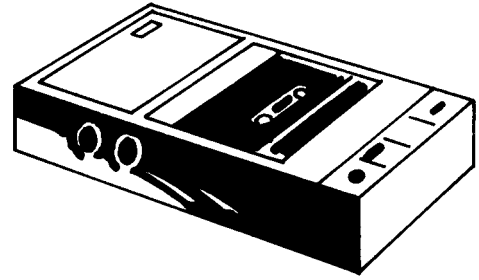


Inventors and Inventions of the 1960s

A multitude of advances in technology in the 1960s changed the American lifestyle. New devices led to quicker and easier communication, and inexpensive electrical goods became available to ordinary people. Read about some of these devices below. Then read through the activities listed below and choose one to complete.



- One of the most important inventions of the era was the computer. At first it was used for data processing and was an extremely bulky machine, sometimes taking up whole rooms.
- In the early 1960s teenagers listened to their favorite tunes on small portable record players with monaural sound. Stereo discs did not become available until the midsixties when powerful hi-fi systems and stereo headphones made their debut.
- Along with stereo systems, cassette tape recorders were first marketed in 1963.
- A number of small electric appliances debuted during the sixties including electric toothbrushes (first manufactured in 1961) and heated hair curlers.
- Fibertip pens were first manufactured in the sixties.
- Improved printing techniques helped posters become a cheap way to decorate a home. Immensely popular, they often depicted images of pop stars and older movie stars.
- In 1962 the first communications satellite Telstar began relaying pictures across the Atlantic, making it possible to report global news instantaneously.
- The first laser was made during the sixties. An acronym for Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation, the laser has an intense beam of pure light which is capable of cutting through metal. In 1963 the first hologram, using lasers, was devised. Today, the laser has been perfected so accurately that it is routinely used for many types of surgeries.

Suggested Activities

Comparisons Compare early stereo equipment with the stereo equipment of today. How do they differ in size and in the quality of sound produced?

Records Teenagers in the sixties listened to their favorite songs on 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ records and long-playing albums. What did these records look like and are they available today? What has now replaced records?

Posters Posters in the sixties typically bore psychedelic images of pop stars such as Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix, and Mick Jagger. Have the students draw a psychedelic posters of their favorite pop stars.

Inventors Research and find out about the inventors of any of the advances cited above. For example, Theodore Maiman was the first to develop the laser.

Lasers Although the laser has become an important tool for surgery, it was not originally intended for that use. Do some research to find out some other ways that lasers figure into our daily lives.