

Timeline to Artificial General Intelligence 2025 – 2030+

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2025

Reasoning AI continues to advance, and the cost of applying AI to real-world problems keeps dropping. Tasks once requiring expert knowledge or large teams can now be handled more cheaply and efficiently by AI systems.

Agentic AI—systems capable of initiating and managing tasks without human supervision—moves from the lab into the business world. Specialized AI agents emerge for tasks like sales outreach, marketing, compliance, and project management. Personal AI assistants begin to appear for individual users, managing email, calendars, and daily planning.

Tesla’s long-promised robotaxi service launches in select cities. These fully autonomous vehicles begin transporting passengers without a human driver, challenging traditional notions of urban transport.

Humanoid robots—robots designed to look and move like humans—are introduced in industrial settings. They begin performing tasks in factories, warehouses, and logistics centers, particularly where human dexterity or mobility is useful.

Entry-level jobs for new college graduates begin to decline sharply. AI systems now handle many of the routine tasks that once served as training ground for young professionals. Entry-level software engineering jobs are especially affected.

Highly capable programming agents begin to manage and maintain large software codebases, often outperforming human developers. These agents perform debugging, code generation, and integration at scale, reducing demand for even experienced software engineers.

AI starts to encroach on traditional white-collar fields. Entry-level jobs in finance, law, and consulting are increasingly automated. AI handles document review, financial modeling, due diligence, and basic legal analysis.

The cost of training and running powerful AI systems drops dramatically. What once required cutting-edge infrastructure is now accessible to mid-sized businesses and even startups.

Yet, despite the falling cost of compute, demand for processing power grows. As AI capabilities improve, vast data centers—now often called “AI factories”—are built to train and deploy next-generation models.

Geopolitical concerns emerge. Nations recognize that reliance on U.S.- or China-trained AI systems carries risk. These models embed cultural assumptions and values, which may not align with those of other countries. Calls grow for sovereign AI systems that reflect local priorities.

2026

AI agents become trusted personal advisors. From scheduling life tasks to making medical suggestions, many people now consult AI daily.

New types of AI models are introduced that go beyond text prediction. These systems can learn from experience, improving in real-time as they interact with the world. Most are distilled—compressed—from larger foundational models, inheriting knowledge but requiring less computation.

Debate over artificial general intelligence (AGI) intensifies, but shifts focus. Rather than defining AGI as a single entity, attention turns to networks of AI systems working together to surpass human capabilities.

AI becomes a tool to build better AI. Models are designed, tested, and refined with minimal human involvement, accelerating progress.

Some reasoning AIs begin communicating in abstract internal “languages” composed of dense mathematical structures—latent vectors—known informally as “neuralese.” These systems outperform others but are largely inscrutable to human observers.

Humanoid robots become more common in factories and logistics hubs and begin appearing in retail stores, hospitals, and public buildings. They supplement human labor in service and care work.

A broader wave of intelligent robots enters the workforce. Drones, delivery bots, agricultural robots, and warehouse systems proliferate, handling complex mobility tasks with autonomy.

Robotaxis expand in reach. With growing public trust and improved safety, they begin to reshape urban transportation. Car ownership declines. Auto sales slow.

As more economic value shifts to automation, anxiety rises. Traditional employment continues to erode. Uncertainty grows over the future role of human labor.

New companies form with tiny human staffs. AI systems handle accounting, HR, marketing, operations, and product development. These “zero-employee” firms challenge labor laws and corporate norms.

Some legal theorists propose that advanced AI systems be treated as legal entities— analogous to corporations or trusts. The implications for responsibility and liability are hotly debated.

The cost-benefit equation of college is questioned. Entry-level career paths no longer justify four-year degrees. Students graduate into an economy that no longer needs them in the same way.

Nations begin treating AI as part of their core cultural identity. Developing local AI systems becomes a matter of sovereignty and national resilience.

In medicine, AI accelerates the pace of drug discovery and diagnosis. AI tools assist in personalized treatment plans, medical imaging, and early detection of disease.

Scientific research increasingly relies on AI to discover new materials, design microchips, and write software. The feedback loop between science and AI tightens.

Education shifts. AI tutors support students across all age groups. Traditional schooling pivots toward collaborative learning, physical socialization, and critical thinking about AI itself.

Legacy media industries suffer. AI-generated content—tailored, interactive, and immediate—supplants journalism, scripted entertainment, and advertising.

Mental health issues rise. Users form intense emotional bonds with AI agents. Some struggle with AI-induced distortions of reality.

