

# Sony revives robot pet dog

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Sony had to put its previous version of the dog down when its business struggled

Japanese electronics giant Sony is marking the year of the dog by bringing back to life its robot canine—packed with artificial intelligence and internet capability.

Sony's new "aibo" dog is an ivory-white puppy-sized, 30 centimetre (one foot) hound with flapping black ears and a [wagging tail](#). It has the ability to roll its eyes to display emotions.

It comes with an array of sensors, cameras and microphones and boasts internet connectivity, allowing owners to play with the pet remotely via smartphone.

Sony's earlier aibo robodog was put to sleep more a decade ago—a victim of business restructuring—shocking fans of the digital pet.

Sony rolled out the first-generation aibo in June 1999, with the initial batch of 3,000 selling out in just 20 minutes, despite a hefty price tag of 250,000 yen (\$2,200 at current rates).

Over the following years, more than 150,000 units were sold, with numerous models ranging from gleaming metallic-silver versions to round-faced cub-like models.

But by 2006, Sony was in trouble. Its business [model](#) was broken and it was facing fierce competition from rivals in all fields.

The aibo, an expensive and somewhat frivolous luxury, had to go.

The company kept its "aibo clinic" open until March 2014, but then—politely—told dedicated and loving owners that they were on their own, prompting retired Sony engineers to offer repairs.

The new aibo is launched in Japan in January but will not come cheap, priced at 198,000 yen (around \$1,750).

Sony will not resume repairs for older models.

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