



#FYI

Why dumb phones are making a smart comeback in 2025

At first, we thought they were just a cult in Reddit, boycotting smartphones out of sheer whim. But turns out, it's not a hoax. The production of feature phones, or "dumb phones", is surging as we speak. What's a dumb phone, you may ask? Well, it's a phone with minimal features. You can call, text, play a retro game or two, and ideally, that's pretty much all you can do. A simpler, less addictive user experience!

In a digital landscape where everything we say gets thrown back at us in the form of ads, ditching smartphones is not seen as abstinence anymore. It's a luxury. A way to escape a device that is designed to rob us of our attention — a rare commodity these days.

However, many people are doing it to have a more fulfilling, more social, and more productive life. Multiple studies have shown a potential connection between doomscrolling and the development of ADHD symptoms, depression, anxiety, and sleep deprivation. Doctors also suggest that early exposure to smartphones is delaying toddlers' speech development. Children are



learning to swipe before they even learn to speak.

Many are also considering dumb phones for convenience at work. These phones are easier to carry, have low maintenance, and the battery can last for days. Dumb phones are also meant to have low or no repair

cost and it does not steal the attention of muggers!

Not everyone can afford to get a new phone every year and some even say they ditched their smartphones to embrace something called "the joy of missing out." Others prefer a phone that simply lasts longer and smartphones are not exactly famous for longevity.

But the appeal goes beyond practicality. It's sheer nostalgia! A throwback to simpler times — playing Snake on a Nokia 1100, before smartphones were even a thing. The lengths people go to for a trip down memory lane!

Cal Newport, an American author, claimed in his book, Deep Work, that every time you check your phone, even if for a second, your brain leaves a part of its focus behind. So, it can take minutes, even hours, to regain the full concentration you lost by looking at your phone.

It might make more sense now why researchers say the daily habit of mindless scrolling can amount to about 37 days per year — which can add up to 7 years of a

person's lifetime. And people are finally realising how much of that time is just gone.

The time you spend with your smartphone is the time you could spend doing a lot more — talking with your friends and family, helping out your family members with chores, fixing up your motor skills, learning something new, the list is endless.

But it's not all sunshine and rainbows in an offline life. Some argue the world is becoming increasingly hostile to those without smartphones. They complain about missing out on invitations, notes, class announcements — and even job opportunities. One could pose a riveting question like, "How can I get directions without GPS?"

Just remember — there was a time even before smartphones. Go old school. It's your chance to re-navigate daily life, something you may have forgotten how to do.

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Photo: Collected

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