Smart technology is not making us dumber: study
2 July 2021

For example, he says, your smart phone knows the way to the baseball stadium so that you don't have to dig out a map or ask for directions, which frees up brain energy to think about something else. The same holds true in a professional setting: "We're not solving complex mathematical problems with pen and paper or memorizing phone numbers in 2021."

Computers, tablets and smart phones, he says, function as an auxiliary, serving as tools which are good at memorization, calculation and storing information and presenting information when you need it.

Additionally, smart technology augments decision making skills that we would be hard pressed to accomplish on our own, says the paper's lead author Lorenzo Cecutti, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Toronto. Using GPS technology on our phones, he says, can not only help us get there, but lets us choose a route based on traffic conditions. "That would be a challenging task when driving round in a new city."

Chemero adds: "You put all this technology together with a naked human brain and you get something that's smarter...and the result is that we, supplemented by our technology, are actually capable of accomplishing much more complex tasks than we could with our un-supplemented biological abilities."

While there may be other consequences to smart technology, "making us stupid is not one of them," says Chemero.
