

INVENTOR & MAKER OF THE WEEK

Johannes Gutenberg

INVENTOR OF THE MOVEABLE TYPE PRINTING PRESS



Printing was invented in Ancient China where they carved words or images, in reverse, onto wooden blocks. They rolled ink over the blocks and pressed them onto paper or fabric.

This was then improved by the Chinese invention of 'moveable type' in around 1000 AD. Moveable type used individual letters carved into clay or wood that were arranged in the right order, inked, pressed on paper and then reused. This was all very slow and meant that printed books were very expensive and only available to rich people.

Around 1450 Johannes Gutenberg, a man from Mainz in Germany, invented the movable type printing press. He made each letter from metal and then arranged them into a frame to make words and sentences. A new kind of ink was then rolled onto the surface. Finally a piece of paper was placed over the frame and a flat printing press pushed the paper onto the letters. This could be done lots of times for each page.

Gutenberg's invention made it much quicker and easier to print books, which made them cheaper and easier to get hold of. As more people started to read books, more knowledge spread. Gutenberg's invention changed the world forever.

