



Timeline:	
( Show Images )	
1970	Datapoint 2200
1971	Kenbak-1
1972	
1973	Micral
	Scelbi-8H
1974	Mark-8
1975	MITS Altair 8800 <small>NEW!!</small>
	SwTPC 6800
	Sphere
	CompuColor
	IMSAI 8080
	IBM 5100
1976	MOS KIM-1
	Sol-20
	Hewlett-Packard 9825A
	PolyMorphic
	Cromemco Z-1
	Apple I
	Rockwell AIM 65
1977	ELF, SuperELF
	Apple II
	Wameco QM-1A
	Vector Graphic
	Vector-1
	RCA COSMAC VIP
	Commodore PET
	Radio Shack TRS-80
	Atari VCS (2600)
	NorthStar Horizon
	Heathkit H8
	Intel MCS-85
	Heathkit H11
1978	Netronics ELF II
	IBM 5110
	VideoBrain Family <small>NEW!!</small>
	Computer
	Exidy Sorcerer
	Ohio Scientific
	Superboard II
	Synertek SYM-1
	APF Imagination
	Machine
	Cromemco System 3
1979	Z80 Starter Kit
	Interact Model One
	TRS-80 model II
	Bell & Howell
	SwTPC S/09
	Heathkit H89
	Atari 400
	Atari 800
	TI-99/4
	Findex
	Sharp MZ 80K
	HP-85
1980	Micro Ace
	IBM 5120
	TRS-80 Color Computer
	TRS-80 model III
	TRS-80 Pocket
	Computer
	NNC 80W

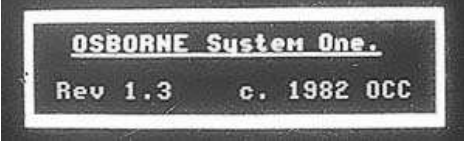
Osborne 1	
<b>Introduced:</b>	April 1981
<b>Price:</b>	US \$1,795
<b>Weight:</b>	24.5 pounds
<b>CPU:</b>	Zilog Z80 @ 4.0 MHz
<b>RAM:</b>	64K RAM
<b>Display:</b>	built-in 5" monitor 53 X 24 text
<b>Ports:</b>	parallel / IEEE-488 modem / serial port
<b>Storage:</b>	dual 5-1/4 inch, 91K drives
<b>OS:</b>	CP/M



Released in 1981 by the Osborne Computer Corporation, the Osborne 1 is considered to be the first true portable computer - it closes-up for protection, and has a carrying handle. It even has an optional battery pack, so it doesn't have to be plugged into the 110VAC outlet for power.

While quite revolutionary, the Osborne does have its limitations. For example, the screen is only 5" (diagonal) in size, and can't display more than 52 characters per line of text. To compensate, you can actually scroll the screen display back and forth with the cursor keys to show lines of text up to 128 characters wide.

The Osborne was designed with transportation in mind - it had to be rugged and able to survive being moved about. That's one reason that the screen is so small - a larger and heavier screen would be more susceptible to damage.

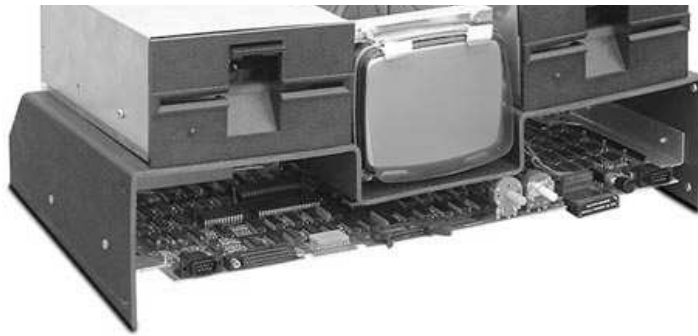


The two pockets beneath the floppy drives work great for floppy disk storage, although the Osborne modem also fits perfectly in the the left pocket and plugs into the front-mounted "modem" port.

Designed as a true portable computer system - it can be considered airline carry-on luggage, and it will fit under the passenger seat of any commercial airliner

two full-height floppy drives.

