

DROIDS AND ROBOTS

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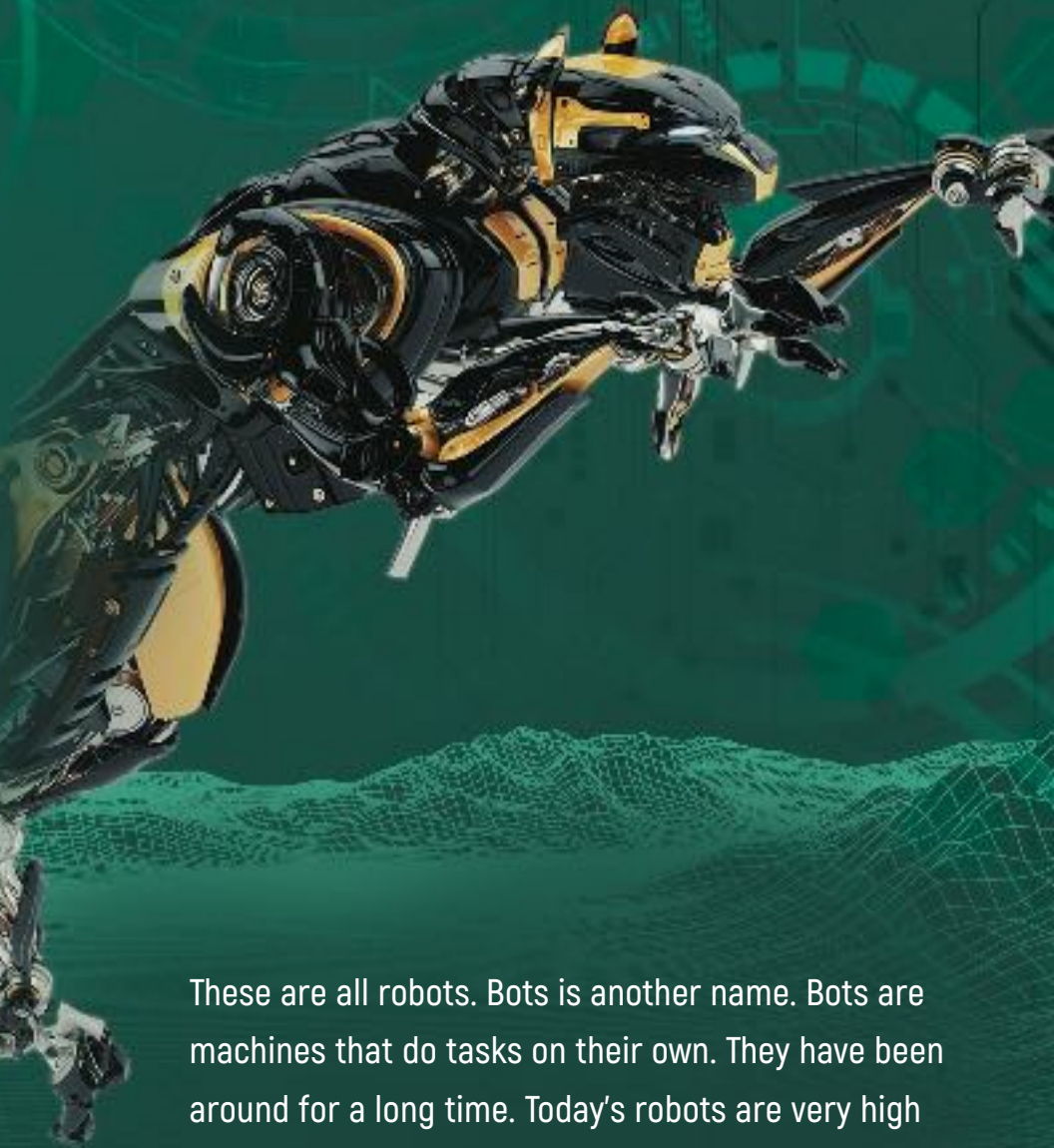
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CHAPTER

1

Born in Fiction

A metal arm bends and twists. It welds a car door. A big cat races across a field. This is not like other cats, though. It is made of metal and wire. A woman greets people at a store. Her head is plastic.



These are all robots. Bots is another name. Bots are machines that do tasks on their own. They have been around for a long time. Today's robots are very high tech. Most are run by computers.

From the Minds of Writers

Androids are robots that have a human look. Droids is another name. These robots began in the minds of writers. Authors wrote about future worlds. The worlds were full of androids. They could think and feel. These droids acted like people. Most obeyed their owners. Others fought them. They rose up and fought back. Their goal was to take over.

Real robots are not like that. They don't look much like people. The world is full of them. Some build cars. Others help doctors. Troops use them in battle. Bots even do chores around the house. They can make life easier and safer.



FAST FACT: A play from the 1920s titled *R.U.R.* included machine beings. The writer called the beings *robota*. It was shortened to *robot*. That is where the word comes from.

Fans and Critics

It seems clear. Robots help us. They keep costs down. That means items are cheaper. This helps buyers. Even still, not everyone is a fan. Robots do jobs once held by people. Because of this, some people are out of work. These jobs may never come back. This is a big problem. There are no easy answers.

Tech keeps getting better. Robots get smarter. They can do more. This means other jobs will be lost. There is hope, though. The robot industry is big. It can create new jobs.



History

Robots may seem new, but they are not. **Automated** machines go back thousands of years. There was a Greek man. His name was Archytas. He made a bird out of wood. It flew on steam power. This was around 400 BC.

A clock is a kind of robot too. Springs and gears run on their own. They keep track of time. The first clocks were made in the 1300s.

It was the late 1700s. The **steam engine** came into use. Many tasks were automated after that. Machines wove cloth. Mills ground grain. These tools were helpful. Food and clothes could be made faster. This caused a big shift in jobs. Over time, more people worked in factories.

DROIDS AND ROBOTS

Robots may seem new, but their roots trace back more than 2000 years. Today, we have more robots than ever before. They work in factories, cook our meals, and even perform surgery. As robots become more like humans, what new changes will they bring to our world?



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