



robot



robot (n.)

1923, from English translation of 1920 play "R.U.R." ("Rossum's Universal Robots"), by Karel Capek (1890-1938), from Czech *robotnik* "forced worker," from *robota* "forced labor, compulsory service, drudgery," from *robotiti* "to work, drudge," from an Old Czech source akin to Old Church Slavonic *rabota* "servitude," from *rabu* "slave," from Old Slavic **orbu-*, from PIE **orbh-* "pass from one status to another" (see **orphan**). The Slavic word thus is a cousin to German *Arbeit* "work" (Old High German *arabeit*). According to Rawson the word was popularized by Karel Capek's play, "but was coined by his brother Josef (the two often collaborated), who used it initially in a short story."

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