

Company makes smartphone you can repair yourself



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Most of us have felt the exasperation of feeling helpless when our smartphone breaks. Phone manufacturers seem to go to extraordinary lengths to deter consumers from opening the back of their phones to try DIY repairs. Help is at hand. Fairphone is a new company that has produced a self-repairable mobile phone. The founder is Bas van Abel, a Dutch design engineer who set out to make "the world's first ethical smartphone". He started his company in 2013 with four basic principles. First, he wanted to use raw materials from non-conflict mining areas. He also wanted to make a product that was recyclable, durable and repairable. The new Fairphone embodies these aims.

The Fairphone website outlines the philosophy that underpins the company. It says its mission is to motivate "a massive industry to take responsibility for its impact on the world, by establishing a viable market for ethical electronics". It highlights the fact that many workers who produce technology are working in unacceptable conditions. It also points out the, "staggering amount of waste the electronics industry generates". Finally, it says: "Communication technology is on track to account for 14 per cent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions by 2040." The Fairphone comes with a screwdriver and is easily repairable. The plastic used is 40-per-cent recycled, and the minerals are ethically sourced.

Sources: bbc.com / redbull.com / fairphone.com

Writing

All smartphones should be easy for owners to repair. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

exasperation / smartphone / consumers / help / design / engineer / raw materials / philosophy / mission / responsibility / electronics / ethical / waste / screwdriver

True / False

- 1) The article says everyone feels helpless when a smartphone breaks. T / F
- 2) The article says it is easy to remove the back cover of a smartphone. T / F
- 3) A Dutch engineer wanted to make the world's first ethical smartphone. T / F
- 4) The engineer wants to use no materials from conflict areas. T / F
- 5) The engineer hopes people who like philosophy will buy the phone. T / F
- 6) The engineer wants the tech industry to be more responsible. T / F
- 7) Smartphones account for very little greenhouse gas emissions. T / F
- 8) The Fairphone contains 40 percent recycled plastic. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. exasperation | a. workable |
| 2. deter | b. moral |
| 3. at hand | c. rectifiable |
| 4. ethical | d. within reach |
| 5. embodies | e. amazing |
| 6. philosophy | f. on schedule |
| 7. viable | g. reasoning |
| 8. staggering | h. put off |
| 9. on track | i. irritation |
| 10. repairable | j. includes |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) What damage does smartphone production do to the world?
- c) What are 'ethical electronics'?
- d) What do you know about the working conditions in tech factories?
- e) What would you do without a smartphone?
- f) Should we use just one smartphone for 10 years?
- g) What do you think of the price of smartphones?
- h) What questions would you like to ask Fairphone?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1. the exasperation | a. and repairable |
| 2. go to extraordinary | b. amount of waste |
| 3. Help is | c. impact on the world |
| 4. raw materials from non- | d. at hand |
| 5. a product that was recyclable, durable | e. sourced |
| 6. the philosophy that | f. conflict mining areas |
| 7. take responsibility for its | g. of feeling helpless |
| 8. the staggering | h. track |
| 9. technology is on | i. lengths |
| 10. the minerals are ethically | j. underpins the company |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of smartphones?
- How do you feel when your smartphone doesn't work?
- When was the last time you felt exasperated?
- Would you ever try to repair a smartphone?
- Are smartphones too complicated?
- What do you think of an ethical smartphone?
- Are you worried about where the components of smartphones are from?
- How durable and long-lasting should smartphones be?

Spelling

- felt the apearxtsoin of feeling helpless
- go to redaotxnirary lengths
- the world's first thieacl smartphone
- four basic ricppinles
- a product that was recyclable, uardble and repairable
- The new Fairphone mbodiees these aims
- the hioposlphy that underpins the company
- establishing a aivble market
- working in cupcetnbaale conditions
- the agegrsrtnig amount of waste
- greenhouse gas issmienos
- comes with a esrwdrivcer

Answers – Synonym Match

1. i	2. h	3. d	4. b	5. j
6. g	7. a	8. e	9. f	10. c

Role Play

Role A – Price

You think the price is the best thing about a smartphone. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least attractive of these (and why): apps, the camera or the call quality.

Role B – Apps

You think apps are the best thing about a smartphone. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least attractive of these (and why): the price, the camera or the call quality.

Role C – Camera

You think the camera is the best thing about a smartphone. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least attractive of these (and why): apps, the price or the call quality.

Role D – Call Quality

You think the call quality is the best thing about a smartphone. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least attractive of these (and why): apps, the camera or the price.

Speaking – Smartphone

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things about smartphones at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------|-------------------|
| • Price | • The alarm clock |
| • Maps | • The camera |
| • Size | • The torch |
| • Apps | • Call quality |

Answers – True False

1 F	2 F	3 T	4 T	5 F	6 T	7 F	8 T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.