

## IS IT TRUE?



Using a cell phone on a plane interferes with the navigation and communications systems of the aircraft.

"I've never experienced a navigational problem that could be traced to a cell phone," says one veteran pilot who didn't want his identity revealed. "From everything I've read cell phones and most avionics shouldn't conflict." So why do flight attendants make you put away your gear before takeoffs and landings? "That's more for making sure [we] have people's attention and for [individual] safety," he says. "If I have to hit the brakes and abort a takeoff, I don't want a laptop flying across the cabin."

The Federal Aviation Administration, which regulates cell phone use in a plane, has a different view: "The concern is that cell phones would conflict with onboard avionics," says Paul Takemoto, the FAA's electronics guru. Is there scientific proof that cell phones can make planes go haywire? Some, in 2003 the Civil Aviation Authority--the FAA of the United Kingdom--ran tests using simulated cell phone signals in a chamber (not in an actual aircraft) and found problems. In some cases, the compass froze, some instruments displayed errors, and audio communications were difficult to hear due to interference. Until additional tests prove otherwise, Takemoto says, the FAA prefers to err on the side of caution.

## Cell phone guns?

"Is it true or a joke? Evidently, it's true. Time magazine's Feb. 2, 2004, issue included a story titled "Press M for Murder," citing official concern about the cell-phone guns, which, the article says, have been found during drug raids in the Netherlands, England and Germany. The guns are heavier than regular cell phones, the article says, but otherwise almost undetectable. None, it says, has yet been found in the United States".



## Cell Phones at Gas Stations

The FCC has been alerted to recent reports and rumors that suggest it is dangerous to use a wireless phone while filling your vehicle with gas or in the presence of flammable materials. **There is no**

**evidence that these reports are true.** One of the reports circulating describes incidents where consumers are injured by fires or explosions when they use their cell phones at gas stations. In these stories, a fire was reportedly ignited or an explosion occurred when an individual's phone rang and was answered. Supposedly, an electrical spark from the phone ignited the fires or caused the explosion.

These reports are not supported by any documentation that the fire and/or explosion was caused by the wireless phone - or that the incidents even occurred.

The rumors and reports may be fueled by warnings posted at gas stations or included in wireless phone owners' manuals suggesting that wireless phones should not be used around fuel vapors.

Scientific testing, however, has not established a dangerous link between the two. Wireless phone manufacturers and fuel companies have issued these warnings as a precaution. If you have questions about your wireless phone, contact your wireless phone company.

Electronic devices, like cell phones, can cause cancer in the people who use them.

Lawsuits and news headlines have fueled the myth that cell phones cause cancer, particularly brain cancer. A few studies suggested a link with certain rare types of brain tumors, but the consensus among well-designed population studies is that there is no consistent association between cell phone use and brain cancer. Consumers could easily have missed the reports showing no danger from cell phones because they didn't receive alarming front-page coverage like the original reports. What has been proven is that using a cell phone while driving increases the risk of having a car accident. So, keeping your hands free and your eyes on the road is a more significant issue for people who use cell phones.

Considerable research has also found no clear association between any other electronic consumer products and cancer. Cell phones, microwave ovens and related appliances emit non-ionizing radiation — the part of the electromagnetic spectrum that includes radio waves and radar. Ionizing radiation such as gamma rays and X-rays can increase cancer risk by causing changes to DNA in cells of the body. Lower frequency, non-ionizing electromagnetic radiation has not been proven to cause these DNA changes.

For more information visit the FCC web site on [Cell Phones & Your Health](#).

### Credit card snapshots

So far no law enforcement agencies appear to have released information about actual victims whose card numbers were obtained by a cell phone camera. But theoretically it's possible, although many models produce such fuzzy images, it's hard to believe the tiny letters and numbers on a card could be captured.

### All Toll Free Phone Calls Are Free?

Because you use "air time" to call a toll free number from your cell phone, a fee is charged, and more than one may apply. Read your contract or check with your provider before making that toll free call.

### Plan Changes Are Impossible

Cell phone plans have numerous options, and many companies are willing to make changes from one plan to another free of charge during the length of the contract. Ask your provider if there is a penalty or cancellation fee before requesting a change.

