What is a flywheel

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I understand roughly how an engine works and that there is a crankshaft which is able to turn the flywheel using internal combustion.

Do all these things run off of the flywheel?

What exactly does the flywheel do and what is it connected to other than the crankshaft?

How is it connected to these other things?

Another such item, like unto a flywheel is a flexplate. This is a thin plate which connects the engine to a torque converter in automatic transmissions. While it provides the starting, connection, and balance of a flywheel, it alone does not have enough mass to provide the rotational inertia. In this case, the torque converter provides this for the engine.

This is addition to Paulster"s answer.Here"s an animationThe disc in Grey is the flywheel

Wikipedia provides a good general outline -

In our case, point 1 serves more to make the engine operation smooth by minimizing crankshaft acceleration/decelerations between cylinder firings when in NEUTRAL.Point 2. is utilized in Mechanical Kinetic Energy Recovery Systems

Consequences of high MI

A flywheel is a rotating mechanical device that is used to store rotational energy. ... - Providing continuous energy when the energy source is discontinuous. For example, flywheels are used in reciprocating engines because the energy source, torque from the engine, is intermittent.

American medievalist Lynn White believed that a German artesian Theophilus Presbyter used the flywheel in many of his artifacts.

After the industrial revolution, James Watt was the first to design a modern flywheel with a crank mechanism for a steam engine.

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