

The Siemens & Halske W48 Table Telephone

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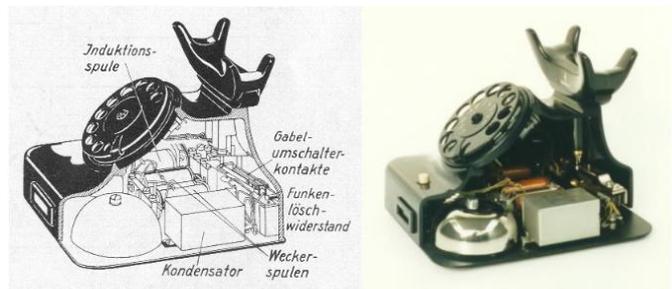
The W 48 is, for most people in Germany, the epitome of the 'old telephone'. Siemens & Halske developed the model 36 in the 30's. With small changes it became W48 after the Second World War. The W48 was standard apparatus of the Federal Postal Administration, Bundespost, up to beginning of the 70s. The W48 is the Volkswagen beetle of telephones.



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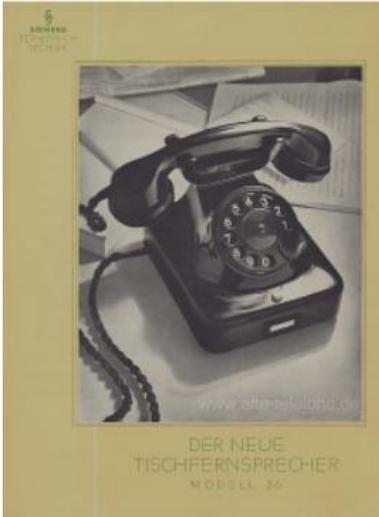
The W36 did not completely satisfy the specifications of the Reichspost. So up to the second World War the Model 36 was only used by Siemens for private PABXs.

In the 1930s the company Siemens & Halske were commissioned to develop a new standard telephone for the State Post Office, the Reichspost. The model 36 was introduced at the Leipzig trade fair in 1936. The case consisted entirely of a plastic moulding (thermosetting polymer and/or bakelite). The W36 laid the foundations for what became the W48.



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S&H Model 36 (housing partly cut open)



Further advantages of the Model 36

Optimised handset: The shape of the new telephone handset was developed as a result thousands of head measurements. Microphone and telephone are positioned optimally between the mouth and ear. The new telephone handset was shortened somewhat and has a greater curvature. The handle is triangular in section and sits comfortably in the hand. This new design gives no user fatigue, even in long conversations.

New cradle rest and dial: The cradle rest improves reliable operation by positively guiding the handset into place. The dial is angled at a steeper angle for increased comfort and improved legibility of the numbers.

Good Stability: Excellent stability even on smooth surfaces, is achieved by a good weight distribution and the positioning of the rubber feet.

Modern Accessories: On request we can supply the new telephone with a flexible cord, which is only half the normal length but readily stretches to twice its initial length.

1936 sales Leaflet: "New table telephone model 36"

The Reichspost produced a revised specification in 1938 and the W38 was developed. Outwardly there is little to allow the layman to tell it apart from the Model 36. The W38 has a more modern dial, but the circuitry of the W38 is considerably more complex than that of the Model 36.

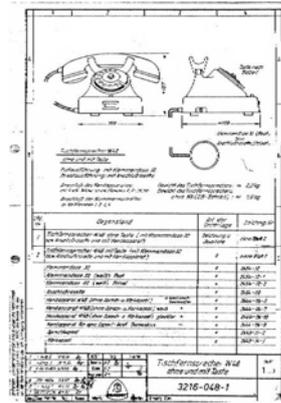


By the outbreak of war and with increasing shortages of materials from 1940 onwards, the W38 was more and more optimised and the circuitry reduced. Even the bell gongs were replaced by glass bells to save iron.

After the war, the W38 in its pre-war design continued to be built in the GDR, East Germany. Later models made by VEB in Nordhausen (R-F-T), replaced the painted sheet metal baseplate with one of thermosetting plastic.

After 1948 in West Germany the W48 was introduced. The change in design of the receiver is most notable. The W48 was once again provided with metal bells. For an increased rental the subscriber could get the W48 in an ivory colour. The ivory coloured W48s were popular with medical practices, hotels and private homes.

The W48 was used up until the 1970s as the standard apparatus of the Bundespost. Nearly all the German manufacturers built it under licence. Up to the end of the 1980s W48s could be found attached to PABXs, on private wires and in official offices.



Even after over 50 years the W48 did not disappear from the market. In the 90s the W48 experienced a comeback. Bundespost / Deutsche Telekom have introduced a reproduction W48 to their range. A vintage form with modern technology and including an 'FTZ' number allowing public network connection. As recently as 2005 the reproduction W48 could be found in exclusive mail order catalogues.



**Deutsche Bundespost-
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