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# The Hand at the End of the Robot Arm: The End Effector

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In a restaurant kitchen, a cook uses the same hand to hold a knife, lift a ladle, and carry a plate. A robot arm, however, does its work with a single tool at the end of its wrist, so what it can do depends entirely on which tool is attached. No matter how precisely the arm moves, it is useless on a factory floor if it cannot grip anything at the end. Put simply, an end effector is a device attached to the end of a robot arm that carries out the actual work, such as gripping or processing an object. In human terms, it is the hand and the tool in the hand combined, and in the field it is also c