

To explore and discuss key changes in home entertainment, the reasons for the changes and the impact on people's lives.

Victorian era

In the Victorian era if you wanted to listen to music you would go out to concert halls or theatres. The rich could afford to hold small concerts in their homes. Families at home would play the piano or sing together.

However towards the end of the 19th century technology and science were making massive strides. It was discovered that sound uses vibrations. It was then discovered that these vibrations could be recorded as grooves on the surface of a cylinder. Thus the phonograph was created.

Victorian era

This was followed by the invention of the gramophone which played flat metal discs. These discs however were still restricted to the wealthy.



The war years

The invention of the radio was initially for communication purposes. At the start of the 20th century an Italian called Marconi sent Morse code signals across the Atlantic. The technology developed mainly for use between coast radio stations and ships at sea.

During the 1920s radio was revolutionised by developing technologies and radio sets were being sold to the public. On 14th November 1922 the BBC started transmitting concerts and the news from 6pm to 10pm. At first there was great excitement around the idea then more and more people purchased receivers. In 1924 when the BBC broadcast the official opening of the British Empire Exhibition by George V more than five million people were thought to have been listening.

The war years

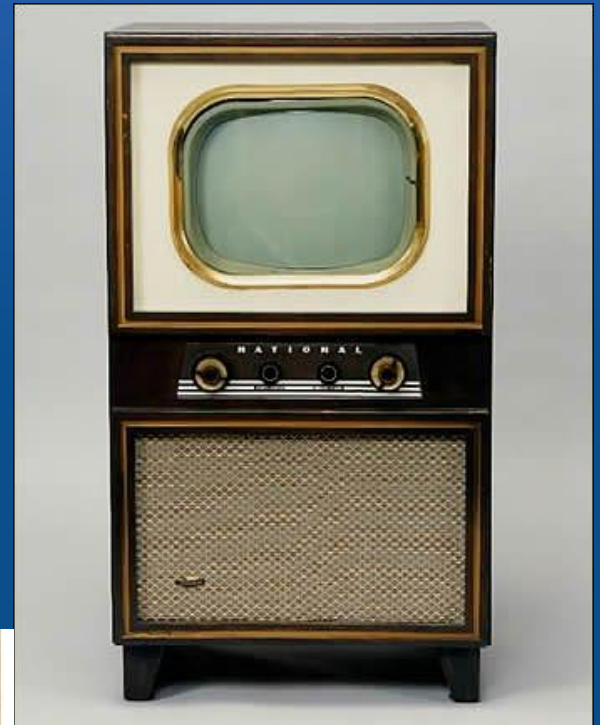
The 1930s and 40s saw the increased popularity of the radio ; most homes had one and many families spent their leisure time listening. However many families still could not afford to purchase a radio. To solve this Radio Rentals started renting out sets and by 1955 had 280,000 subscribers. The increase in popularity of the radio brought about a new range of programmes – news, drama, music and a children's hour.

People loved their radios, they were the heart of the home and families would gather round to listen together. But a new technology was coming that would change home entertainment forever.

The war years

By the late 1920s basic television had been invented that could show moving black and white images but no sound. These sets were very expensive. The first programmes were broadcast in 1929 but only at night.





Post war

Towards the end of the 1940s technology had rapidly improved and more and more homes had televisions. However one key event changed people's attitudes towards televisions. One event introduced more people to televisions than ever before.

In 1953 on the 2nd July over 20 million people crowded round the nearest television. A lot of people went to neighbours' homes, many others bought television sets especially; many people had never watched television before. The nation watched as Queen Elizabeth was crowned.

Post war

By the end of the 1960s there were two channels BBC one and ITV with a third by 1965. More and more programmes were being offered. Technology was also moving forward with colour sets becoming more popular.





The digital age

New genres were being broadcast along with programmes from America – The Muppets, Star Trek and Happy Days among them. Britain saw Doctor Who, Coronation Street, Rainbow and Play School.

The 1980s and 90s saw two further channels launched – channel 4 and 5. By the 1980s all TVs came with remote controls whereas before they operated using buttons on the set. Also in the 80s more and more people owned new devices that allowed them to record programmes and watch them later – video cassette recorders or VCRs. The late 90s saw the development of the Digital Video Disc – DVD.

The digital age

Nowadays television and radio are still changing. Digital technologies and the internet are providing new ways of watching. High definition has brought new quality and a better viewing experience.





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BBC tv



Home entertainment timeline

1885 Phonographs played sounds recorded on cardboard cylinders coated with wax.

1901 Emile Berliner invents the Gramophone which plays flat disks. The disks produce a better quality of sound and are easier to produce.

1910 Crystal radio receivers are made available to the public but only for amateur radio enthusiasts.

1919 New vacuum tube radios go on sale.

Home entertainment timeline

1936 BBC 1 first broadcast on November 2nd.

1946 televisions become more affordable and start to appear in homes.

1947 Tape recorders appear in homes.

1948 The first LP records are produced.

1950 FM radio grows in popularity.

Home entertainment timeline

1953 Colour televisions are sold.

1954 Lightweight (portable) radios are sold.

1955 ITV started on September 22nd.

1963 Compact cassette recorders are available.

1964 BBC 2 began on April 20th.

1976 The VCR goes on sale.

1977 The first fully assembled personal computer is available.

Home entertainment timeline

1980 The Sony Walkman goes on sale.

1982 Channel began on November 2nd.

1983 Compact discs and CD players are available.

1989 LCD (liquid crystal display) and smaller components mean the first laptops are developed.

1994 World Wide Web grows in popularity.

1997 Channel 5 started on January 26th.
