

COMPUTER GURU

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Let's Talk About 5G

Perhaps you've heard about the new 5G cellphone network and thought, "Golly! What's that?" (I usually start my thoughts with "Golly!" Some folks start their thoughts with "Oh no!" but I'm an optimist.)

The answer is simple: It's the newest generation of global standards for mobile networks. (The "G" means "generation.") It's called 5G because we're now using 4G. Before that, we were using 3G. (Do you see a pattern here? I hope so.) I prepared this table for you to summarize the features each cellphone standard provided as technology progressed from mobile phones the size of large bricks to smartphones the size of much smaller bricks.

The 5G network will improve the reliability of the cellphone network, provide much (MUCH) faster data streaming speeds, and reduce the network's "latency," which is its response time to your requests for data.

Cellphone providers are installing equipment now to support the new 5G standard, but it will be a few years before we'll see

complete nationwide coverage. Not to worry—the assortment of 5G smartphones is limited. We expect Apple to release its first 5G iPhone later this year. In two years, they'll be everywhere.

You may have read that some folks are worried that the 5G signals caused the Coronavirus, or autism in cats ("Golly! How would you know?"), or uncontrolled flatulence. This is ridiculous. Uncontrolled flatulence can result from too much bran in your diet, not cellphone signals. Our bodies don't respond to cellular radio frequencies because they're too low—way below the frequency of light, which is way below the damaging frequency of x-rays and gamma rays.

So if you have gas, blame the dog.

And now you know about 5G.

Golly!

If you need technical help, please contact us at princetonsenior.org/psrc-tech-resources/.

Standard	Year	Features
1G	1979	Analog mobile phone service – Voice only
2G	1991	Digital mobile phone service – Voice + text
3G	1998	Faster than 2G + Data (Internet)
4G	2008	Faster than 3G
5G	2020	10X faster than 4G, better coverage, reduced latency



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