick tire for dry conditions which are usually soft providing maximum grip, then wet tires

for rainy days which are grooved to use in rainy conditions and lastly, special tires for off-roading or recreational activities which only provides a smooth ride and lasts a long time.Engine

Go-karts have two different gasoline engines - two-stroke and four-stroke. Two-stroke engines have an RPM of up to 18,000 and are commonly used for racing in professional go-kart races. Four-stroke engines have an RPM range of up to 11,000 which is quieter and runs smoother. Then there are electric motor variants which have been getting popular in recent years due to the ridiculous acceleration, better weight distribution, lower centre of gravity, ability to reverse

and are also considered environmentally friendly. But electric karts run out of battery fast.Frame

You'll notice that there is a metal frame around the whole kart. This outer metal cage is referred to as the guard frame. The frame will be protecting the bodywork from damaging collisions, accidents

and bumps. You'll also notice that the frame also covers the outer part of the wheels to ensure any wheel collision is avoided. Wheel collisions have serious consequences of flipping the whole kart dangerously and can result in serious injuries. Other features



Unlike actual cars, go-karts don't have regular gears since they don't have a differential. The acceleration and brake pedals are divided by the steering wheel, so you have to accelerate with your right foot and brake with your left foot. They are still very easy to manoeuvre regardless of driving experience. They have a maximum speed of 60-80 km/h - a speed that is safe and as controlled as possible.

The karts weirdly don't have a suspension since they are designed in a way that it doesn't need one, while the frame provides the necessary flexibility it needs. They have all the bare necessities of a car to go around the track. Go-karts are exceptionally safe due to their low centre of gravity and strong frames.

However, it is important to follow basic safety regulations like wearing a helmet. Go-karts, relatively, are surprisingly affordable considering motorsports is considered to be the playground for the wealthy.

Intrigued? You can experience go-karting in Bangladesh at two places - Xtreme Racing at the Fantasy Kingdom Complex in Ashulia and Go Kart Courtside at Madani Avenue in Dhaka.

# Tips to stay healthy and active when you have a 9-to-5 desk job

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Working 9 to 5 and staying fit and in good shape don't always go hand in hand. Even though we promise ourselves to hit the gym after work or devote ourselves to working out as a New Year's resolution, let's face the truth—it's easier said than done.

Moreover, given the cumbersome road congestion during rush hours, going to the gym on time is a luxury and exercise duration gets shortened inevitably. And so, making optimal use of the work shift is the best method to inch towards your fitness goals.

to the bathroom or just simply stroll around the office premises. This practice not only helps straighten your back but also helps to relocate focus.

**Try not to slouch**  
Given the type of chairs common to all offices, it is very easy to find oneself slouching while working on their computers. Practising good posture is essential in keeping your back straight and away from chronic pain.

Straighten your spine once in a while to not suffer from muscle spasms. Add a lumbar support cushion to your chair

a habit of saying no when you have overwhelmingly too much on your plate. Overworking is never healthy. Prioritise your mental health.

**Avoid carbs**  
Protein is a great source of energy. Substituting rice for chicken or fish will boost your energy levels and help you be more productive. Consuming carbohydrates, especially rice during lunch, make the body extremely lethargic. This might make you feel drowsy at work as the second half of the day goes by struggling to focus.

Another pro tip is to restrict your sugar intake. Since caffeine has successfully secured a place in our adult lives, sugar comes as a complementary ingredient. Try slowly substituting sugar for other alternatives, like honey. Snacking and ordering food at the workplace is pretty common. Push away the cookies and doughnuts that come your way to avoid as many carbs as possible.

**Manage your after-hours**  
While working hard bears fruit, it is best to leave work at the office after your shift. Fusing professional and personal life isn't always healthy.

Instead of watching something on the TV or mindlessly scrolling through your phone, take a break from the constant riveting on screens and spend time with your loved ones. Sleep early. Early to bed, early to rise probably doesn't make you wealthy and wise, but helps you stay fresh and healthy!

**Utilise fitness gadgets**  
Get yourself a smartwatch or a smart band tracker which records your daily steps, activities, heartbeat and pulse rate. A fitness gadget will remind us of our current phase in the personal fitness journey and pave the way to our goal. There are some great alternatives within the Tk. 3,000 price range, as opposed to the expensive smartwatches.

Here are a few ways you can maintain your physical and mental health when you have a desk job.

**Take hourly short walks**  
An excellent way to combat regular backache, even the severe ones, is to force yourself to stand up every hour, irrespective of the work, and take a one or two-minute walk. While this may seem like a tiresome practice, the benefits will add up.

