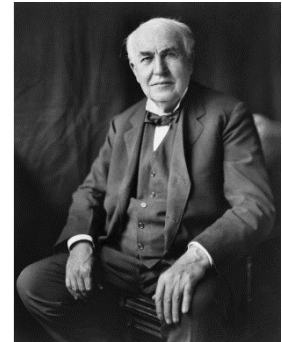


Read the information about the scientist, Thomas Edison.  
Create a fact file or write a summary of his achievements.

### Thomas Edison Facts

Thomas Edison was born February 11, 1847 in Milan, Ohio. He was the youngest of seven children.

He was one of the United States most well-known inventors. When he was a child he got scarlet fever, and this left him almost deaf.



### Early Life

He was nicknamed "Al" and although he was a very busy, curious boy, he struggled at school and often got into trouble.

His teacher called him "addled," which means slow or dim. Well, little did they know what would happen!

Edison's mother, Nancy Mathews Elliott, was frustrated with the school and knew her son could learn, so instead she taught him at home after he left school.

He read books from the library and taught himself but learned to love reading and conducting experiments from his mother.

He later remembered, "My mother was the making of me. She was so true, so sure of me; and I felt I had something to live for, someone I must not disappoint." Ah, that's awesome!

Edison often entertained himself by taking things apart to see how they worked. Soon, he decided to become an inventor.

When Edison was twelve, he started publishing and selling a newspaper to passengers on the train. Wow, that's clever.

At age 15, he became a "[tramp telegrapher](#)", sending and receiving messages via [Morse code](#), an electronically-conveyed alphabet using different clicks for each letter.

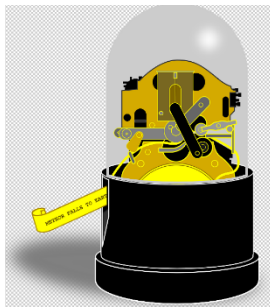
Morse code was used across the world by the military, shipping and the rail system where messages could be sent by wires.

### Life and Career

Eventually, he worked for the Union Army as a telegrapher.

He was 22 years old when he filed his first patent for the Electrographic Vote Recorder which helped people in the US Congress record their votes in a quicker way than the voice vote system they used at the time.

In 1870, he moved to [New York](#) City and improved the stock ticker. A stock ticker is a machine used by stock traders. When it made a “tick”, it meant a change in price of the items they were interested in. He soon formed his own company that created and made a new stock ticker.



He also began working on the telegraph, and invented a version that could [send four messages](#) at once. In war time or emergencies, telegraphs saved lives. When the [Titanic](#) sunk in the Atlantic Ocean, a telegraph alerted rescuers to the disaster. When you think about how he was called slow at school, he certainly was one clever man.

### Family Life and Inventions

Meanwhile, Edison married Mary Stillwell, had three children and moved his family to Menlo Park, [New Jersey](#) where he built his famous laboratory.

He was called the “Wizard of Menlo Park” because of the many inventions and improvements that streamed out of the doors of his lab. The secret of his success was not only about his creativity, but in his ability to create a workplace where he could spark the creative abilities of other people.

He worked extremely hard and registered 1,093 patents. A patent is a document granting an inventor sole rights to an invention.

In 1877, Edison, with help from “[muckers](#)”, who were individuals around the world looking to make fortunes in America, he invented the phonograph.

The phonograph was a machine that recorded the spoken voice and played it back by using the sound vibration of the voice which made a needle create indentations on a drum wrapped with tin foil.

Later, Edison would adopt cylinders and discs to permanently record music. He perfected the phonograph



A man with a phonograph

by recording "Mary had a Little Lamb" on a piece of tin foil! How awesome is that?

### Edison and Electricity



In 1878, Edison invented the light bulb for which he is most famous for. This is, however, not entirely true as the light bulb had been around for a number of years.

However, he perfected it and made the light bulb practical and inexpensive.

Edison later invented the entire electric utility system to deliver light to homes through a network of wires.

He started the Edison Electric Light Company in October of 1878 and the world was never the same again.

In 1884, after he had reached the dizzying heights of fame and fortune, his wife died. He remarried 20 year old Mina Miller in 1886 and had another three children.

Edison continued to invent or improve products and make significant contributions to x-ray technology, storage batteries and movies.

In Edison's movie studio, technically known as a Kinetographic Theatre, but nicknamed "The Black Maria". One person at a time could view 50 feet (15 meters) of film in about 20 seconds through a peep hole. Each Kinetoscope was about 4 feet (about 1 meter) tall, 20 inches square (50 centimeters square). A battery-operated lamp allowed the film to be lit up.

He also invented the world's first talking doll and revolutionized the cement kiln industry.

His inventions changed the world forever. They still influence the way we live today!

He won countless awards and was very famous. Edison worked until his death on October 18, 1931.

### Interesting Edison Facts

- Before his Mom decided to teach him at home, Edison only attended school for 3 months.
- In 1862, Edison saved a 3-year-old boy from being run over by a boxcar. That's cool.

- Thomas Edison would sleep for 4 hours only in a day and would work for 72 hours straight, especially when an experiment was about to be completed. Can you believe that?