

# The Risks of AI

Nine areas of risk, each with a few of the best numbers we could verify

This is a starting map. Each area holds many more risks than the few shown here. Every figure names its source and its kind. A survey tells us what people believe. It cannot tell us how likely an event is. Where the evidence is thin or disputed, the line says so.

## Ethical CONSENT, HONESTY, LIKENESS

73%

of adults in an 8-country survey say it is unethical for AI firms to use copyrighted music without the artist's approval. [SURVEY]<sup>1</sup>

Up to 85%

of streams on fully AI-generated tracks on Deezer were fraudulent in 2025, by the company's own detection. [MEASURED]<sup>2</sup>

1 in 8

US young people aged 13 to 20 personally know someone targeted by deepfake nudes. [SURVEY]<sup>3</sup>

## Educational LEARNING AND SKILL

+48%, then 17% worse

Students using plain GPT-4 for math practice scored 48% better in practice, then 17% worse than classmates on an exam without AI. A tutor with guardrails largely avoided the harm. [MEASURED]<sup>13</sup>

28.4% to 22.4%

Experienced doctors' adenoma detection rate in colonoscopies done without AI, before and after they began using AI assistance. Observational. [MEASURED]<sup>14</sup>

67%

of US students agree that the more students use AI for schoolwork, the more it will harm critical thinking. [SURVEY]<sup>15</sup>

## Equity WHO BEARS THE COST

27.5% vs 15.4%

of working-age people used generative AI in the Global North vs the Global South in early 2026, and the gap is widening. [ESTIMATE]<sup>22</sup>

27.7% vs 22.8%

is how often language models chose the death penalty in hypothetical trials for speakers of African American English vs Standard American English. [MEASURED]<sup>23</sup>

3% vs 34%

Women in one image generator's pictures of a "judge" in 2023, against the real share of US judges. [MEASURED]<sup>24</sup>

\$1.32 to \$2 an hour

reported take-home pay of Kenyan workers labeling toxic content for an AI developer. The contractor disputes it. [REPORTED]<sup>25</sup>

## Economic LIVELIHOODS

26% and 36%

of illustrators and translators who answered a UK survey said they had already lost work to generative AI. [SURVEY]<sup>4</sup>

9.4% lower

monthly earnings for image-related freelancers on Upwork after image generators launched, relative to other freelancers. [MEASURED]<sup>5</sup>

24%

of music creators' revenue is projected to be at risk by 2028, in a study commissioned by a creators' rights body. [FORECAST]<sup>6</sup>

19% lower

employment of 22 to 25 year olds in the most AI-exposed jobs since late 2022, relative to less-exposed peers. Descriptive, not proof of cause. [MEASURED]<sup>7</sup>

## Emotional RELATIONSHIPS AND MENTAL HEALTH

72%

of US teens have tried an AI companion, and 52% use one at least a few times a month. [SURVEY]<sup>16</sup>

49% more often

is how much more 11 AI models affirmed users' actions than people did, a measure of flattery. [MEASURED]<sup>17</sup>

0.15%

of weekly ChatGPT users have conversations with explicit signs of suicidal planning, and 0.07% show possible signs of psychosis or mania, by OpenAI's own estimate. [ESTIMATE]<sup>18</sup>

## Expressive SAMENESS AND FLOODING

Up to 8%

more novel is how stories were rated when writers were given AI ideas. The stories also became measurably more alike. [MEASURED]<sup>26</sup>

Over 50%

of new uploads to Deezer on peak days in June 2026 were fully AI-generated. They drew only 1 to 3% of streams. [MEASURED]<sup>2</sup>

53%

of Americans say AI will worsen people's ability to think creatively. 16% say it will improve it. [SURVEY]<sup>27</sup>

## Environmental ENERGY AND WATER

1.5%

of the world's electricity went to data centers in 2024. Use is projected to more than double by 2030. [ESTIMATE AND FORECAST]<sup>8</sup>

Under 1 to ~1,000 Wh

for one short AI video clip in lab tests of open models. A median text prompt is put at 0.24 Wh. Commercial video tools publish no figures. [MEASURED]<sup>9,10,11</sup>

2 in 3

new US data centers built or planned since 2022 are in areas of high water stress. [MEASURED]<sup>12</sup>

## Epistemic TRUTH AND TRUST

55.5%

is how often people correctly identify deepfakes, which is not reliably better than chance (50%). [MEASURED]<sup>19</sup>

45%

of AI-assistant answers about the news had at least one significant issue. [MEASURED]<sup>20</sup>

\$893 million

lost in 22,364 crimes reported to the FBI in 2025 that mentioned AI. Reported crimes only, so the true figure is higher. [MEASURED]<sup>21</sup>

## Existential CONTROL, POWER, MEANING

5%

is AI researchers' median guess at the chance that AI causes human extinction or severe disempowerment (2023, 15% response rate). [SURVEY]<sup>28</sup>

0.38% vs 3%

The same risk by 2100, as judged by superforecasters vs domain experts in 2022. Experts disagree widely. [ESTIMATE]<sup>29</sup>

51% vs 15%

of US adults vs AI experts were more concerned than excited about AI in 2024. The public figure was 52% in 2026. [SURVEY]<sup>30,31</sup>

63%

of the world's cloud infrastructure market is held by three companies. [ESTIMATE]<sup>32</sup>

164 to 6

UN General Assembly vote on autonomous weapons, December 2025. There is still no binding treaty. [MEASURED]<sup>33,34</sup>

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LEDGER

- A well-designed AI tutor more than doubled learning gains over an active-learning class of 194 Harvard physics students. MEASURED<sup>35</sup>
- Conversations with an AI cut belief in conspiracy theories by about 20%, and the effect lasted at least two months. MEASURED<sup>36</sup>
- A 15-minute chat with an AI companion eased loneliness about as much as talking with a person. The relief did not build over a week. MEASURED<sup>37</sup>
- A median Gemini text prompt uses about 0.24 Wh, which Google likens to under nine seconds of TV. The figure is the company's own. ESTIMATE<sup>11</sup>
- Through mid-2025, a Yale and Brookings analysis found no discernible disruption of the wider US labor market. MEASURED<sup>38</sup>
- Ireland's arts basic income pilot paid 2,000 artists €325 a week. Recipients spent 11 more hours a week on their art. MEASURED<sup>39</sup>

What lowers these risks is the subject of the companion page, A Shared Ethic: AI in Art & Music.

WHAT NOBODY KNOWS YET

- The chance of losing control of advanced AI. Every figure is someone's judgment, and the 2026 International AI Safety Report gives no probability. (Source 40)
- How much skill is lost in music, art or writing. No controlled study has measured it.
- How common severe mental health harm is. The evidence for so-called AI psychosis is case reports.
- What commercial music and video tools cost in energy. The companies publish nothing.
- Whether efficiency gains will outrun growing use.

HOW TO READ THIS SHEET

- This sheet does not list everything. Each of the nine areas has many more aspects to consider, and one figure cannot carry a whole risk. Each line is the strongest single number we found that could be checked.
- Many figures come from one country, one platform or one study. The line names it.
- Several sources have a stake in the answer: Deezer, OpenAI, Google, Microsoft and CISAC report on their own business.
- The numbers will age. Each was checked against its source on October 11, 2026.

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