

The 1970 Survival Ideas for Now

Would you have survived Vietnam and the Counter Culture?
Are you ready?

Some ideas may actually be better than what we do now, at least in terms of team work and cooperation.

1) had a smoking area in high school

mostly so other students would not have to suffer from your addiction.

2) Vietnam draft at 18, but could not vote till 21

Does not seem fair right? Voting age changed a few years later, AFTER the draft ended.

3) watched sci-fi on TV or movies

from Star Trek to eventually Star Wars, sci-fi as big box office.

4) hot pants, miniskirts and birth control

sexualization of women was big business

5) slide rules at school or work

soon pocket calculators would come out, but still rare and slide rules were cheap.

6) mechanical calculator for addition/subtraction

see above. Not portable though.

7) used a mini computer with punch cards/paper tape

had to use existing code or write it yourself. Debugging was a real pain.

8) physical encyclopedias and huge dictionaries

every library had them, most homes (World Book Encyclopedia was common)

9) used a card catalogs with the Dewey Decimal system in libraries

the Wikipedia of the time, but shower though

10) legal to ride in the back of a pickup without restraints

amazing we survived right?

11) typing classes, home economics and shop classes (wood, metal, drafting)

good idea if going into the trade or college.

12) transistor radios and tape decks

gotta have your tunes right?

13) "organic" food as response to pesticides

Rachael Carson's "Silent Spring" made a big impact on our thinking.

14) worked in a fast food restaurant as a first job

a right of passage, sometimes got a free meal though.

15) used a manual transmission in a car

manual transmissions are arguably better, cheaper and easier to service.

16) B&W TVs at standard def

color TVs were for the rich. 640X480 resolution.

17) been backpacking and camping

another rite of passage thing for the time, part of the back to nature and could you survive without help.

18) ran custom made slot cars and rented time on larger tracks<

a teenager hobby along with model trains, skate boards, and custom 'stingray' bicycles.

19) used a black and white film camera and kept images in an album

Go into your grandparents closet and you will still often find these albums of family images and vacation trips. Now digital all fits on a tiny chip. Not as tactile and can't be seen without a viewer. The 'old' print images can be viewed without any external device. I always developed my own B&W film, learned from my father, who recorded images of the Korean conflict.

20) saw the first moon landing live on TV

From the first powered flight to people on the moon in fifty years. Jet airlines for normal passengers was common too.

21) bought a nice house for less than \$25,000. Now a 'hut' size house in my town goes for over a million. Why are there so many homeless you ask? Really, you need to ask this? Greed and scarcity.

22) travel luggage had wheels

Convenient, but we are losing muscle mass in the process. How about pack less stuff instead?

23) served actual meals on airplanes

short flights it was more of a snack, but it did happen.

24) fallout shelters and evacuation drills (as in WWII, not crazy people)

Till the Internet and email, this was the cheapest way to communicate. Telephone and telegrams were out of reach (\$\$\$) for long distance unless it was an emergency.

25) ash trays in cars, planes, restaurants

Starting to see separate smoking sections at least.

26) used a film camera with flashcubes

Made it much easier for the photography illiterate. No separate hot flash bulbs to deal with.

27) had to lick stamps to mail a letter

Done with that at least, though some envelopes still need to be licked.

28) sting ray bikes and paper routes at age 12 or above

First job for most was either baby sitting or a paper route (sexist times)

29) pledge of allegiance every morning in school

Complete with the 'Under God' part. There was push back from the 'hippies' of the time. Being drafted does that to you.

30) watched movies in school using a 16mm projector

And film strips and slide projectors. Being tech, was often drafted by teachers to load the devices.

31) can read and write in full handwritten cursive script

Old people secret writing. Schools are starting to teach it again, because, it really does help with essential hand-eye coordination and ultimately makes you smarter. Go figure.

32) used a rotary phones to dial long distance (expensive)

They charged by distance and length of call. Only in emergencies.

33) navigated by charts, compasses, etc. (slide rules helped)

GPS came out later and at first was only for the military. Good idea to learn this skill, as we have seen, GPS is jammed by the enemy in a time of conflict.

34) used leaded gas and lead in paint

Nothing like the smell of good old poison in the morning.

35) equal time for anti-smoking advertisements

Starting to catch on that smoke in general, but nicotine (1st insecticide) is not good in your lungs, even as a bystander (2nd hand smoke)

36) used old grocery bags to make book covers

Not optional. Could get detention if your books were not covered or turned back in damaged in anyway. In college you could potentially resell your books if in good condition. Not a disposable culture yet.

I was alive during this time, high school. Strange time. Older people either embraced the changes or actively rejected them. Generational conflict was high.

No internet or social media yet and that might have saved everyone.

Draft for Vietnam War ended in June 1972, and the threat of being drafted affected everyone (yourself or a loved one could be next!)