

Two Robot Chefs Make Omelets

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MotoMan SDA10, developed by Yaskawa Technology, makes an omelet. Image credit: AFP BB News.

(PhysOrg.com) -- No "house of the future" is complete without a household robot to do the cooking and cleaning. Although today's robots still have a ways to go before substituting for a real live-in maid, researchers are working on their development.

It seems one of the most popular tasks for household robots is making omelets. Two recent robots - MotoMan SDA10 developed by Yaskawa Technology and Cogniron developed by researchers at the Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne (EPFL) - were both taught how to cook the perfect omelet.

At a recent robot fair in Osaka, Japan, Yaskawa Technology demonstrated Motoman SDA10 as it cooked an omelet, or "Okonomiyaki cake," in front of crowds. The humanoid mixed together the batter, eggs, cheese, and cabbage, and then flipped and fried the omelet. The company explained that a robot that has the flexibility to make omelets (Motoman SDA10 has seven axes of movement per arm) can also perform a variety of other jobs, such as assembling digital cameras.

Meanwhile, in Switzerland, researchers at EPFL's Learning Algorithms and Systems Laboratory (LASA) are developing a humanoid that progressively learns to cook an omelet from a

human instructor. The Chief Cook Robot is part of the lab's Cogniron (Cognitive Robot Companion) project.

Cogniron is intended to be not just a ready-made device, but an "artificial creature" that continually improves its abilities by acquiring new knowledge and skills. As a cook robot, the Cogniron remembers the exact movements as demonstrated by a human, and repeats the movements to perform tasks such as whipping eggs, cutting ham, and grating cheese.

EPFL's Learning Algorithms and Systems Laboratory: <http://lasa.epfl.ch>

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