

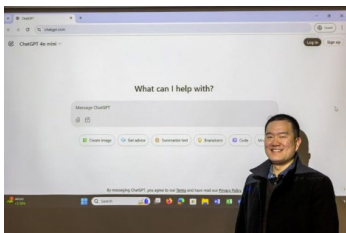


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AI
When AI imagines cities, smaller communities can disappear



"When College of Natural Resources and Environment geospatial data scientist Junghwan Kim asked an artificial intelligence (AI) image generator to create a picture of Blacksburg, the result wasn't quite right.

"The image looked generic," Kim said. "It didn't capture what makes Blacksburg unique."

But when he asked the same system to create images of larger cities such as Richmond, Virginia Beach, and Washington, D.C., the results looked much more recognizable.

The images included familiar landmarks, waterfronts, and city features that reflected the character of those places.

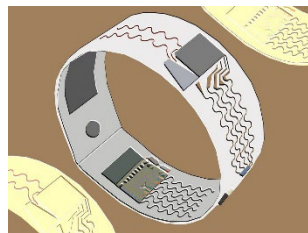
That observation sparked a research question: Does AI do a better job representing large cities than smaller communities?

A new study from researchers at Virginia Tech, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (Guangzhou), and the University of Alabama found the answer is yes.

The team discovered that AI-generated images were consistently better at representing larger metropolitan areas than smaller towns such as Blacksburg. The findings raise questions about how generative artificial intelligence tools portray places and whose communities are most visible online.."

Source: [Technology in Society](#) (22 May 2026)

AI
AI Rings on Fingers Can Interpret Sign Language



"Electronic rings wirelessly connected to an AI system are capable of translating multiple sign languages into text, a new study finds.

"I believe this is an important step toward making sign language translation systems more practical, lightweight, and usable in real-world environments," says Ki Jun Yu, an associate professor of electrical and electronic engineering at Yonsei University in Seoul, Korea.

More than 300 different sign languages are used worldwide, and many research projects are developing translation devices for communicating with people who do not know a sign language. However, these projects have faced many setbacks.

For example, some projects used cameras and computer vision algorithms to recognize hand gestures. But these were typically limited to controlled settings with fixed cameras and were sensitive to lighting variations and other forms of interference.

Other devices relied on wearable sensors that detected either hand motions or electrical signals linked with muscle activity. However, a common kind of wearable sensor, smart gloves, trapped heat and moisture, making prolonged use uncomfortable. And their fixed sensors failed to account for individual variations in hand size, finger length, and joint positions, reducing their accuracy. In addition, wearable sensors often required hooking up to computers using wires, hampering hand movements. Although some wearable sensors ultimately transmitted their data wirelessly to an external processor, these still typically connected to the same single transmitter using wires.. "

Source: [IEEE Spectrum](#) (22 May 2026)

ARCHITECTURE
Street Artist JR Installs an Inflatable Cave on Paris' Pont Neuf in Tribute to Christo and Jeanne-Claude

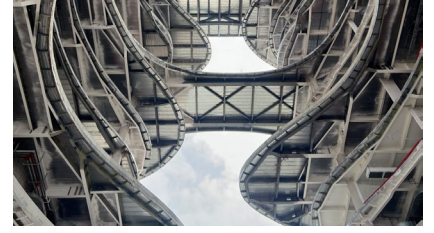


"On May 21st, a realistic cave took shape on Paris' Pont Neuf, the oldest standing bridge across the Seine. The inflatable artwork was designed and built by French photographer and street artist JR, along with an extensive multidisciplinary team. La Caverne du Pont Neuf was conceived in honor of Christo and Jeanne-Claude's 1985 work The Pont Neuf Wrapped, an environmental artwork in which the artists wrapped the historic bridge in sandstone-colored fabric for two weeks. The structure creates a trompe-l'œil effect that mimics a textured rock formation through photographic printing in tones of white, black, and gray. The shape of the exterior already gives the public the optical illusion of the artwork, while paving the way for the final stage of the interior design..

The 120-meter-long, up-to-18-meter-high structure is meant to offer passersby an immersive experience engaging the senses of sight, atmosphere, and sound. The temporary artwork will open on June 6, 2026, accessible free of charge, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, until June 28th. Walkers and cyclists can already view the structure from multiple points across the city: the quais, neighboring bridges, the famous bateaux-mouches traversing the river, all riverboat services, and the banks of the Seine. "

Source: [Archdaily](#) (22 May 2026)

ARCHITECTURE
How parametricism changed architecture but not buildings



"Our Parametricism series has explored the architectural theory controversially touted by Patrik Schumacher as the defining style of the 21st century. To round things off, Tom Ravenscroft measures the movement's impact.

