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## Spider robot unveiled in US

Climbs up walls and crawls across glass - creepy

by Katie Scott published on 8 July 2008

A team of scientists in the US has created a robot that can climb up walls and even crawl across windows.

The robots have been designed as part of the Mobile Robotics and Transducers Programme at SRI, and are about the same size as a remote controlled car.

They use the same principles behind electrostatic charges, in other words, the science that makes balloons stick to ceilings after being rubbed.

The robots harness these charges using caterpillar tracks similar to those on toy tanks, which have materials inside with electro-adhesive properties.

When a charge is put through the tracks, they automatically attract to the surface that they are creeping along.

"What we've invented is a way to induce charges on the wall using a power supply located on the robot", research engineer Harsha Prahlad told BBC World Service's Digital Planet programme.

"The robot carries with it positive and negative charges, and when the walls sees these charges it automatically generates the opposite charge. The robot can then clamp onto those charges."

"In some ways it is similar to rubbing a balloon and sticking it on the wall, except we carry our own power supply and are able to control the adhesion."

The robots are being touted for use by the military, for reconnaissance, for service applications and as toys.

In the meantime, the scientists are now working



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on a way to apply their technology to more insect-like robots.