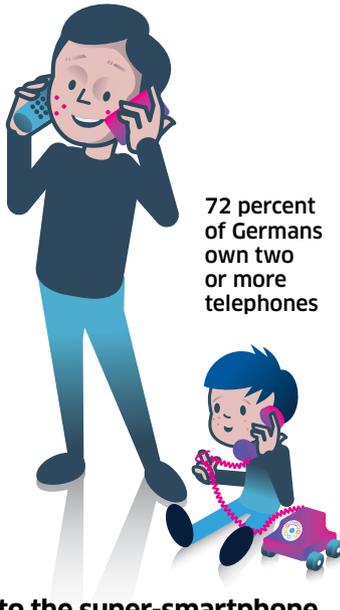


The Germans and their telephones

LIFE Flash

“Das Pferd frisst keinen Gurkensalat!” (The horse doesn't eat cucumber salad) – with this historic sentence, Philipp Reiss demonstrated the first telephone to his listeners on October 26, 1861. 150 years on, his invention has become indispensable to most people. To mark its 150th birthday, TNS Infratest has asked the German people what role the telephone plays in their lives today.



72 percent of Germans own two or more telephones

From the telephone set to the super-smartphone

Given a choice of the car, the computer, or the telephone, almost one in four Germans (23 percent) names the telephone as modern man's most useful invention. As the cell phone, it has even found its way into our handbags and pockets. No wonder three quarters of all Germans (72 percent) own two or more telephones. For the younger generation in particular, getting through the day without one is inconceivable. Three quarters of 20 to 29-year olds (77 percent) will turn back in the morning if they have forgotten their cell phone. By comparison, just 56 percent of this age group will turn back to clean their teeth. Expectations for the future of this classic are also high: 71 percent believe the cell phone will take on even more functions in the future, e.g., as a mobile wallet.

From per-minute subscribers to the flat-rate generation

When the right person is on the other end of the line, Germans can talk until the cows come home: one in every ten Germans (11 percent) has spent more than three hours on a call; in the supposedly taciturn north of Germany, it's as many as one in six (17 percent). East Germans, however, are rather less talkative: more than a third of them (34 percent) say they have never made a call of longer than 30 minutes. There is a difference between the generations here. Those who grew up in the 1950s tend to keep it short: almost half of the over 60s surveyed (47 percent) say they have never made a call of more than 30 minutes, and just one percent has made it past the three-hour mark. That's nothing for the flat-rate generation: 27 percent of under-30s make long phone calls. With the advent of mobile communications, the telephone managed to cut its cords: from on the bus to in bed, everyone has their own favorite place to talk on the phone. But most Germans still prefer to chat from the couch. There's no limit to the reasons for calling either: people are as likely to pick up the phone to give a quick piece of information as they are to chat and gossip, or talk on serious subjects. And two out of hundred people have even been proposed to by telephone.

Children and bosses first

When a person's phone rings, they make a clear distinction between official and private calls: even though the majority of calls are answered, parents and friends have to expect to be ignored from time to time. The boss has better chances. Only children come first every time: just five percent of those surveyed say they have ever not answered a call from their child. In some circumstances, however, the telephone is taboo, with the cinema or concerts, and romantic moments topping the list. A good two thirds of all Germans say they don't answer the phone in those situations.



Men most like talking to their wives or girlfriends, women prefer talking to their best friend

Preferably with my girlfriend

Most people, men and women alike, prefer to talk to a woman on the phone: one in three men (36 percent) say they most like to talk to their wife or girlfriend. Women, however, put their best friend at the top of the list. Only one in six (18 percent) most like talking to their other half on the phone. If they could talk to someone famous, most German men say they would like to talk to German Chancellor Angela Merkel, followed by model and TV personality Heidi Klum and reality TV star Daniela Katzenberger. Women would most like to get television host Günther Jauch on the line. If he's busy, they'd also like to talk to actors George Clooney or Til Schweiger. At the end of a relationship, it is the weaker sex that seems to be harder on the phone, with substantially more men (18 percent) than women (8 percent) being dumped by phone.

PUBLISHING INFORMATION All data are based on a representative telephone survey (n-1,503 interviews) of the German-speaking population from the age of 14 in Germany, which TNS Infratest conducted on behalf of Deutsche Telekom AG in July 2011. ©Deutsche Telekom AG