Zaha Hadid Architects (ZHA) principal Schumacher coined the term parametricism in 2008, declaring that it will become a universal style of architecture. He doubled down on the prediction in 2016, and again in an interview with Dezeen as part of this series.

Clearly, this has not yet come to pass. Schumacher himself acknowledges that parametricism – basically the use of computational tools to design buildings based on a set of parameters, but usually associated with dramatic swooping curves – is still "a drop in the ocean".

But while Schumacher remains convinced that a parametricist future is on the horizon, others are not so sure.

Architectural historian Mario Carpo, who wrote the book *The Digital Turn in Architecture: 1992-2012*, pointed out that the idea is not looked on favourably among architects in the Western world.

"It is 'digital' style, but it's not the only one, and today is not even the most popular except in some parts of the world where it has taken over," he told Dezeen.

"In the West, parametricism – meaning the digital style a-la-Patrik Schumacher – is universally detested," he continued. "If you mention the term at Columbia, at Yale, or in any of the Ivy Leagues, they shoot at you.""

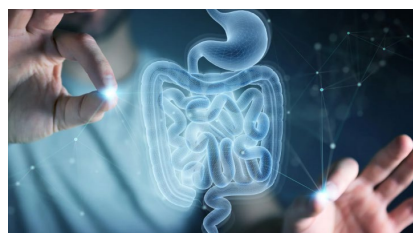
Source: [Dezeen](#) (21 May 2026)

HEALTH
Scientists reveal the surprising truth about coffee and blood pressure



"Coffee may give your blood pressure a temporary jolt, but that doesn't mean it's secretly wrecking your heart. Researchers say caffeine can briefly raise blood pressure by stimulating your heart and tightening blood vessels, especially in people who don't drink coffee regularly. But large studies involving hundreds of thousands of people found no strong evidence that moderate coffee drinking increases the risk of developing hypertension. In fact, coffee also contains natural compounds that may help blood vessels function better.."

HEALTH
MIT scientists discover amino acid that helps the gut heal itself



"MIT researchers have discovered that a naturally occurring amino acid found in many protein-rich foods may help the intestine repair itself after damage. In a new study, scientists found that cysteine can activate an immune response that boosts intestinal stem cells and helps regenerate tissue in the small intestine.

The findings, which were observed in mice, could eventually lead to new ways to reduce intestinal damage caused by radiation therapy and chemotherapy. Researchers say cysteine-rich diets or supplements might one day help cancer patients recover more quickly from treatment-related injuries."

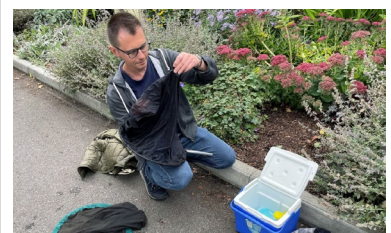
HEALTH
Scientists discover hidden driver of aging — Simple supplement reversed brain decline



"Scientists may have uncovered a hidden biological switch that helps control how quickly the body ages. Research published in *PLOS Biology* suggests that declining levels of a brain protein called Menin can trigger inflammation, memory decline, and other age-related changes throughout the body. In experiments with mice, restoring the protein reversed several signs of aging, while a simple amino acid supplement improved cognitive function.

The findings add to growing evidence that aging may be strongly influenced by the hypothalamus, a small but powerful brain region that regulates metabolism, hormones, body temperature, sleep, and stress responses. Researchers increasingly view the hypothalamus as a central command center for aging itself. In central Copenhagen, using Douglas fir timber topped with an anodised zinc roof.."

OBJECT RECOGNITION
Radar Can Tell the Difference Between Insect Species - PODCAST



"Bees and other pollinating insects play vital roles in food webs and crop pollination, yet monitoring them has proven difficult. That's why researchers have developed a radar system that could lead to a cost-effective, non-invasive way to track pollinators....

"Typically, the radar reflection from single insects is very weak," says Adam Narbudowicz, an associate professor of space research and technology at the Technological University of Denmark. "It's probably impossible to detect them just by looking at a single point in time."

Instead, "we hoped to be able to detect insects by integrating signals over longer durations," Narbudowicz explains. Specifically, they focused on how insect wingbeats generate micro-Doppler signatures—distinctive time-varying patterns in radar reflections that arise from tiny motions such as wobbles. Micro-Doppler signatures allow radar systems to identify more subtle distinctions between objects, which for instance can help

the system distinguish between birds and drones."