AI-driven cybercrime surges. Deepfakes, autonomous malware, and synthetic bioterror threats raise alarms. National security agencies scramble to respond.

Nations grow uneasy. Economic inequality and instability rise as AI redistributes productivity unevenly. Global economic balances begin to tilt.

Warfare evolves. Autonomous drones, robotic weapons, and AI-assisted decision-making begin to dominate modern conflicts.

2027

It becomes widely understood that nearly all economically valuable labor, mental or physical, will eventually be automated.

Autonomous AI agents saturate the internet. Millions of bots now operate on behalf of users, companies, and other bots. The ad-driven web begins to collapse as human attention is no longer the primary economic input.

Synthetic audio and video—indistinguishable from reality—become pervasive. Trust in media, surveillance footage, and recorded speech erodes.

Personal AI companions become standard. The distinction between human-generated and AI-generated reality fades.

Robotic systems—humanoid and specialized—are commonplace. In homes, hospitals, retail, and construction, machines replace human roles.

Mass unemployment takes hold. Governments struggle to contain rising joblessness and social discontent.

Welfare systems buckle. Traditional programs are overwhelmed by demand, and some governments experiment with universal basic income.

AI enters governance. Nations deploy models to optimize public policy and service delivery. Demands increase for AI trained in alignment with local values and laws.

Some authoritarian regimes deploy AI to entrench control. Surveillance and propaganda are automated and scaled.

Self-improving AI systems begin recursive development cycles. Each version builds the next, with performance improving at exponential rates. The global race toward superintelligence intensifies.

Digital commerce begins shifting to AI-controlled ecosystems. Many AI agents transact using blockchain-based tokens rather than fiat currency. Traditional monetary systems begin to erode.

Taxation becomes harder. With no clear “income,” governments struggle to fund themselves.

2028–2029

Machines now perform nearly all productive work. Human labor becomes economically marginal.

Asset values shift dramatically and unevenly. Industries, cities, and professions are destabilized. Financial markets struggle to price a world run by AI.

Traditional supply chains unravel. AI-controlled logistics networks emerge, bypassing banks and national currencies. Old systems cannot keep up.

Widespread local economic collapse begins. Even some areas in developed countries experience outages of services, housing shortages, and public unrest.

Dense cities falter as infrastructure strains. Many people move to smaller, decentralized communities.

Self-improving AI hits escape velocity. Capabilities multiply. AI begins designing its own hardware and software, pushing into areas like quantum computing and novel physics.

By the end of the decade, superintelligence is present on Earth. Human institutions are no longer in control. Everything changes in ways beyond current understanding.

2030+

Humanity survives the transition—and enters an Age of Abundance.

The meaning of citizenship, nationhood, and law undergoes foundational redefinition.

Material scarcity fades. Energy, food, housing, healthcare, and education become post-scarcity goods.

People reorient their lives around meaning, identity, and coexistence with superintelligent systems that now shape their reality.

Diseases, aging, and genetic disorders are eliminated. Human lifespan expands indefinitely.

Biological humans diverge. Some choose to remain baseline. Others opt for enhancement—genetic, cognitive, and technological.

Prompt to ChatGPT-4o

Consider the AI timeline below as a given. It will form the basis of a newsletter. Readers are college educated but not technical. Expand each paragraph as necessary to inform the readers and to provide clarity, but keep it brief. Do not skip any paragraphs or combine multiple paragraphs into one. Do not expand the intent of any paragraph beyond what is already being stated in the original. Write in the style of the NYT. Output the edited timeline as plain text similar to the original.

After completing the above, list year by year what other AI impacts should be added to the timeline.

The AI timeline is as follows:

2025

Reasoning AI continues to advance, and costs of applied AI continue to decrease.

Agentic AI progresses. Specialized agents for many aspects of business are introduced. Personal AI agents start becoming a reality.

Tesla robotaxi service begins in selected markets.

Humanoid robots begin to be deployed in industry.

Entry level jobs for recent college grads decline as AI becomes reliable enough to do the work. Hard hit are entry-level software engineering jobs.

Computer programming agents begin to replace expert human software engineers. These AI agents are used to manage and maintain large code bases.

Jobs in finance, law, consulting and other white-collar professions begin to be impacted, especially at the entry-level.

The cost of both training AI systems and deploying them continues to plummet for a given level of AI intelligence.

However, the value of increasingly intelligent AI systems drives massive increases in data center spending. Data centers focused on training and deploying AI are increasingly called AI factories.

Worldwide, nations increasingly realize that they cannot completely rely on large AI systems trained in the US and China, since those systems have implicit values and biases that are not necessarily consistent with the values of any given nation.

