

World's Renowned Scientist Warns A.I. Could Destroy Mankind

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. spell the end of - can be used generally to describe something that will lead to the end of something else, usually in a bad way.
Example: Global warming will spell the end for civilization.
2. synthesizer /'sɪn·θəˌsaɪ·zər/ an electronic instrument used to reproduce, combine, and vary sounds, esp. of musical instruments or voices
Example: The British scientist complained that his voice synthesizer had given him an American accent.
3. issue a warning - to give a statement of possible problem or danger
Example: In January, the police issued a warning that took many by surprise.
4. outsmart /ˌaʊt'smɑrt/ (verb) to obtain an advantage over someone by using your intelligence and often by using a trick; to outwit
Example: She thinks he can outsmart him.
5. manipulate /mə'nɪp.jə.leɪt/ to control something or someone to your advantage, often unfairly or dishonestly
Example: Throughout her career she has very successfully manipulated the media.



Professor Stephen Hawking, one of the world's most renowned scientists, has warned that robots and machines with artificial intelligence could one day mean the end of us all. Professor Hawking recently told the BBC in an interview that: "The development of full artificial intelligence (AI) could **spell the end** of the human race."

The famous cosmologist made his warning in response to a question about an update to the app he uses to allow him to communicate. The update will be able to predict words he might want to use based on his previous communication. Hawking suffers from motor neuron disease and needs a special voice **synthesizer** to talk. Motor neuron diseases (MNDs) are a group of progressive neurological disorders that destroy the cells that control skeletal muscle activity such as walking, breathing, speaking, and swallowing.

Hawking said that AI has given many benefits to many people. He said it is still in its early stages of development, but when it becomes more advanced, it could prove a threat to our existence. He said: "It would take off on its own, and re-design itself at an ever increasing rate. Humans, who are limited by slow biological evolution, couldn't compete, and would be replaced."

This is not the first time he has **issued such a warning**. He gave a more frightening warning in April 2014, saying: "One can imagine such technology **outsmarting** financial markets, out-inventing human researchers, out-**manipulating** human leaders, and developing weapons we cannot even understand."

When did Hawking previously warn us about the dangers of AI?

What did Hawking say AI would develop that we could not understand?

DISCUSSION

1. Do you like the idea of robots helping us?
2. Do you think we will be controlled by robots one day? Why or why not?
3. What damage could A.I. do to our daily lives?
4. How likely is it that technology will take over the world?
5. How do you imagine life to be in 2100?