

# 'Quit the apps! It's time to get a dumbphone'

[D theday.co.uk/quit-the-apps-its-time-to-get-a-dumbphone-4](https://www.theday.co.uk/quit-the-apps-its-time-to-get-a-dumbphone-4) 5 June 2024



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"The Nokia brick": The Nokia 3310, released in 2000, was one of the best-selling mobile phones of all time.

**Should we give up our smartphones? We have the entire world at our fingertips. But many believe that this excess will be the death of our minds as we know them. Is it time to regress?**

## What's happening?

Experts think that with the smartphones of the future you will be able to control them with your mind, sending a text or playing a video just by thinking about it.

Or you could choose the Boring Phone, which boasts few of the features of the iPhone 15; in fact it hardly has any features at all.

It might be hard to understand the appeal of a device called the Boring Phone, but it exists as part of a worldwide boom in "dumbphones", devices that allow you to manage your calendar, message your friends and call your mum — but not much more.

## Find out more

The dumbphone is not the only example of this new trend. Recent years have seen a revival in things retro, with vinyl records, cassettes and vintage gaming consoles all back in fashion.

Three in five Gen-Z consumers questioned say that they would like to be less connected to the digital world, but the dumbphone is about more than just "digital minimalism". It speaks also of concerns about data privacy. A 2021 survey showed that 50% of people aged 18-24 are concerned about their online privacy and security.

Some say our social media exposure has gone too far. One 2021 survey showed that a quarter of children aged three to four years had their own social media profiles.

But buying a dumbphone is not the only way to reduce your internet footprint. From screen time restriction tools to "night mode" and app blockers, modern phones have plenty of tools to enable you to reclaim your time.

The best thing you can do for your mental health and privacy, **cynics** say, is to opt out entirely. Resign your iPhone. Abandon your Android. Mend your mind.

## Should we give up our smartphones?

### Some say

Yes! All of the research shows that our smartphones are damaging our attention, our mental health, our sleep quality and our self-esteem. On top of that, companies are stealing our data.

### Others think

No! You need a smartphone for almost every aspect of life nowadays. From completing schoolwork to staying on top of the news and getting around, it is almost impossible to live without a smartphone.

## Six steps to discovery

### Some people say

*"The challenge for a human now is to be more interesting to another than his or her smartphone."*

#### 1. Connect

**How do you feel about this story?** - What would make you trade in your phone for a dumbphone?

**Alain de Botton (1969 – ), Swiss-born British author and public speaker**

*What do you think?*

**2. Wonder**

**What questions do you have?** - For example: Do people with dumbphones find it easy to stay in touch with their friends?

**3. Investigate**

**What are the facts?** - Pick out one thing we know for certain and another thing we cannot say for sure.

**4. Construct**

**What is your point of view?** - Imagine that you are living in a world where smartphones were never invented. How do you think things would be different?

**5. Express**

**What do others believe?** - In small groups, imagine that you are a technology company designing your dream phone. It could be a futuristic smartphone with loads of sophisticated features, or it could be a dumbphone which only performs the most basic of functions. Describe your dream phone to the class.

**6. Reflect**

**What might happen next?** - It is July 2024. The general election has just ended, and the winning party has banned smartphones for under-18s. Write a short article explaining your opinions.

**Glossary**

**Minimalism** - Living with only the things you need.