### Every Provider Has the Same Off-peak and Weekend Hours

Many cell phone providers offer unlimited off-peak and weekend calling hours as part of, or with, the purchase of their standard service plan. Be sure to ask for a definition of off-peak and weekend hours. Times can vary among providers.



### All Cell Phones Can Be Used Worldwide

Most developed and developing countries have some form of wireless telephone service. The digital networks used to provide this service can differ from country to country, with GSM (Global System for Mobiles) being the one commonly available in Europe. To be able to place a call while you are outside the United States, you must have a digital cell phone that is designed for use on the network in the country where you will be traveling.

### I already have Digital Television via cable.

Currently, only about 300 of the more than 1,100 over-the-air Digital TV stations are being carried on a cable system. Digital cable is not Digital TV - Digital TV is free, over-the-air signals from local broadcasters offering viewers a

picture resolution that is up to five times greater than analog TV.

I already have Digital Television because I have digital cable.

Maybe yes, maybe no. Digital cable is not necessarily Digital TV (DTV) from broadcasters. DTV is received via free over-the-air digital signals. Digital TV has the capability to offer consumers five times better resolution than the current analog signal, in a wide screen format with digital surround sound. Some cable companies offer HDTV over their Digital cable systems. Some HDTV programming is available on CBS, NBC, ABC, HBO, ESPN and a few other channels. More channels and programming in HDTV are available all of the time and eventually it will be the only type of programming on the air.

High-definition Television (HDTV) means Digital Television.

While HDTV is the highest quality of Digital TV, it is only one of DTV's benefits. In addition to HDTV, Digital TV can offer a second type of signal, Standard-definition Television (SDTV). The magic of SDTV is that it occupies less space on the allocated spectrum than high-definition signals, giving broadcasters the flexibility to multicast programming and bringing viewers more over-the-air content. All TV stations broadcast in 6 megahertz (MHz) blocks of spectrum. HDTV is a particular type of Digital Television signal that occupies most of the available 6 MHz broadcast signal, enabling broadcasters to show a single program in HDTV's stunning resolution. However, when stations are not broadcasting an HDTV signal, Digital TV does give them the capacity to broadcast multiple standard definition signals and data streams resulting in more programming options. In effect, one Digital Television signal has the ability to carry either one program broadcast in HDTV or several programs, broadcast simultaneously on different channels, in a Standard-definition (SDTV) format. This technology will enable broadcasters to dramatically enhance the picture quality of television.

The digital transition will cause a loss in programming options.

No. In fact, the transition will greatly increase programming options. With HDTV, local broadcasters have the ability to improve and increase programming for consumers. All television stations are scheduled to broadcast in a digital format. Digital TV's multicasting capabilities can dramatically expand viewer choice by multiplying the amount of programming offered at any one time over the viewing options currently available with analog television. During the current transition period, many familiar programs broadcast in analog are simultaneously broadcast digitally. As of December 2003, more than 1,100 stations in 202 markets that include more than 99 percent of American TV households are broadcasting a digital signal; and the major networks are providing thousands of hours of digital programming annually.

Consumers are not interested in paying the price to upgrade to Digital Television.

Twenty five percent of U.S. households already spend \$1,500 or more for a big screen analog set. September 2001 survey results show that upon learning about the benefits of Digital TV, 43 percent of consumers age 25 or older were "extremely likely," "very likely" or "somewhat likely" to purchase a Digital Television. With prices on Digital TV sets decreasing by almost 50 percent over the past three years, the Digital TV experience is an affordable reality for consumers now.

Viewers can't ignore the dramatic improvements offered by the Digital Television conversion. Visually, HDTV captures viewers with crystal clear resolution and razor sharp detail. Individual hairs, labels on footballs and the subtle effect of wind blowing through grass are all clearly visible through HDTV. Also, the resolution provides an image akin to a movie theater screens. Combined with the capacity to

deliver enhanced Dolby Digital surround sound, HDTV produces an advanced home-theater effect. Digital TV's multicasting ability gives viewers expanded choice in television programs broadcast from the same station at the same time. For example, with multicasting, viewers can choose to watch the news, sports, a sitcom or children's programming coming from the same station at 5 p.m. Digital TV automatically provides viewers with sharper images, better sound and more viewing options than have ever been available over the air.

