

The AI Avatar Scorecard

5 video-avatar engines tested hands-on — ratings, prices, and the silent hallucination gap.

ENGINE	PRICE	RATING	VERDICT
★ HeyGen Avatar V	\$29/mo Creator	7/10	Only editorial-grade — English only
Synthesia Selfie	\$18/mo Starter	≤2/10	Mis-clones the voice; wardrobe-by-prompt is unique
Akool Instant	Free	3/10	Cheapest (\$0) but share-only output
Tavus	\$59/mo	Skipped	Real-time conversational API — wrong fit for editorial
AI Studios / DeepBrain	Free UI	Skipped	API gated to enterprise sales

THE VERDICT

HeyGen Avatar V is the only platform that cleared 7/10 for talking-head editorial — and only in English. It conditions on the full reference-video token sequence, so a 15-second clip yields a 10-minute video that still looks like you. Everything else is situational.

- The Hallucination Gap: HeyGen silently rewrites non-English scripts (a German render turned a hometown into slang; "prommer.net" → "Proma.net"; Spanish 32% / French 23% character similarity). Synthesia mis-clones the voice. Neither UI warns you — always review localized output.
- Total experiment spend: \$47. EU AI Act Article 50 watermarking deadline lands August 2, 2026.