

Glassmaker Corning toughens Gorilla Glass for smartphone screens

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US manufacturer Corning said Thursday it was introducing a new, tougher version of its Gorilla Glass used by major smartphone makers in a bid to maintain dominance in the sector.

The new material, called Gorilla Glass 4, is "up to two times tougher

than any competitive cover glass design now in the market," and aims to prevent screen breakage from everyday drops, said the company, which specializes in glass, ceramics and related materials.

"We're always innovating to push the limits of what glass can do," said James Steiner, Corning's senior vice president.

"With Gorilla Glass 4, we have focused on significantly improving protection against sharp contact damage, which is the primary reason that mobile devices break. Dropping and breaking a phone is a common problem, and one that our customers have asked us to help address."

The company gained notoriety when Apple's late chief Steve Jobs persuaded Corning to set up a new manufacturing facility to ensure enough capacity for the iPhone launch in 2007.

Corning now supplies most of the smartphone makers and is also featured on many tablets, including the iPad. It has been used on some three billion devices, according to the company.

But talk has been circulating about new materials such as sapphire glass being adapted for smartphones.

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