

Radio milestones

- 1864 Scottish physicist James Clerk-Maxwell develops theory of electromagnetic waves.
- 1888 Maxwell's theory given practical confirmation in the laboratory by German physicist Heinrich Hertz.
- 1895 Guglielmo Marconi, an Italian electrical engineer, invents the first practical radio-signalling system.
- 1901 Marconi transmits the first transatlantic wireless signal from Cornwall, England, to Newfoundland, Canada.
- 1922 Radio broadcasts start from 2MT at Writtle, Chelmsford on AM.
- 1922 Formation of the British Broadcasting Company is agreed by the Post Office and radio manufacturers.
- 1922 Daily broadcasts start from London station 2LO.
- 1923 BBC London radio's operation moves to Savoy Hill from Marconi Magnet House.
- 1923 First valve wireless goes on sale, replacing crystal sets.
- 1923 First edition of Radio Times.
- 1927 British Broadcasting Company becomes British Broadcasting Corporation with the granting of the Royal Charter.
- 1928 Battery eliminator that allows radios to be installed in cars invented by an American, Paul Galvin.
- 1932 First BBC broadcast from Broadcasting House: Henry Hall and the BBC Dance Orchestra.
- 1938 BBC's Arabic service launches – the first foreign language service from the BBC.
- 1939 BBC's Home Service launches.
- 1940 A bomb drops on Broadcasting House, killing seven people.
- 1945 BBC's Light Programme launches.
- 1946 BBC's Third Programme launches.
- 1955 First BBC FM broadcasts from Wrotham transmitter in Kent.
- 1956 First transistor radios appear in the UK, making radios portable.
- 1957 A combined licence costs £4; a radio licence is £1.
- 1967 BBC Radio One launches; the other BBC radio networks renamed Radios 2, 3 and 4.
- 1971 Radio licence is abolished.
- 1973 Capital Radio launched.
- 1979 Conservative Government elected with commitment to expanding commercial radio.
- 1989 Government relaxes restrictions on commercial radio.
- 1990 First BBC DAB (Digital Audio Broadcasting) trial from Crystal Palace.
- 1990 BBC Radio 5 launches.
- 1992 Radio Luxembourg closes down.
- 1994 Radio 5 renamed Radio Five Live.
- 1995 First BBC DAB broadcasts – Radios 1-Five Live.
- 1996 Broadcasting Act sets out plans for launch of digital broadcasting including radio.
- 1998 First commercially available digital radio tuner, made by Arcam, demonstrated in Scotland.
- 1998 Digital One is awarded a national digital licence.
- 2001 First digital portable digital radios go on sale.
- 2002 BBC launches five new digital radio networks – 1Xtra, Five Live Sports Extra, 6 Music, BBC 7, Asian Network.