

Anthropic researcher believes more than 10% chance [redacted] 'could kill all humans'

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[redacted] could kill all humans in next decade, warn experts: but how seriously should we take them?

Alarming warnings from industry insiders increase pressure for curbs on [redacted]



Robert Booth *UK technology editor*

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A safety expert at Anthropic believes there is a greater than 10% chance that AI could spark an event that wipes out humanity. Illustration: Ales Utouka/Alamy

Does [redacted] really pose a risk greater than nuclear weapons? Is there a significant chance of “a Chornobyl-sized catastrophe”. Might there even be a greater than 10% chance that AI could “kill all humans” in the next decade?

These warnings were issued over the past 48 hours on both sides of the Atlantic about the potential impact of a technology that most people still think of as a more talkative search engine.

From the *The Economist's* sunday newsletter

On Friday, two dozen top mathematicians issued a stark warning: AI could ruin the foundations of maths. Earlier that week OpenAI said it had untangled a fiendishly hard problem related to the Navier-Stokes equations, which are useful for modelling how air flows over aircraft wings and plasma circulates inside stars. New knowledge was unlocked. But was something lost in the process? One of the signatories drew a comparison: airdropping someone on the summit of Mount Everest is very different from climbing it.

This matters beyond the rarefied world of advanced maths. In reading—as in maths—15-year-olds are testing at levels of 14-year-olds a decade ago. That's according to the latest findings from PISA across the 35 rich countries that take part in the tests. Some may argue that this doesn't matter, because AI will help them as grown-ups. This line of reasoning could not be more wrong, says our leader.