Source: [The Conversation](#) (15 May 2026)

Source: [MIT](#) (22 May 2026)

Source: [PLOS](#) (24 May 2026)

Source: [IEEE Spectrum](#) (25 May 2026)

OBEJCT RECOGNITION

Ordinary WiFi can now identify people with near perfect accuracy



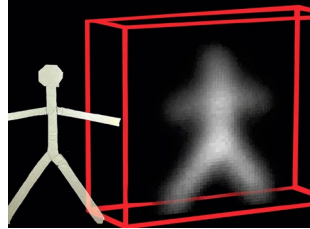
"Researchers in Germany are warning that ordinary WiFi networks could become a powerful new form of invisible surveillance. Using standard wireless signals and artificial intelligence, they demonstrated a system capable of identifying people with striking accuracy, even if those individuals are not carrying an active device.

"By observing the propagation of radio waves, we can create an image of the surroundings and of persons who are present," says Professor Thorsten Strufe from KASTEL -- KIT's Institute of Information Security and Dependability. "This works similar to a normal camera, the difference being that in our case, radio waves instead of light waves are used for the recognition," explains the cybersecurity expert. "Thus, it does not matter whether you carry a WiFi device on you or not."

Source: [KIT](#) (22 May 2026)

LIDAR

Seeing Around Corners Using Smartphone-Grade Lidar. Low-cost systems could improve robots, autonomous vehicles



"Lidar can be used to see objects hidden around corners. However, until now, such a feat required lab-grade devices. A new study reveals off-the-shelf smartphone-grade lidar, which costs less than US \$100, can also help see around corners.

The advance may have a host of potential applications. "In autonomous driving, around-the-corner sensing could help self-driving cars detect other vehicles, cyclists, or pedestrians before they come into direct view, improving safety at blind intersections or obstructed roads," says Siddharth Somasundaram, a doctoral student at MIT's Media Lab. "In robotics, it could help robots navigate cluttered or partially hidden environments."

More broadly, "we think the most important implication is the democratization of the technology," Somasundaram says. "When technologies like this become accessible, people often discover applications far beyond what the original researchers imagined." The scientists have publicly released the code required to perform such work."

Source: [IEEE Spectrum](#) (20 May 2026)

ROBOTS

Open-Source Software Is Starting to Help Robots Think. On platforms like Hugging Face, AI models for robotics gain traction



"When a group of academics started making open-source robotics hardware, a generation of roboticists got years of their lives back. Now, the bigger challenge is getting robots to think—and that's starting to be open sourced too.

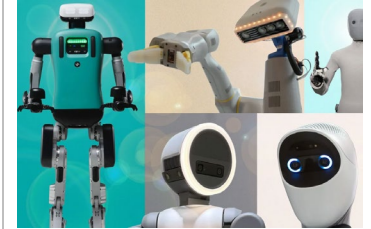
The shift is still early, but companies including Hugging Face, Nvidia, and Alibaba have all made significant bets on open-source robotics in the last two years, releasing tools and models aimed at the higher-level work of getting robots to reason, decide, and act.

The open source movement that accelerated other AI applications is now being applied to the problem of making robots smarter. If these attempts to bring AI to robotics with open-source platforms succeed, the barrier to building a capable robot could fall as fast as the barrier to building an AI application did.."

Source: [IEEE Spectrum](#) (21 May 2026)

ROBOTS

Will Robotics Have a ChatGPT Moment? A single breakthrough AI moment in robotics may not be the answer



"The promise of robots that live and work alongside us has been the stuff of science fiction for a very long time. And while many programmers have tried to make that promise a reality, the physical world is just too complicated for traditional computer programs to handle the endless complexity it presents. Thanks to AI, robots are no longer being programmed—instead, they learn to operate in the real world. With enough practice, they can learn to perceive and understand the world around them, reason about that world, and use that reason and understanding to perform tasks that are useful, reliable, and safe.

The two of us have worked at the forefront of AI and robotics for the last decade, as a Professor in Robotics at Oregon State University and Co-Founder of Agility Robotics, and as former CEO of the Everyday Robots moonshot at Google X. Our experience deploying AI-powered robots in real-world settings has given us a perspective on where AI can be used to great benefit in complex robotic systems in the near term and where we are still on the frontier of science fiction. We believe AI will enable an inflection point in robotics advances, but that it will be through the well-engineered application of coordinated systems of different AI tools rather than a single ChatGPT-style breakthrough.

As the excitement around AI is matched only by the uncertainty of what will be possible, here are five hard truths that will define AI in robotics.."

Source: [IEEE Spectrum](#) (20 May 2026)

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