

# INVENTORS

## Johann Gutenberg

### HIGHLIGHTS

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1. For centuries, monks worked in quiet monasteries to painstakingly create the written word so that the great ideas of their age and previous ages would not be lost.
  2. The term manuscript comes from the Latin word “manus” because for more than 1,000 years of human history, all manuscripts were copied through the labors of human hands.
  3. Officials of the church, governments and wealthy nobles were the only ones who had access to written materials.
  4. By the 15th century, humanity had accumulated a wealth of knowledge that needed to be made available to the common man.
3. Had to borrow money to build his printing press, and just when it was perfected, he lost his shop and everything in it because of the debt.
  4. Furst, his partner, took credit for what is now known as his first printing job, the massive Gutenberg Bible.
  5. After his death in 1468, Gutenberg was given credit for his invention.

### THE PERSON

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1. Johann Gutenberg was born between 1394 and 1400 in Mainz, Germany.
2. He was an excellent craftsman and a perfectionist with a vision.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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1. Gutenberg did not invent printing. He invented moveable type, which allowed people for the first time in human history to make numerous copies of a work at a fairly rapid rate.
2. He discovered just the right blend of metals for his molds, a combination of lead, zinc, and antimony that is still used today in letterpress printing.
3. He found a special oil-based ink that would stick to the type and transfer to the paper.
4. He invented his printing press entirely on his own, a monumental achievement that took him many decades.

### UNIQUE INFLUENCE

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1. Gutenberg’s printing methods weren’t significantly modified until the 20th century.
2. For 500 years, his methods produced most of the printed material on earth.
3. With his invention, Gutenberg opened the door of knowledge and communication for everyone — not just the nobles, the priests, and the wealthy — but for all the world.
4. The invention of the printing press and moveable type has allowed poets, philosophers, historians, and scientists to teach and awaken the masses.
5. There may be no invention that has changed our world more.

### QUOTABLE QUOTES

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Gutenberg once called one of the witnesses in a case against him, “**a poor creature, leading a life of lies and deceit.**” It is one of the few quotations ever attributed to this quiet man. He lost the libel case that followed.

“**The admirable art of typography was invented by the ingenious Johann Gutenberg at Mainz in 1450.**” This quote is from the preface to a book written by the grandson of Johann Furst, the business partner who had

foreclosed on Gutenberg’s printing press, and the son of Peter Schoeffer, who was Gutenberg’s foreman before helping Furst complete the Gutenberg Bible.