



A Survey of Thomas Edison's Inventions

[The Edison Cylinder Phonograph](http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/bledisondiscphgraph.htm)

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The cylinder phonograph was a combination of two other Edison inventions, the telegraph and the telephone. In 1877, Edison was working on a machine that would print telegraphic messages by making indentations on paper tape. This idea made Edison wonder if a telephone message could be recorded in a similar fashion. In this case, the vibrations of the speakers' voices made indentations in the paper. Next, Edison changed the paper to a metal cylinder with tin foil wrapped around it. When one spoke into a mouthpiece, the sound vibrations were indented onto the cylinder by the recording needle. Edison tested the machine by speaking the nursery rhyme into the mouthpiece, "Mary had a little lamb" and was amazed when the machine played his words back to him.

"The History of the Edison Cylinder Phonograph." Inventors. About.com. 2002. Accessed 9 July, 2002.

[The Edison Disk Phonograph](http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/bledisondiscphgraph2.htm)

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After cylinder phonographs came records and record players. The most popular disk phonograph at the time was called the Victrola. Thomas Edison's company had been manufacturing only cylinder phonographs, but because discs were more popular, Edison associates began developing their own disc player and discs in secret. The ten-inch records would run for 5 minutes per side at approximately 80 r.p.m.

"The History of the Edison Disk Phonograph." Inventors. About.com. 2002. Accessed 9 July, 2002.

[Kinetoscope](http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/bledison_kinetoscope2.htm)

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Moving pictures (movies) were already around by the end of the 19th century, but Edison's kinetoscope, a camera capable of recording successive images in a single camera, made movie-making easier and more cost-effective.

"Kinetoscope." Inventors. About.com. 2002. Accessed 9 July, 2002.

[Kinetophone](http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/bledison_kinetoscope.htm)

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At first, motion pictures were silent, and various inventors attempted to unite sight and sound through "talking" motion pictures. In 1895, Edison first offered Kinetophones – motion picture cameras with phonographs inside their cabinets. The viewer would look into the peep-holes of the Kinetoscope to watch the motion picture while listening to the accompanying phonograph through two rubber ear tubes connected to the machine.

"Kinetophones." Inventors. About.com. 2002. Accessed 9 July, 2002.

[Electric Lightbulb](http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/bledison.htm)

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Contrary to popular belief, Thomas Alva Edison didn't "invent" the light bulb, but his greatest challenge was to improve the lightbulb—make it more practical. In 1879, he was able to produce a reliable, long-lasting source of light that could be used in the home. Edison eventually completed an electric lighting system that contained all the elements necessary to make the incandescent light practical, safe, and economical.

"The Inventions of Thomas Edison." Inventors. About.com. 2002. Accessed 9 July, 2002.