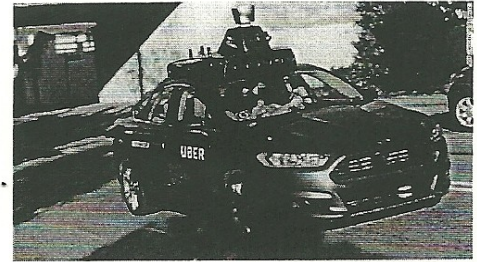


Robots: Is your job at risk?

A Uber driverless Ford Fusion drives down Smallman Street in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (Photo)

Almost 100 years ago, the U.S. horse population peaked at about 26 million. There's been, of course, a steady decline since then, thanks to the growth of machines -- most notably, cars.



- 5 Today, a debate rages over workers and whether we too may become obsolete as society becomes automated. The fear of robots replacing jobs is real -- consider self-checkout kiosks and self-driving trucks. The good news is that specific lines of work won't suffer the same fate as horses. Which ones?

10 Jobs that require only a high school degree are most in danger. Take cashiers and toll booth operators, for example. These jobs don't require much human analysis so are easier for machines to handle. Some have already been replaced by automated systems. As many as 7.5 million retail jobs are at risk of automation in the next decade, according to a study from financial services firm Cornerstone Capital Group.

15 A shift is already underway. Self-checkouts are being installed. McDonald's and Wendy's have added kiosks in some restaurants, allowing customers to place orders on a touchscreen. The payment process is automated through a customer's smartphone, so a customer can skip the line and walk out.

Luxury and boutique stores will be slower to adapt the technology. They rely more heavily on a human staff to provide specialized service to customers.

20 Some of the world's biggest companies are investing billions to build robots intended to replace human workers. The obvious example is self-driving cars. Car and tech companies are in an intense race to get there first. Once cars and trucks can drive themselves, there's less need for humans to sit behind the wheel of a cab, Uber or tractor trailer.

25 Vivek Wadhwa, author of "The Driver in the Driverless Car," estimates that close to 5 million driving jobs will be lost in the early 2020s, as vehicles achieve full autonomy. The optimistic case for drivers is that jobs often involve other tasks, such as unloading merchandise. Robots currently don't carry packages or Chinese food orders to your front door. However, as automated drones drop packages on door steps and in
30 backyards, some of those jobs may be replaced, too.

by Matt McFarland September 15, 2017 adapted from *CNN Tech*