

nature briefing

ai & robotics

Hello *Nature* readers,

This week, we discover that fake citations are prevalent in published papers, check in on the latest chip-making technologies and learn how people are folding laundry to teach robots.



A crowd enjoys the blossoms in Ueno Park, Japan. (The Yomiuri Shimbun via AP Images/Alamy)

AI aids Japan's cherry blossom maps

Cherry-blossom forecasters in Japan have turned to AI to help analyze weather data and crowdsourced images of trees. [Cherry blossom tourism](#) in Japan is estimated to generate more than US\$9 billion a year, making forecasting a serious business. Each tree only blooms for about a week, so various apps offer maps and 'bloom meters' for trees in more than a thousand spots.

[The New York Times](#) | 4 min read

Tens of thousands of 2025 publications, including journal papers, books and conference proceedings, probably contain invalid references generated by AI. That's according to an [exclusive analysis](#) conducted by *Nature's* news team in collaboration with UK company Grounded AI, which confirmed that at least 65 papers in a random sample of 4,000 had invalid references. Many journals and companies, including Grounded AI, are developing tools that check for hallucinated citations. The research community is still debating whether including bad citations should count as a form of research misconduct.

[Nature](#) | 12 min read

Chip-making tech packs in more transistors

A new record has been set for commercial chip-patterning systems: Netherlands-based company ASML uses short-wavelength ultraviolet light to create tiny structures just 8 nanometers wide, letting them [pack 2.9 times more transistors](#) onto a chip than previous extreme ultraviolet lithography machines, the company says. Chips with more transistors could help AI data centres to run more efficiently. The company has shipped about ten of these \$400 million devices to chip-making customers.

[Nature](#) | 3 min read

Image of the week



power, processing, sensing and movement capabilities, giving various combinations their own unique gait. One 3-module robot (pictured) “galumphs” like a seal, while a 5-module unit uses one of its legs as a supportive spine. The team found that different combos could run, walk over muddy and sandy ground, hop over obstacles and flip themselves upright.

See [more of the month’s sharpest science shots](#), selected by *Nature’s* photo team. (Sam Kriegman/Northwestern University)

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE



Study authors M. Madan Babu, Kalyan Immadisetty, Michaela Meehl, Giedre Krenciute, all of the St. Jude Department of Bone Marrow Transplantation & Cellular Therapy. (St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital)

AI accelerates dual-target CAR T design

St. Jude researchers have developed an [AI-informed computational method to design tandem CAR T cells](#) that target two cancer antigens simultaneously, addressing a major limitation in treating solid and brain tumours. Published in *Molecular Therapy*, the approach screens many theoretical bi-specific CAR designs, ranking candidates most likely to express on T cell surfaces and kill cancer cells effectively. Previous tandem CAR attempts struggled with poor surface expression and reduced function. The computationally optimized tandem CAR completely cleared heterogeneous tumours in most preclinical models, while all tumours treated with single-target CARs regrew.

Reference: [Molecular Therapy paper](#)

Features & opinion

Doing chores for science

People around the world are strapping iPhones onto their heads and recording themselves doing chores, in an attempt to beef up the training data for robots. California-based company Micro1, for example, has hired thousands of contract workers in more than 50 countries, including India, Nigeria and Argentina, to gather [real-world data on laundry folding](#), dish washing and more. Roboticists say it's going to take a long time to gather the hours they need: large language models, for example, have been trained on text that would take a person 100,000 years to read, and robots may need more. And for those doing the work on camera, there are privacy concerns on top of the drudgery.

[MIT Technology Review](#) | 8 min read

Bring on the circular economy

Researchers would prefer new materials to be recyclable, sustainable and otherwise better for the environment. But, so far, AI in material development has mainly been used to predict properties, or to speed up testing or manufacturing. Materials scientist Guoxing Chen and his colleagues argue that AI should be put to use to [accelerate the move to 'closed loop' circular economies](#) that aim to eliminate waste and pollution. This will require more data to be published about how materials degrade and fail, they say.

[Nature Reviews Materials](#) | 5 min read

What is AGI, anyway?

Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang made headlines in March when he said that artificial general intelligence (AGI) has already been achieved — at least by one definition. But [no one can agree what AGI is](#) or how it should be measured. Researchers at Google DeepMind recently introduced a taxonomy of 10 cognitive faculties that they think serve as a better foundation for benchmarking, with a prize pot for developing new tests. This is just the latest in a long and fascinating history of how we attempt to measure machine intelligence.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“The contradiction between use and trust of AI is striking.”

Quinnipiac University computer scientist Chetan Jaiswal responds to the latest results from his university’s influential public opinion poll of US adults, which found that 51% use AI for research, but only 21% trust AI most or all of the time. ([Quinnipiac University Poll](#) | 30 min read)

All eyes, including mine, are on the [Artemis II mission](#) this week as four astronauts return home from the Moon. [NASA uses AI](#) for a [variety of purposes](#), including autonomously driving Martian rovers and to [process sensor data during the construction of spacecraft, including the Orion capsule](#). But I haven’t heard of a chatbot joining the crew on their lunar flyby... have you?

Your e-mails are always welcome at ai-briefing@nature.com.

Thanks for reading,

Nicola Jones, editor, Nature Briefing: AI & Robotics

With contributions by Flora Graham

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