1. Neolithic Tools

Neolithic tools, such as mallets, axes, and grinding stones, were made from animal bones or polished stones. With such tools, people could more efficiently produce food, clothing, and buildings. This led to the development of permanent settlements and agriculture, laying the foundations for society as we know it today.
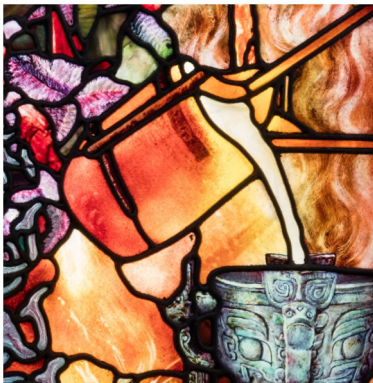
2. Jōmon Pottery

Jōmon pottery, created in Japan between 10,500 and 300 BCE, is amongst the oldest pottery in the world. The oldest known pottery was found in a cave in China that is about 20,000 years old. Pottery and ceramics have enabled the cooking and long-term storage of food, crucial to the development of agriculture.

3. The Wheel

The effect of the wheel in improving transportation of goods and people has had lasting impacts on humankind. With over 30 billion wheels in the world – used to transport, open, create, steer, and spin all kinds of materials – the significance of this simple device is easily felt through to the present day.
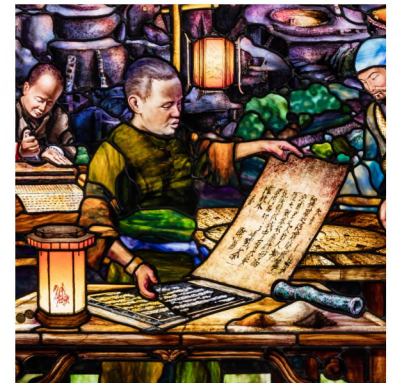
4. Metal Casting

Metal work with copper started as early as 5000 BCE, and has affected nearly everything within daily human life. Copper was replaced by the more durable bronze, a forged alloy of copper and tin employed to shape tools, weapons, and art. Eventually, civilizations learned to work iron, prompting the final stage of the Three-Age System of ancient societal development: the Iron Age.

5. The Pantheon

The Pantheon in Rome, built in 126 CE, still stands as the largest and oldest unreinforced concrete dome. Its longevity is credited to the type of concrete used in construction and the innovative mathematics used in its design. Today, 8.8 billion metric tons of cement are produced every year for long-lasting structural products.

6. Moveable Type

Originally developed by Bi Sheng in 11th-century China, movable type revolutionized printing technology and paved the way for more prolific communication. The resulting mass production of books made them more affordable and accessible to the public, thus aiding the spread of information and literacy.

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7. Toilet

Toilets have improved and saved lives through the reduction of the spread of disease. Although toilets first appeared in Ancient Roman times, the first modern flushable toilet was invented by John Harrington (1561 - 1612 CE). Queen Elizabeth had one installed for her use in 1596, but they were not legally required in buildings in England until 1848.

8. Benjamin Franklin

When the power goes out, we quickly realize just how much we've come to take for granted the power of electricity. The discovery of electricity in 1752 is credited to American scientist, politician, and inventor Benjamin Franklin, who famously experimented with kite flying during a thunderstorm.
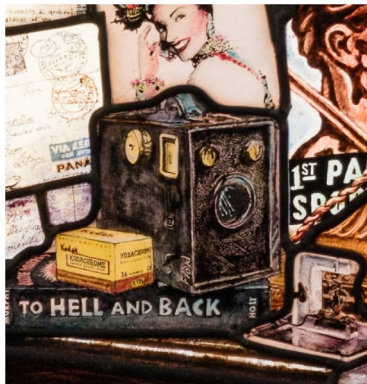

9. Sewing Machine

The sewing machine was invented in 1826 during the Industrial Revolution by French inventor Barthélemy Thimonnier. It revolutionized the clothing industry by making mass textile production possible and increasing the production of bedding, towels, clothes, and more.
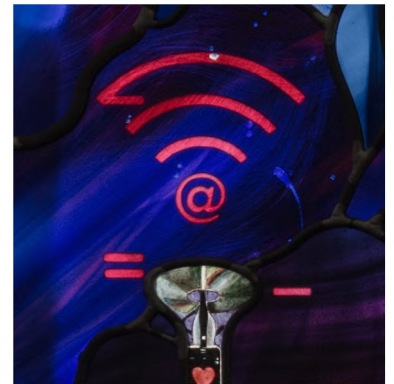

10. Alexander Graham Bell

Speaking with somebody on the other side of the globe within moments was unimaginable until Alexander Graham Bell invented the first telephone in 1876. The telephone essentially shrank the globe, allowing billions to connect and speak with family and friends all around the world.

11. Brownie Camera

Photography has shaped the way humans visualize the world for centuries. The "Brownie Camera" was invented by Frank Brownell and released in 1900. The camera was initially marketed towards children and sold for one dollar. Because of this, 100,000 cameras were sold within the first year, allowing more families access to photography.

12. The Internet

The Internet is a global network that connects billions of electronic devices. It became widely accessible to the public in the 1990s when the World Wide Web was opened, allowing the world to quickly publish and share more information than any previous time in history.