- Commodore VIC-20
- Sinclair ZX81
- Apple III
- Osborne I
- Micro-Professor
- TI-99/4A
- IBM System/23
- IBM PC
- LNW-80
- Epson HX-20
- Rockwell AIM 65/40



- 1982 Timex Sinclair 1000
- Kaypro II
- Otrona Attache
- GRiD Compass 1101
- Victor 9000
- NEC APC
- SAGE II

While the Osborne was a good deal at \$1795, it also came bundled with about \$1500 of free software:

- CP/M System
- CP/M Utility
- SuperCalc spreadsheet application
- WordStar word processing application with MailMerge
- Microsoft MBASIC programming language
- Digital Research CBASIC programming language

- DEC Rainbow 100
- Sinclair ZX-Spectrum
- Lobo MAX-80
- Panasonic/Quasar HHC
- Franklin Ace 100
- Franklin Ace 1000
- HP-75C

The Osborne was a huge overnight success, with sales reaching 10,000 units a month. In September 1981, Osborne Computer Company had its first US\$1 million sales month.

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- Zorba

Available options include the Osborne DATACOM modem.

- The Osborne modem and COMM-PAC software gives you access to more than 200 electronic bulletin boards across the country (well, in 1982, that is).
- Data transfer rate is 300 baud.
- The modem fits in the diskette pocket below floppy drive A.
- It fits in both the original "tan case" and the newer "blue case" Osborne (see below), but the diskette pocket in the "blue case" is smaller, so the eight alignment tabs must be carefully snapped off.

- 1983 Dynaloc Hyperion
- Compaq Portable
- TI CC-40
- Jupiter Ace
- Apple Lisa

case" is smaller, so the eight alignment tabs must be carefully snapped off.

- TRS-80 model 100
- Kyotronic 85
- Olivetti M-10
- NEC PC-8201a
- Tomy Tutor
- Gavilan SC
- SAGE IV
- Altos 586
- Spectravideo
- Mattel Aquarius
- Coleco Adam
- Timex Sinclair 1500
- TRS-80 MC-10



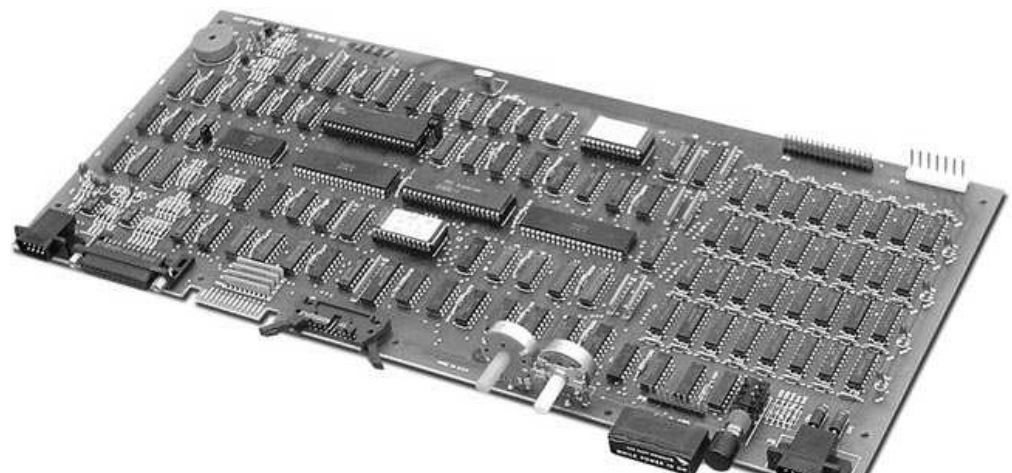
Also available is the Double-Density Disk Drive Option. This is an additional circuit board which must be installed inside the system.

