

Biohackers have hands on CRISPR, but mostly to make beer

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

The advent of enzyme complex CRISPR/Cas9 has ushered in a new age of genetic manipulation—it could help us [cure diseases](#) or [resuscitate extinct species](#). One of CRISPR's big advantages is that it's much easier to use than its predecessors. So easy, in fact, that amateur biohackers are using it in their experiments, according to [a report from *Nature News*](#).

It's natural to be nervous about this. CRISPR is a powerful tool that scientists don't fully understand, and it can have unintended consequences even when used cautiously. But a lot of the concerns are isolated to some of the most advanced labs in the world. Yes, CRISPR is easy to use, but it's not *that* easy to get the exact results you want, even for the experts. It's highly unlikely that an amateur biohacker with little scientific knowledge could use CRISPR to create an unstoppable virus or change the human genome. It's just too difficult.

Plus, biohackers don't seem to be into that in the first place. The biohackers highlighted in the *Nature News* piece are more interested in engineering yeast to make unique beer or vegan cheese, or changing the color of a flower. On [one message board](#), a biohacker with the alias plambe planned to use CRISPR to modify stress hormone receptors in plants in order to “deliver shit wherever I want when I want in the nucleus.”

Read full, original post: [Biohackers are now using CRISPR](#)