

# HARDWARE

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## 15 years ago: the first mass-produced GSM phone

Happy Birthday, Nokia 1011 (almost)

By Tony Smith • Get more from this author

9th November 2007 08:02 GMT

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**Forgotten Tech** Fifteen years ago tomorrow, ladies and gentlemen, Nokia launched the world's first commercially available GSM digital phone, the Nokia 1011, the model number coming from the launch date: 10 November 1992.



Nokia's 1011: GSM first

The 475g 1011 was rather heavier than today's slimline models. A lot of the weight came from the unit's nickel-cadmium rechargeable battery, which yielded a low - by today's standards - talk time of just 90 minutes. It could stay operational for 12 hours in stand-by mode.

The 195 x 60 x 45mm handset could hold 99 phone numbers and the names of their owners, any of which could be displayed on the 1011's two-line screen. There was no colour, no camera, no Bluetooth, no memory card slot and the handset had to have an extendible antenna. But it did introduce one innovation that phone owners now use without a second thought: text messaging.

However, the 1011 lacked that crucial component of all modern Nokia's: the infamous Nokia ringtone. This jingle wasn't introduced until 1994.

The 1011 wasn't the first GSM phone, either. That honour goes to the unnamed handset Nokia developed for Finland's Radiolinja network in 1991. The Finnish phone giant also supplied testing handsets that year for Hutchison's Orange in the UK, then in the process of building its network up from the Rabbit service launched a few years previously.

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