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[ROBERTO BALDWIN](#) GEAR 04.03.13 6:30 AM

THE 12 CELLPHONES THAT CHANGED OUR WORLD FOREVER





MOTOROLA ENGINEER
MARTIN Cooper made telecommunications history when he placed the first cellphone call 40 years ago. And who did he call, you ask? His rivals at Bell Labs, of course. Oh snap!

Still, it took another decade for the mobile phone to reach the masses, because Motorola didn't make the DynaTAC available until March 1983. And in an example of just how quaint the tech business was back then, Motorola had a press event 10 years *before* the phone was on sale.

Which brings us to April 3, 1973, when the company that eventually brought us the Razr and Droid introduced the mobile phone. Forty years later, we're still dropping calls like bad habits and struggling to get a signal inside a supermarket. Not that it matters, because we rarely use our phones to make phone calls. Instead, they're a gateway to our digital lives, a means of doing everything from sending texts to updating our status to posting photos and listening to music.

Thousands of phones have come and gone, and most of them seem to run on Android. But the number of handsets that could be called truly groundbreaking is surprisingly small. Here they are.

Yeah, yeah, we've probably missed your favorite. And you'll probably tell us about it in a comment typed on your phone.

ABOVE: MOTOROLA DYNATAC 8000X -- 1983

The DynaTAC was the first commercially available cellphone and the culmination of all the research Cooper had done since joining Motorola in 1954.

The phone resembled those the military used in the field. The svelte handset weighed 28 ounces and was 10 inches tall, not including the antenna nearly as long as the phone. It wasn't exactly something you could shove in a pocket or purse. Still, it wasn't attached to a car and you could walk around with it, so there was that.

Such mobility wasn't cheap. The DynaTAC would dig a \$4,000 hole into your bank account. But that didn't stop early adopters from diving into the swanky world of mobile calling. The phone had a cameo alongside Gordon Gekko in *Wall Street* and with über-preppy Zack Morris on the teen drama *Saved By the Bell*.

Photo: Motorola



MOTOROLA MICROTAC -- 1989

The MicroTAC introduced the flip-phone form factor that would eventually be adopted by the StarTAC. Beyond setting the standard for phones, it popularized the idea of being able to put a mobile phone in your pocket.

The phone, billed as the “MicroTAC

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For the sake of comparison, the enormous Galaxy Note II is just shy of 6 inches long and weighs 6.4 ounces.

Still, the “little” phone packed a lot of amazing features, including security codes, currency calculator, hands-free operation and, perhaps most conveniently, a phone book to store names and numbers. It was the beginning of the end of having to actually remember anyone’s number.

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LIVING
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9

TWEET
3

Photo: Motorola



NOKIA 3210 -- 1999

The Nokia 3210 was, for many people, the gateway drug of phones. It also was among the first to tuck the antenna inside the handset. (The Toshiba TCP-6000 was the first, but that was the phone's only claim to fame.) The little Finnish candybar phone was the first mobile communication device of the masses.

Its monochromatic screen did more than give you a heads up about incoming calls. It introduced a generation to the greatest mobile-phone game ever: *Snake*. The addictive game, based on computer game from the 1970s, featured a snake that grew as it consumed pixels. The object was to make the longest snake possible without having it eat itself.

And you thought *Angry Birds* was silly.

Nokia sold 160 million T9-enabled 3210s before replacing it with 3310 in late 2000.

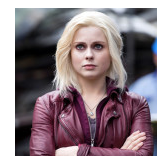
Photo: Nokia

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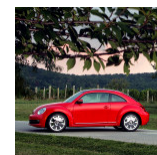
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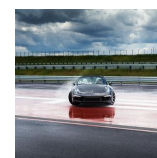
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