

# Mass Production- Ford and the Motor Industry

L/O- To assess the impact of mass production on the economy and the American people

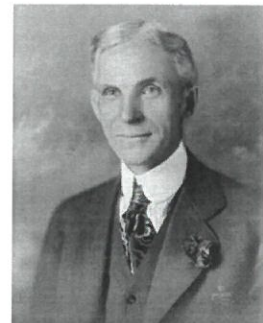
**America's economy recovered quickly after The First World War. The government was Republican and favoured 'big business.' By the mid 1920s the economy was booming.**

## Factors leading to the Boom

- US industry had been boosted by the war.
- Republican government's policy of laissez faire.
- Protectionism - import duties raised (1922).
- Mass production - cars, radios, refrigerators etc.
- Hire Purchase - people could buy on credit. There was massive consumer spending.

## Henry Ford

Henry Ford set out to build a car that everyone could afford to buy. Ford started mass-producing his first car, the Model T Ford in 1909. It was slow, ugly and difficult to drive, but for the next eighteen years this car, nick named 'Tin Lizzie', was America's bestselling car. The big attraction of the Model T Ford was its price, it never increased and instead it kept on dropping. Costing \$1200 in 1909, the price in 1928 was only \$295. By the end of the 1920s Ford was producing more than one car per minute.



## How was this possible?

- Henry Ford was able to sell cars more cheaply because they were mass-produced and every part was standardised (only one colour and one engine size were available).
- By producing large numbers of cars on an assembly line Ford needed fewer workers, and that cut the cost of paying wages. By standardising the parts he cut production costs even further. Mass production worked by breaking down the job of making a car into smaller jobs that could be done quickly and simply by an unskilled person.
- A car would be pass down an assembly line and every time it stopped someone would add an extra part until finally it reached the end of the line and was finished. As Henry Ford said:

***"Work is planned on the drawing board and the operations sub - divided so that each man and each machine do only one thing ... the thing is to keep everything in motion and take the work to the man not the man to the work."***  
**Henry Ford**

Effects of Mass Production

The car industry helped to make America richer in the 1920s.

Car production used up 20% of America's steel, 80% of her rubber, 75% of her plate glass, and 65% of her leather.

**What would this lead to in these industries?**

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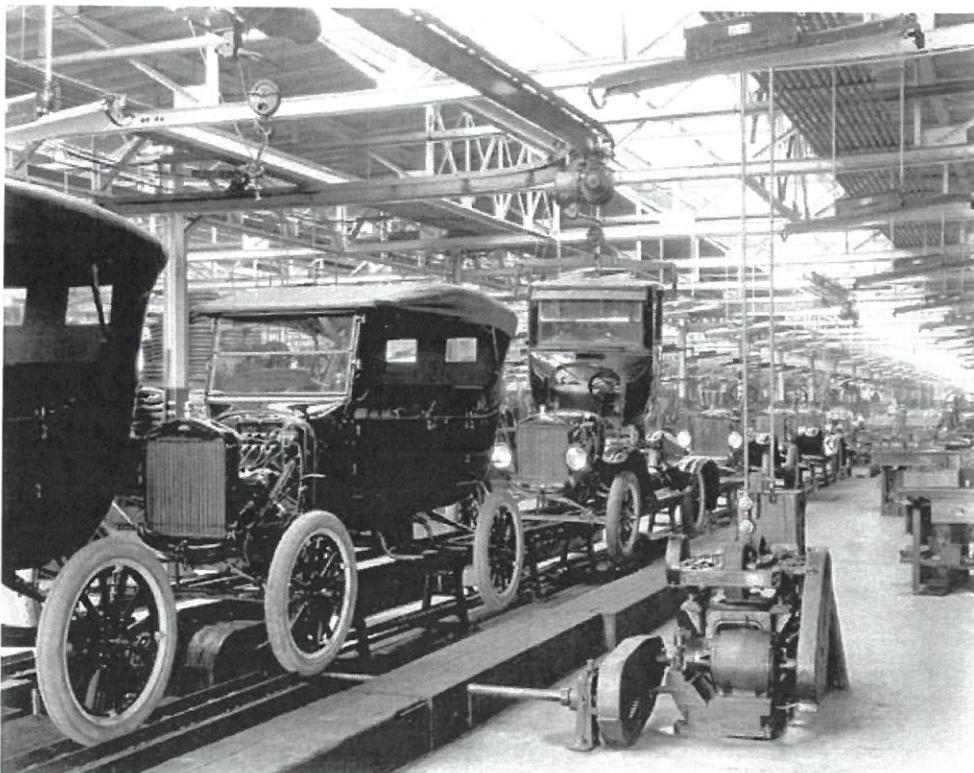
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*Model T Ford:*



*Production Line:*

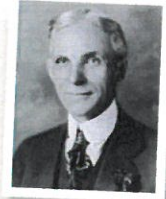


# Ford and the motor industry

During the 1920s, Henry Ford was one of the richest men in the world, making the equivalent of £2 million a day. He did this by adopting a method called 'mass production' to make his car factories more efficient. This method quickly spread to other industries.

## Henry Ford (1863–1947)

- Ford came from a farming family. His parents were immigrants from Ireland and Belgium. He did not like farm work and in 1879 he left to become an apprentice machine operator in Detroit, Michigan.
- He founded the Ford Motor company in June 1903. His first car was the Model A, and by October he had made a profit of \$37 000 – the equivalent of about \$3 million today.
- He introduced the system of **mass production**, which revolutionised industry in the USA.
- He paid his workers nearly three times as much as other factory owners. This meant he attracted skilled mechanics, reducing training costs. It also meant that his employees could afford his cars!



## Mass production and the Model T

- In 1911, Ford introduced the assembly line (previously used in food packing plants) to car-making. Rather than workers building a car from start to finish, the car moved on a conveyor past workers who were each responsible for a small part of the process.
- The Ford Company concentrated on mass-producing a single type of car – the Model T. It was quick and cheap to build because they were all the same, and one colour (so they didn't have to spend time changing the paint in the spray guns).
- Faster production meant lower costs and cheaper cars – between 1911 and 1928 the cost of a car fell from \$800 to \$295. Mass production was soon adopted in other industries, which increased production and reduced prices, which further increased the boom.



The Ford Model T was available in black only. Black was chosen because black paint dried fastest!

The car industry created jobs – 500 000 people worked in car plants by the mid-1920s. In addition, factories making glass, tyres, leather and steel employed millions more.

By 1926 there were 20 million cars in America – this led to congestion on the roads.

Increased car use led to pollution.

## The impact of the motor industry

Cars were new and many people were not very good drivers – car accidents were frequent.

City suburbs grew because people could drive to work and no longer needed to live near their place of work.

Cars brought a sense of increased freedom and independence and also increased trade for roadside businesses like restaurants and hotels.

Mass production was widely adopted and soon everything from fridges to weapons was made on assembly lines. However, the spread of the motor car was mass production's biggest impact.

## Now try this

Write a paragraph to explain the impact mass production in the motor industry had on the economy. Give at least **two** examples in your answer.