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Science - Associated Press - updated 10:41 AM ET Sep 5

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Saturday September 1 3:37 PM ET

Physicist Warns Humans About A.I.

BERLIN (AP) - People get ready: the machines are coming.

That's the word from famed British physicist Stephen Hawking, who says if humans hope to compete with the rising tide of artificial intelligence, they'll have to improve through genetic engineering.

In an interview released Saturday with the newsmagazine Focus, Hawking said science could increase the complexity of DNA and "improve" human beings.

He conceded that it would be a long process, "but we should follow this road if we want biological systems to remain superior to electronic ones."

"In contrast with our intellect, computers double their performance every 18 months," he added. "So the danger is real that they could develop intelligence and take over the world."

"We must develop as quickly as possible technologies that make possible a direct connection between brain and computer, so that artificial brains contribute to human intelligence rather than opposing it," Hawking said.

Hawking, the author of the best-selling "A Brief History of Time," holds a prestigious Cambridge University chair once held by Sir Isaac Newton.

The 59-year-old lives with Lou Gehrig's disease ([news](#) - [web sites](#)) and uses a motorized wheelchair and computer voice synthesizer.

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