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UK a nation of losers... when it comes to mobiles

November 17 2004

by [Will Sturgeon](#)

We just can't stop losing them, throwing them across the room, soaking them in Tikka Masala or dropping them in the toilets at Glastonbury...

Despite the advancements made in mobile phone design and technology and the fact many people now store their entire life on their handset it seems UK mobile users are still incapable of keeping hold of them, coming up with increasingly novel ways to be parted with their phone.

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Whether it's 'old school' mishaps like leaving them in a taxi or on a train or something more novel - like one user who unwittingly buried his after dropping it in a hole he had dug in order to answer a call of nature (the only call he will have been answering for a while) - we seem incapable of retaining one for terribly long.

More than half of us (54.5 per cent) go through at least one mobile phone each year, according to a recent survey, and for many that isn't by choice, with 52 per cent of us having lost a mobile phone in the past three years. More than a quarter of us (26 per cent), this writer included, have lost more than one during that period.

A new service launched in the UK called [Retrofone](#), who also conducted the research, is servicing this phenomenon by offering cut-price replacements for some of the most popular handsets from the past few years. As the name suggests there is nothing too cutting edge on offer but many consumers learn the hard way that expensive handsets, while fun, are inevitably more costly to lose.

And with only 16.8 per cent of respondents saying they were covered by insurance that replacement can indeed be costly.

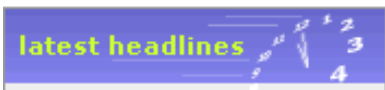
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Retrofone has also been asking customers to admit their most embarrassing phone loss blunders.

Dan from Cambridge duly obliged with a truly horrific tale.

"I dropped my mobile down the toilet pit at the Glastonbury festival," wrote Dan. "About four months later my Mum was called by the guy who sorts the stuff dropped down there. He had found it and taken the SIM card out, called the entry saying 'Mum' and then put the SIM in the post - so I got all my contacts back."

And then there was this confession from Mark in London.

"I once got lucky and woke up in the morning in an unfamiliar place with an unfamiliar person. I asked my beau if I could borrow her mobile to ring my flatmate but placed it back on the bedside table straight into her glass of water. I fished it out pretty quickly and removed the evidence, by downing what was left of the water. When she came back into the room I told her about what I'd done.

"She didn't seem so bothered about the phone but said her contact lenses were in the water. Not only had I knackered her phone but also drank her contacts... nightmare!" Other users admitted tales of mobile phones marinated in Tikka Masala after carrying the handset and a leaking curry in the same bag.

Another wrote: "I split up with my wife recently because of a third party. She used to keep her mobile very close to her chest so that she could text with her new fella and understandably that used to really annoy me. One Monday night we were off to our Relate meeting and her phone was charging so I unplugged it and calm as you like wound down her window on the passenger side and lobbed it out the window... the most cathartic experience of my life."

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