- Doubles the amount of data storage per diskette.
- Recognizes these formats:
  - Osborne 1 single density - 92K per diskette
  - Osborne 1 double density - 182K per diskette
  - Xerox 820 single density - 82K per diskette
  - Cromemco single density - 80K per diskette
  - IBM Personal Computer (CP/M-86 format) - 156K per diskette
  - DEC VT-180 - 171K per diskette

- 1984 Commodore SX-64
- Apple Macintosh
- Sinclair QL
- IBM Portable
- TRS-80 model 200

- Epson PX-8
- IBM PCjr
- Apple IIc
- Sord IS-11
- HP 110
- Tano Dragon
- Tandy 1000
- Sharp PC-5000

- 1985 Heath/Zenith Z-171
- Atari 520ST
- Franklin Ace 2000
- Franklin Ace 500
- Kaypro 2000
- Amiga 1000



- 1986 Compaq Portable II  
IBM Convertible  
Apple IIGS
- 1987 Zenith eazy PC  
Amiga 500  
Amiga 2000  
Canon Cat  
Linus Write-Top  
Commodore 128D (USA)  
Compaq Portable III
- 1988 Apple IIc Plus
- 1989 Atari Portfolio  
Macintosh Portable  
Atari Stacy  
NeXT  
Atari ST Book  
Zenith MinisPort
- 1990 Poqet PC  
Amiga 3000
- 1991 Commodore CDTV  
HP 95LX  
Macintosh PowerBook
- 1992 Amiga 600  
Zeos Pocket PC  
Amiga 4000  
Amiga 1200  
IBM ThinkPad
- 1993 AT&T EO 440  
Amstrad PenPad  
Apple Newton

GREEN=Acquired  
RED=Wanted

Click on the blue text for more information



Seen above is the second release of the Osborne portable. It has a sturdier case and a slightly different look - double-density floppy-drives are optional.

Intentional or not, the "new" Osborne has a very military-like appearance, with its square face, dark blue color, and its many knobs and compartments.

In 1982, the Osborne Computer Company announced a successor, the Executive model OCC-2 (seen here to the right), with a larger screen and a cooling fan.



Shortly thereafter, they announced the next system, the Vixen, a portable running the CP/M operating system.

Unfortunately, potential customers stopped buying the Osborne 1, waiting for the Executive and the Vixen, which wasn't even ready to ship yet. Additionally, the new Kaypro II was now available with a larger screen for less money. Osborne sales plummeted and Osborne quickly ran out of money and filed for bankruptcy in September of 1983.

It probably wasn't the company's fault, since by this time most of the serious computer users were gravitating towards the new IBM PC, which had already been available since 1981.

Anything that wasn't IBM compatible was bound to fail. In 1983, the Compaq Portable came out - a portable computer similar to the Osborne, except that it was IBM compatible and ran MS-DOS. It was a great success.

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**History of the Osborne Computer Corporation**

Osborne 1 computer

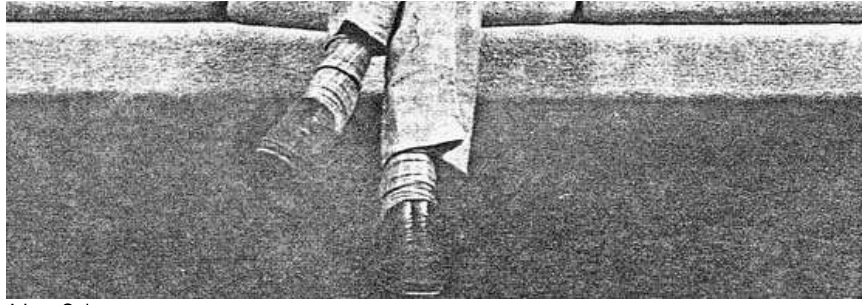
- **1981: April** - Adam Osborne, of Osborne Computer Corporation, introduces the Osborne 1 Personal Business Computer at the West Coast Computer Faire
- **1981: September** - Osborne Computer Company has its first US\$1 million sales month.
- **1982: August** - Microsoft releases Multiplan for the Apple II and the Osborne I.
- **1982: In the first 8 months since its introduction, 11,000 Osborne 1 computers ship.**
- **1983: March** - Osborne Computer introduces The Osborne Executive and the Executive II portable computers.
- **1983: September** - Osborne Computer Corp. files for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection

Source: [Chronology of Events in the History of Microcomputers](#)



11/24/11

Osborne 1 computer



Adam Osborne

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