

# byteback

## Mobile moans

Do you know where the stranger sitting next to you is going on the weekend, what they're going to wear and drink? Ah, that'll be the curse of the mobile phone. Ben Camm-Jones vents his anger, so stand well back

There are certain things you can't do in this country unless you hold a valid licence – for example, drive, fish or shoot defenceless animals. Some licences can't be obtained without first passing a test and there are good reasons for this. The purpose of the driving test, in principle at least, is to protect the general populace by keeping the reckless and the feckless from getting behind the wheel. The effectiveness of this particular test may be debatable, but I do believe there is a strong argument for introducing proficiency tests in other areas of daily life, especially in the correct usage of the mobile phone.

People should be tested for suitability before they can purchase a mobile phone. It may seem severe but it's the only way to weed out those people that are too irresponsible to use one. The individuals, for example, who will choose *The Macarena* as their ring tone, set it at top volume and then forget to turn it off in the cinema. There's no denying that mobile

phones are useful, but they are also the cause of extreme irritation to the law-abiding public and this simply won't do.

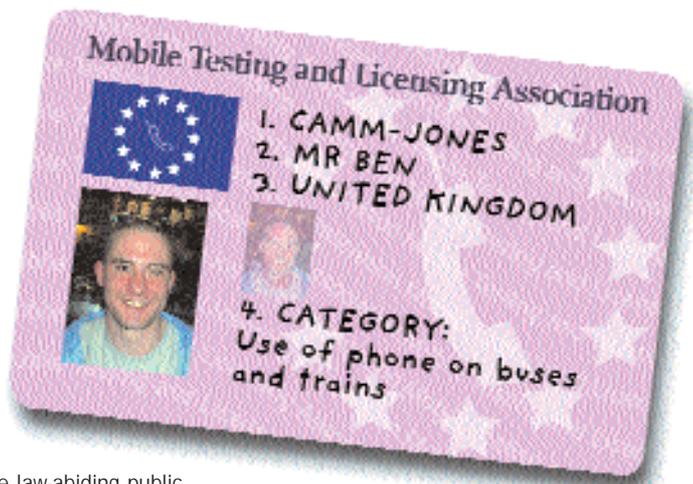
We all know how annoying it is to be forced to listen to someone else's conversation when using public transport. There are certain circumstances when using a mobile on the bus is alright, but only when you have to let someone know that you're going to be late because you're currently stuck in a snowdrift.

Even then you should conduct the call quietly and look suitably embarrassed and apologetic afterwards. Having shouted conversations on a train or even in a built-up area about what you're going to have for tea tonight should be a criminal offence.

Recently I was using the lifts at *PC Advisor Towers*, when a gentleman from another company (that shall, of course, remain nameless) entered,

evidently halfway through a telephone call. As the lift doors closed, his signal faded and he was reduced to shouting 'Hello?' and looking at his mobile as if it was playing up on him. The fact that he was enclosed in a metal-lined box seemed to have escaped his attention. This is a clear example of someone who should be banned from owning a mobile.

Mobile telephony, when conducted discreetly and between consenting adults, can be a beautiful thing. But when people abuse, rather than use, their phones, everyone suffers. It's time to put a stop to this, so I would encourage you to write to your MP and voice your support for the creation of a MTLA (Mobile Testing and Licensing Association) today.



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