Once broadcasters transition from analog to digital, analog televisions will be obsolete.

No. Set-top boxes are available now and will continue to be available to consumers after the transition is complete. However, to reap the full benefits of Digital TV, including superior sound and clarity, you must own a Digital TV set. An analog television, with the addition of a set-top box, will still allow viewers to enjoy all of the programming they have always enjoyed in addition to the benefits of Digital TV including multicasting, enhanced sound quality and data casting available through digital broadcasting.



#### Satellites aren't secure.

While many of us have seen free video content on a neighbor's backyard dish, those days are gone. Businesses now understand the value of their network and protect that content. Systems can add encryption over the satellites to ensure their integrity. Furthermore, many applications now use Internet Protocol, which has its own set of addresses and encryption techniques that are perfectly compatible with today's satellites.

Madalyn O'Hair proposed that the FCC consider limiting or banning religious programming.

A rumor has been circulating since 1975 that Madalyn Murray O'Hair, a widely known, self-proclaimed atheist, proposed that the FCC consider limiting or banning religious programming. Also circulating is a rumor that the FCC granted Ms. O'Hair an FCC hearing to discuss this proposal.

These rumors are untrue. In December 1974, Jeremy D. Lansman and Lorenzo W. Milam filed a petition (RM-2493) asking the FCC to inquire into the operating practices of stations licensed to religious organizations, and not to grant any licenses for new noncommercial educational broadcast stations until the inquiry had been completed. The FCC denied this petition on August 1, 1975. Ms. O'Hair was not a sponsor of this petition. Since that time, the FCC has received mail and telephone calls claiming that Ms. O'Hair started the petition and that the petition asked for an end to religious programs on radio and television. Such rumors are false. The FCC has responded to numerous inquiries about these rumors and advised the public of their falsehood. There is no federal law that gives the FCC the authority to prohibit radio and television stations from broadcasting religious programs.



#### Magnets zap your data.

For floppies, this statement holds true. A magnet placed near enough to a 3.5-inch floppy for the magnet to stick to the disk may ruin its data. Fortunately, most modern storage devices, are immune to magnetic fields. The same is true for hard drives. The only magnets powerful enough to scrub data from a drive platter are laboratory degaussers or those used by government agencies to wipe bits off media.

Want to erase data from a hard drive you plan to toss? Don't bother with a magnet. Overwrite the data that is stored on the media instead.



If you don't 'stop' a USB device before unplugging it from a PC, you'll ruin your device.

When you unplug a USB device without first "stopping" it in Windows (accomplished by clicking the Remove Hardware icon in the taskbar), your PC makes a bing-bong sound and usually pops up a message scolding you for the move or warning that what you just did can delete data saved on USB storage devices or damage hardware.

If you wait until the device stops writing data and then pull the drive out, you're unlikely to experience serious problems.



Cookies track everything you do on the Internet.

When cookies first appeared, some Web users got concerned because they thought cookies would track their every move

online. Wrong.

Cookies can perform limited tracking when you're browsing Web pages. And some persistent cookies can trace your movements from site to site. But most cookies are far less intrusive.

If you're worried about cookies, turn them off in your browser (although doing so will render many sites virtually unsearchable). In IE, choose Tools, Internet Options, click the Privacy tab, and click Advanced to override automatic cookie handling. Also, consider opting out of DoubleClick's site-to-site cookie tracking.

Opting out of spam gets you even more spam.

You've heard the advice. Don't reply to spam. If you do, you'll get even more because you've just told the spammer that your e-mail address is legitimate. This fact would be

difficult, if not impossible, to prove. Opting out of legitimate companies will drop you off their list, but when you do that with 'real' spammers, the results are unclear.

Regardless of whether you opt out, spammers have various tools to grab addresses. You can't completely protect your inbox, but you can take defensive measures, such as keeping your e-mail address off public sites.

For more information visit our website at [CAN-SPAM](#)