

Top Ten Most Important Gadgets

Read the description of each invention and try and decide what the invention is.

- _____ predate the Seth Thomas brand by centuries, but the clockmaker's 1876 model fit on a nightstand and helped drag the Industrial Revolution out of bed.
- At the World's Fair during the hot New York summer of 1939, Willis Haviland Carrier and his female assistants demonstrated the first room _____. In 1953, Americans bought more than 1 million window _____ units; over the past five years, manufacturers have shipped 41 million units.
- Alexander Graham Bell's interest in the education of deaf people-he began teaching at the Boston School for Deaf Mutes in 1871-led him to invent the microphone and, in 1876, the _____, which he called the "electrical speech machine." In a 1912 issue of Popular Mechanics, Bell said, "To tell the truth, as a practical man, I did not quite believe it; as a theoretical man, I saw a speaking _____ by which we could have the means of transmitting speech and reproducing it in distant places.
- With origins tracing back to Finland and Japan in the '70s, _____ have fast become the most widely used gadgets in the world. The first billion units sold in 20 years, the second billion in four and the third billion in two. By the end of 2010, the subscription rate stood at 5 billion, or 75 percent of all people on earth.
- The forerunners of modern _____ were introduced in the mid-1970s as kits. Little did pioneers like Bill Gates and Paul Allen, who wrote programming language for the MITS Altair 8800 kit, or Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak, who designed the skeletal Apple I, know what was in store.
- The promise of the hollow _____, invented in 1844, was realized a century later as _____ vaccines spared millions from polio, tuberculosis, rabies and more.
- Thomas Edison came upon the concept of recording and reproducing sound while trying to automate speech sounds for the telephone. He gave a demonstration of the _____ for Scientific American magazine in late 1877. "The visitor without any ceremony whatever turned the crank, and to the astonishment of all present the machine said: "Good morning. How do you do? How do you like the _____?" The device liberated music.
- The origins of _____ stretch back to the late 19th century, to a time before it was even technically feasible.
Today, 99 percent of U.S. households have a _____. We spend an average of 2.8 hours per day _____ them.
- Patented in England in 1896 as "wireless telegraphy" by Guglielmo Marconi-who based his work on technology developed by Nikola Tesla-radios were in 80 percent of U.S. homes by 1940