

# The Peanut Butter Intelligence Test

The Peanut Butter Test, like the Turing Test, has the drawback/ strength of relying on one entity which is assumed to be intelligent to determine whether another entity is intelligent.

However, the Peanut Butter Test, unlike the Turing Test, does not rely on a definition of intelligence as being the ability to successfully mimic an assumed intelligence. Instead, intelligence is defined as the ability to manipulate the environment in such a way that a continued desirable interface with the environment is assured. In other words, forces contained in the environment which might disrupt the desirable interface are anticipated and countered. An entity which can do this successfully in a complex and threatening environment would be classified as intelligent. A desirable interface could mean anything, but for the Peanut Butter Test, I propose that it be peanut butter.

As you may begin to guess, a major ingredient to the Peanut Butter Test is goals. Goals are the desirable interface. I think peanut butter is a good choice because it is fairly simple, instead of something like happiness, which no one understands (or knows how to describe). I personally believe that to be intelligent, a thing must be able to learn, and to effectively learn, it must have goals or needs to direct the learning.

Now, suppose a machine is built, and we want to know if it is intelligent. We give the machine a taste for peanut butter, perhaps by attaching a chemical sensor to it which stimulates a reinforcement circuit or program whenever peanut butter is detected by the sensor. It would also make things more interesting if the peanut butter were "consumed" after being sensed, perhaps by arranging the machine to be powered by burning peanut butter, but this is not strictly necessary. Then, we take the machine out into some fairly interesting and complex environment like the wilds of North Dakota or the wilds of downtown Boston, Mass. and bid it goodbye.

After a period of time, maybe a couple of years, we go and look up our machine and see how it is doing. If it is still sitting in the same place, with rancid peanut butter stuck on its sensor, then there is not much to conclude. However, if it turned out that the rain had washed away its initial supply of peanut butter, and it had gone out in search of more, and in the process of doing that had learned how to speak French, and had acquired controlling stock in a peanut butter company, and had acquired several parcels of prime peanut growing land, and was simply rolling in peanut butter, then we can conclude that our machine has gone out and assured itself of a continuous supply of peanut butter regardless of the vagaries of the environment, and is therefore intelligent.

[The Peanut Butter Intelligence Test](#) with visuals and audio.