

Three Laws of Robotics

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Isaac Asimov

The three laws of robotics are a set of rules devised by the science fiction author Isaac Asimov. The Three Laws are:

- 1. A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.**
- 2. A robot must obey the orders given to it by human beings, except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.**
- 3. A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Laws.**

These form an organizing principle and unifying theme for Asimov's robotic-based fiction. The Laws are incorporated into almost all of the "robots appearing in his fiction, and cannot be bypassed, being intended as a safety feature. Many of Asimov's robot stories involve robots behaving in unusual ways as an unintended consequence of how the robot applies the Three Laws to the situation in which it finds itself.

Before Asimov began writing, the majority of artificial intelligence in fiction followed the *Frankenstein* pattern. Asimov found this unbearably tedious.

Additional law

The 1974, Lyuben Dilov novel "*The Trip of Icarus*" introduced a Fourth Law of robotics:

A robot must establish its identity as a robot in all cases.

Dilov gives reasons for the fourth safeguard in this way: "The last Law has put an end to the expensive aberrations of designers to give psychorobots as humanlike a form as possible. And to the resulting misunderstandings..."