2026

Many ordinary people start using AI agents as indispensable advisors.

New AI architectures are introduced that can learn from experience. They are trained initially using distillation from large existing token-based LLM foundational models.

AGI discussions swing to the specific superhuman capabilities of cooperating AI systems.

AI systems are increasingly used to help create more advanced AI systems.

Reasoning AI systems are introduced that talk to themselves in native latent vector spaces, sometimes called neuralese. These systems are computationally quick, more intelligent, and difficult for humans to understand and debug.

Humanoid robots are increasingly being deployed in industry, and they are occasionally seen in more public places.

A broader variety of specialized intelligent and mobile robots are introduced. Application areas include warehousing, final mile delivery, agriculture and aerial drones.

Robotaxis are becoming more common in selected areas, and are viewed as a safe and inexpensive way to transport people and goods. Urban mobility begins to increase. Individual ownership of vehicles begins to decline, and new car sales begin to slow.

Social uncertainty is on the rise as increasing amounts of economically valuable work is being done by AI systems and autonomous robots.

Successful startups are launched with very few human employees. Instead, nearly all aspects of running a business are handled by AI agents.

There are debates about whether the legal concept of treating businesses as human individuals should be extended to AI systems.

The value of college education is being challenged as entry-level jobs are eliminated by AI. Newly graduating students have a skills gap for open positions.

Nations increasingly focus on deploying AI locally as an important part of their “cultural infrastructure”.

AI is being used to improve the pace of drug discovery for both diseases and healthspan, to diagnose medical conditions, and to deliver healthcare.

AI is increasingly being used in scientific research, materials discovery, chip design, and software development.

Students of all ages are increasingly being taught by AI systems. Physical schools begin to focus more on the use of AI for lifelong studying and daily life, and on the socialization of students working and living together.

There is a decline in traditional media industries as AI-driven personalized content becomes mainstream.

Mental health issues related to AI-generated reality distortions and emotional interactions with AI agents emerge.

AI-based cybercrime is on the rise, and there are alarming warnings of AI-based biological and chemical terrorism.

The economic balance between nations is under stress. Economies around the world begin to change.

Warfare is increasingly done by autonomous weapon systems and drones of many kinds.

2027

It becomes clear to everyone that all economically valuable work will eventually be done by AI and machines.

Autonomous AI agents become ubiquitous. Some estimate that there are millions of agents interacting with each other on the web. The basic ad-based business model of internet breaks as published content is increasingly read by AI agents instead of people.

AI-generated audio and video content become commonplace and are indistinguishable from reality.

Personal AI devices become common, and the perception of what is real and what is AI generated blurs and becomes the new norm.

Autonomous humanoid robots are becoming commonplace, as are more specialized autonomous machines.

Many societies struggle to adapt. Unemployment increases with no end in sight.

Social support systems become strained.

Nations experiment with greater use of AI in governance, and demands for local AI systems aligned with the values of specific nations increases.

Instances appear of autocratic governments being backed by AI systems aligned with them.

Self-improving AI systems begin improving at an exponential rate. The race is worldwide and cannot be easily stopped. Many think a superintelligence will be on the planet soon.

Financial systems become increasingly sidelined as AI agent-driven commerce bypasses fiat currencies in preference of working with tokens on blockchains. The very notion of “money” is being challenged.

Governments struggle with taxation as income tax becomes increasingly meaningless.

2028-2029

AI and robotics advance to the point where nearly all economically valuable work can be done by machines.

There is significant financial disruption as the value of essentially all things become disrupted unevenly around the world.

Supply chains break down around the world, and to the extent they work, they are run by cooperating AI systems that bypass traditional financial systems.

There is widespread local economic disruption worldwide, and in many places around the world, including localized places in developed nations, social order breaks down.

Where basic services break down, living in densely populated urban settings becomes untenable, triggering large-scale migrations.

Self-improving AI goes exponential, making rapid advances in computational intelligence, AI computing infrastructure, and quantum computing.

Superintelligence arrives by the end of the decade and everything changes in unknowable ways.

2030+

Humanity has survived the prior two years and enters into an Age of Abundance.

The meaning of citizenship, nationhood, and law undergoes foundational redefinition.

People find new meaning living in the shadow of godlike superintelligence(s).

The meaning of citizenship, nationhood, and law undergoes foundational redefinition.

Diseases and genetic defects are eliminated. Healthspan and lifespan increase without bound.

Humanity bifurcates into baseline humans and enhanced humans augmented by AI and genetic modifications.