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'How do I open this door?' ... 'Allow me, I have a spare hand'

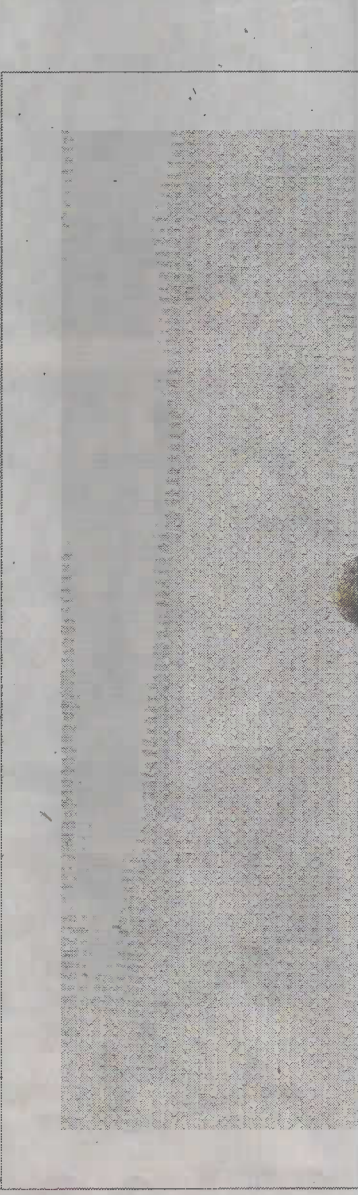
A VIDEO showing a robot dog having a door opened for it by another has gone viral, with more than five million views on YouTube.

Footage of the SpotMini models, built by Boston Dynamics, was uploaded in the Hey Buddy, Can You Give Me A Hand? film which shows how they can work as teams to perform tasks.

When the first robot approaches a closed door and realises it cannot open it, it signals to another who, handily, has an arm with which it turns the

handle and holds the door open. The 30kg robot can perform for 90 minutes between charges and the company says it can also do the dishes, pick up rubbish and do other household tasks aided by sensors and 3D cameras.

Mark Blunden and Robin de Peyer



After you... robot dog opens door for friend

The march of the robots may have just got a little harder to halt (Katie Gibbons writes). Footage of a four-legged robot walking purposefully up to a metal door and opening it for a

"friend" has been released by an engineering company. The clip from Boston Dynamics shows one of its latest robots mastering an impressive — and somewhat unnerving — feat of dexterity. It extends its "neck" then uses a gripper on the end to twist the handle and swing the door open. It then props it with its left front foot, uses its neck to swing it back and holds it open for another robot to



BOSTON DYNAMICS



The robot dog opens the door with its neck before holding it for another to walk through scurry through. The first machine then follows its companion while keeping the door open with its neck.

Weighing 30kg (4st 10lb) and standing 84cm (33in) tall, SpotMini is one of several dog-like robots developed by the US company. Described as "a nimble robot that

handles objects, climbs stairs and will operate in offices, homes and outdoors" it can last 90 minutes on a charge.

The clip was played five million times within hours of being posted. Many viewers questioned what else a robot that can open locked doors could be capable of.

Zach Braff, the actor, wrote on Twitter: "Well, we had a good run. I for one welcome our new robot overlords."



▲ The SpotMini robot is able to turn the handle to open a door with its 'fifth limb' before propping it ajar with its front leg

PHOTOGRAPHS:
BOSTON DYNAMICS

Robot dog can open doors - and it's also quite polite

Alex Hern

Eight years after it was first revealed, the uncanny gait of Boston Dynamics' quadrupedal robots is still unsettling. But a new video shows the company's top robot, the SpotMini, crossing a new threshold - literally - as it demonstrates that it can open doors.

The video depicts a SpotMini,

four-legged yellow machines that stand about a metre high, flummoxed by a closed door, before a second robot of the same type, equipped with a fifth limb extending from its back, arrives to save the day. The second bot turns the handle, pulls the door open, and holds it for the first to walk through, before it follows.

The actions may sound prosaic, but small touches betray the complexity of the programming. After the second SpotMini pulls the door slightly ajar, it hooks one foot behind it, holding it open while it moves aside to provide more room to swing it the whole way.

SpotMini is a miniaturised version of a robot called BigDog, that Boston Dynamics designed for the US army.

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The Guardian 14/2/18