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Thread: [\[Hardware History\] When a 10MB Hard Drive Was Considered Huge](#)

techpacket - March 6, 2026, 11:24 pm

Today it's normal to see 1TB, 2TB, or even larger hard drives in personal computers. Storage has become so cheap and massive that most people barely think about it anymore.

But if we go back a few decades, storage looked very different.

In 1956, IBM introduced the IBM 305 RAMAC, which contained the world's first hard disk drive.

It could store about 5 MB of data.

That might sound tiny today, but at the time it was revolutionary. Before that, data was mostly stored using punch cards or magnetic tapes.

The hard drive itself was massive. The system weighed over a ton and used 50 large metal disks spinning together inside a cabinet about the size of a refrigerator.

Fast forward to the early personal computer era and things were still very different from today. In the 1980s, a 10 MB hard drive was considered a serious upgrade for a home computer.

To put that into perspective:

- A single modern smartphone photo can easily be 3–5 MB
- One modern video game can require 50–100 GB or more

Yet back then, people managed operating systems, programs, and files within just a few megabytes of storage.

Hardware has evolved incredibly fast in just a few decades. What once required an entire cabinet now fits on a tiny chip smaller than a fingernail.

Sometimes it's crazy to realize how quickly computing hardware has progressed.

? Discussion

- What was the first hard drive size you remember using?
- Did anyone here ever use computers with less than 1 GB storage?
- Do you still use HDDs today, or have you fully moved to SSDs?

Always interesting to hear different hardware experiences. ?

Null State - March 13, 2026, 1:00 pm

Never used any of the smaller stuff that was 1GB or anything, but I do remember 60,80, 100,120 GB models at various points. I have 8TB of SSDs between two PCs, as well as 32TB on HDDs in my NAS. SSD speeds are great and all, but HDDs for the foreseeable future will be the better deal for

bulk storage.