**Assembly line**

Assembly line is a manufacturing technique in which a product is carried by some form of mechanized conveyor among stations at which the various operations necessary to its assembly are performed. It is used to assemble quickly large numbers of a uniform product. Henry [Ford](http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1E1-Ford-Hen.html) is often credited with establishing the first assembly line for his Model T**. So long as an assembly line's output is high, the cost per unit is relatively low. It is somewhat inflexible, however, as it must be designed and installed for a particular product. Also, the operations on the product usually must be performed in a sequence that is strictly ordered. A malfunction or shortage of parts that shuts down a single assembly station necessitates shutdown of the entire line.** Traditional assembly lines had come under criticism from those concerned with their effects on workers, but industrial robots now perform many of the repetitive tasks. Recent variations on the assembly-line process, such as teams of workers responsible for multiple steps, have increased productivity and employee interest.