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Introduction

In 1801 Joseph Jacquard invents a textile machine which is operated by punch cards. The machine is called a programmable loom and goes into mass production that led researches for the development of industrial robots.

The idea of a robot is not new. For thousands of years man has been imagining intelligent mechanized devices that perform human-like tasks. He has built automatic toys and mechanisms and imagined robots in drawings, books, plays and science fiction movies.

The need, to produce a job at a consistent quality at a steady rate, to work on a 24 hour basis all week (without demanding wage increase, benefits, holidays and sick pay), for better material utilisation, faster throughput times in hazardous areas (unsafe to humans), able to lift heavier weights and handle large forces with caution, accuracy and flexibility led man to research and to discover robots.

What is the definition of a 'robot'?

"A reprogrammable, multifunctional manipulator designed to move material, parts, tools, or specialised devices through various programmed motions for the performance of a variety of tasks"

THE USE OF ROBOTS

Today, we find most robots working for people in factories, warehouses, laboratories, hospitals, the military, aerospace and entertainment.