

Does AI Affect Your Smarts?



Artificial intelligence, or **AI**, has quickly become part of everyday life. We can use it to answer questions, find information, write messages, recommend movies, plan trips, and

even help us make decisions. AI can be very useful—but some people wonder: **Could using AI too much actually make us less mentally sharp?**

The answer may depend on **how we use it**.

Think about calculators. Before calculators became common, people had to do more math in their heads or on paper. Today, we can get an answer almost instantly. That certainly makes life easier. But if we always use a calculator, we may get less practice doing simple math ourselves.

AI can work in much the same way. Imagine you are trying to remember the name of an actor from an old movie. Instead of thinking about it, you immediately ask AI. You get the answer in seconds. That's convenient—but you may have missed an opportunity to exercise your **memory** and discover that the answer might have come to you on its own.

Our brains benefit from being challenged. Reading, remembering, solving puzzles, learning something new, having conversations, and making decisions all give our brains opportunities to work. If we let technology do all of these things for us, we may not get as much practice using our own mental skills.

But there is another side to the story. AI can also be a **learning tool**. It can explain a difficult subject, give us new ideas, help us organize information,

or answer questions we have been curious about. In that way, AI can encourage us to learn rather than simply give us an answer.

The important question may not be, **“Does AI make us smarter or less smart?”** Perhaps the better question is: **“Are we using AI to help us think, or are we using it instead of thinking?”**

Throughout history, people have created tools that changed the way we think and work like books, calculators, and computers. These tools didn't necessarily make people less intelligent. What mattered was how they were used.

Maybe AI is simply another tool. It can save us time and help us learn, but we don't have to let it do all the thinking for us.

Perhaps the smartest way to use AI is to let it help us—but not let it think for us.