

Mobile phones in use worldwide top 5.0 billion: study

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Mobile phones on display. The number of mobile phones in use worldwide has topped 5.0 billion, boosted by soaring demand in emerging markets India and China, a study by Swedish telecoms giant Ericsson showed Thursday.

Since one person can have more than one mobile phone subscription, the 5.0 billion mark does not necessarily mean five billion people own a mobile phone.

According to the United Nations, the world's population is around 6.8 billion people.

Ericsson added mobile broadband subscriptions are growing at a similar pace and are expected to reach 3.4 billion by 2015, up from 360 million last year.

The mobile giant predicts 80 percent of all people accessing the Internet will soon do so via a [mobile phone](#).

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The world's 5.0-billionth mobile phone subscription was recorded on July 8, the company said in a statement, with the market having increased almost seven-fold in 10 years.

"In the year 2000, about 720 million people had mobile subscriptions, less than the amount of users in China alone today," Ericsson said.

The number of mobile subscriptions increases by two million a day, "largely thanks to emerging markets like [India](#) and [China](#)," it added.

An Ericsson spokeswoman told AFP the study's term "subscriptions" included both billed contracts with providers and the 'pay-as-you-go' formula, popular in [emerging markets](#).

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