During the walks, you can communicate with a colleague, go

for lower back support and alignment. Stretch for 30 seconds and loosen up those tight muscles.

**Take the long way**  
Opt for the stairs instead of the lift when climbing one or two floors. While this might not sound like much, little measures as such add to your daily activity and steps. This practice can also include meeting your colleagues at their desks instead of communicating via email or phone.

**Say no!**  
A negative response when your boss piles up more work on you or assigns you projects on a weekend is rather perplexing. Make

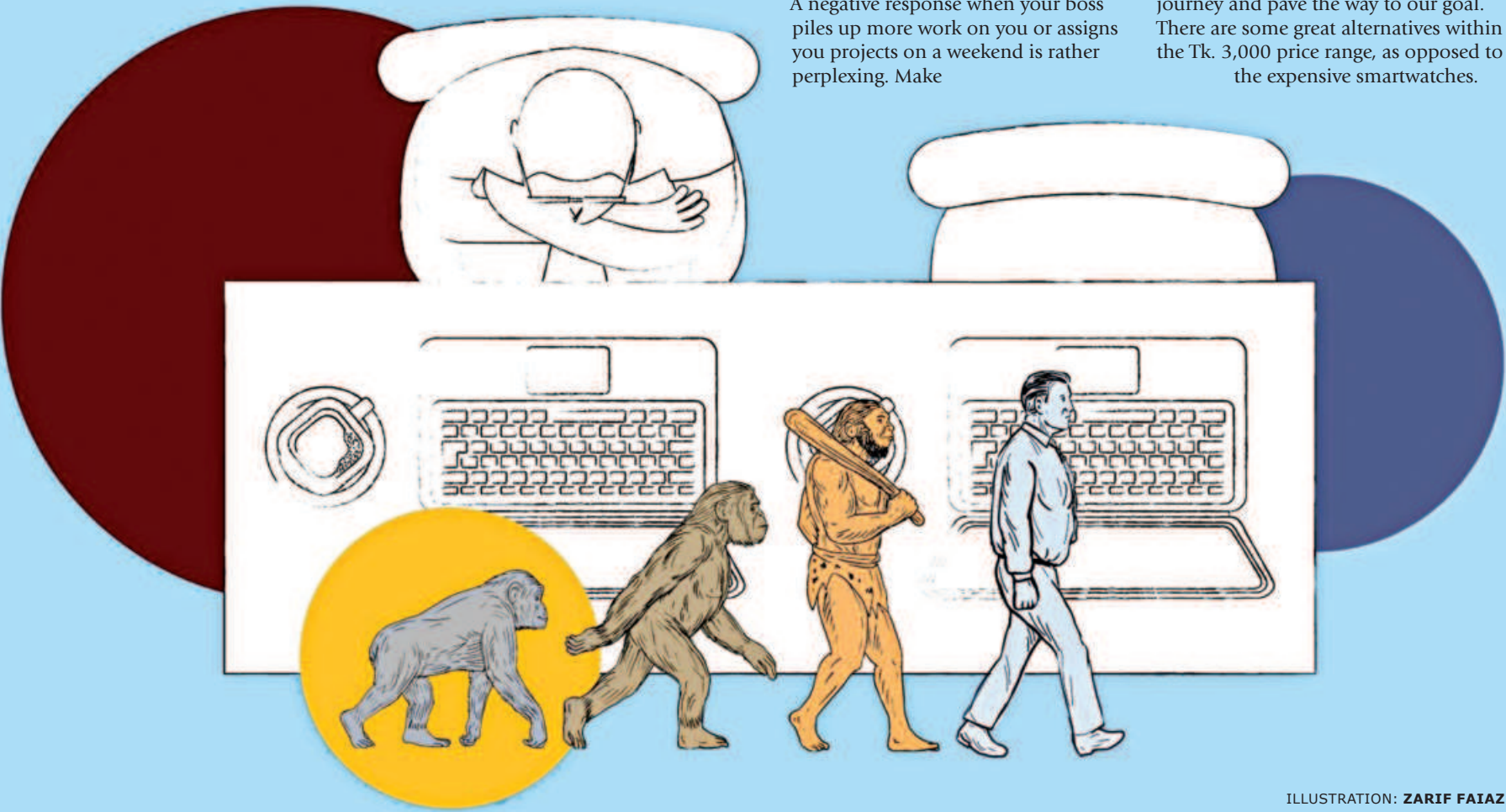


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