

AI Is Now The Weapon And The Shield In Cybersecurity

Most organisations are behind on both sides of that fight. What the 2026 data shows, what already works, and the skills gap standing in the way.

Four Things This Deck Covers

01 AI is now the biggest driver on both sides

94% call it the top force reshaping cybersecurity, and governance is still catching up.

02 What AI-enabled attacks already cost

\$6 million a breach, and 92% trace back to one unlocked door.

03 The proven payoff of AI in defence today

Two months faster, close to two million dollars cheaper, already documented.

04 The skills gap reshaping the SOC

AI security is now the top critical hire, and over-automation is its own risk.

94%

Of security leaders say AI is the single most significant driver of change in cybersecurity this year.

World Economic Forum, Global Cybersecurity Outlook 2026

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AI Is Not Helping One Side. It Is Helping Both.

The same capability that lets a defender triage ten thousand alerts in minutes lets an attacker generate a convincing phishing campaign or a working exploit in a fraction of the old time. 87% of leaders now call AI vulnerabilities the fastest-growing risk category, and the share of organisations formally reviewing an AI tool's security before deployment rose from just 37% to 64% this year, real progress, but still leaving more than a third with no review at all.

World Economic Forum, Global Cybersecurity Outlook 2026

\$6M / \$4.99M

Average cost of an AI-enabled breach against the global average. AI-driven attacks are up 56% year over year.

IBM, Cost of a Data Breach Report 2026

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The Shortage Has Shifted, Not Shrunk

95% of cybersecurity professionals report at least one skills need, and 59% now call it a critical or significant gap, up 15 points on the year before. AI security is the single most cited critical-skills priority, at 41%, ahead of cloud security at 36%. Budget, not talent availability, is now the leading reason teams can't close it.

ISC2 Cybersecurity Workforce Study, 2025

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92%

Of organisations breached through their own AI models had no proper AI access controls in place at all.

IBM, Cost of a Data Breach Report 2026

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Deploying AI In Defence Already Pays Off

Organisations running AI and automation extensively across prevention, detection, investigation and response closed breaches roughly two months faster and paid close to \$2 million less than the ones running none of it. That is not a projection, it is what already happened in 2026. The practical starting point is not a full AI SOC rebuild, it is alert triage and containment first, where the payoff is already proven.

IBM, Cost of a Data Breach Report 2026

75% by 2030

Of SOC teams are projected to see their foundational security analysis skills erode from over-dependence on automation and AI.

Gartner, 2026 Security & Risk Management Summit

Lock The Door Before **You Build A Bigger Shield.**

Access control, phased AI deployment, and skills investment are the same project, not three separate ones. Start with the one nobody's watching.



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