

## GCSE Bitesize Computer Science

### Professor Steve Furber on smartphone patents

I'm Steve Furber. I was involved in the design of the very earliest ARM processors at Acorn in the early 1980s. Today, most of the mobile computing products that we find in everyday life - such as tablets, phones, smartphones - use the ARM processor, which is designed by a British company in Cambridge and is quite different from the processor you find in your desktop computer, which is designed by Intel in the USA. One of the earliest developments that ARM Ltd did to make the processor more suitable for mobile phone applications was they created a way of compressing the instruction set – making the instructions a bit smaller so they occupied less memory. Many other people have then tried to copy it because it's such a useful technique in mobile phone applications, but their patent protection means they can defend themselves against direct copies.