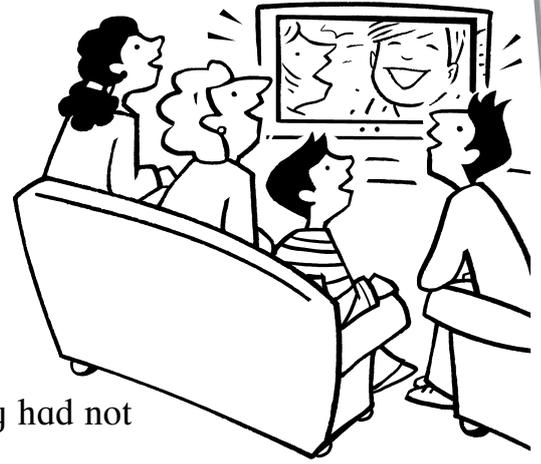


Television

Most homes, though not all, have at least one television. Many homes have several televisions, with perhaps one in the lounge, one in the kitchen and one in each bedroom. For most of us life without the television would be very strange. A hundred years ago nobody had televisions in their homes at all – televisions as we know them simply had not been invented.



One of the very first televisions was demonstrated in a London shop in 1925. A Scottish man called John Logie Baird invented it and he was keen to show people what it could do. At that stage it couldn't do very much! It could show a still image of simple white shapes against a black background. But the following year, on the 26th January, he was able to give the world's first demonstration of a television system where clear pictures could be transmitted to appear in shades of grey. Just two years later he was able to transmit television pictures from London to New York.

The BBC made its first public television broadcast in 1936 but had to close its television service in 1939 because of the start of the Second World War. Although the war ended in 1945, the BBC did not start broadcasting again until 1946. Most people in those days couldn't afford a television set and it was not until a special event took place in 1953 that television became popular.

The special event was the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth the second and everybody wanted to be able to watch this. Those who could afford it bought a television set while those who couldn't afford one visited friends to watch theirs.

With television gaining in popularity, new companies were set up to broadcast television programmes. By the end of the 1950s most people had the choice of two channels to watch on their televisions: BBC or ITV. On both channels, programmes were only shown for part of the day and for the evening.

Up until the 1960s all television broadcasts in this country were in black and white. This meant that people, scenery and countryside appeared in shades of grey. By the end of that decade broadcasts were being made in full colour, though many people couldn't see the colours as their televisions could only receive black and white pictures!

Today we have a huge choice of television channels. We can watch them all in colour and we can watch at any time of day. We can record programmes to watch later and we can even use our televisions to play games on. Televisions have changed considerably since the first broadcasts so many years ago.