

For Your Inner Math Lover, The Calculator Goes Retro

By Damon Darlin

The New York Times August 2, 2007 Hewlett-Packard introduced the first hand-held scientific calculator in 1972 and sent the engineer's stalwart slide rule the way of the buggy whip. Named the HP-35 because it had 35 keys, the pocket-size device sold 10 times as well as expected in its first year, no small feat considering that it cost \$400. The HP-35 was discontinued after three years, but the company has just released a "retro" version to mark its 35th anniversary.

The HP 35s only vaguely resembles the original. It is larger now, with 43 keys and a two-line L.C.D. instead of red light-emitting diodes.

The new model stays true to the system of data entry called Reverse Polish Notation that defined the early H.P. calculators. Engineers swore by the odd method (2 Enter 3 +) as a time saver, but nearly everyone else found it befuddling. You can switch to the more conventional algebraic method ($2 + 3 =$).

The 100 built-in functions make the programmable calculator as handy a tool as it was when engineers wore bellbottoms. But one other thing has changed: the price is \$60.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/02/technology/circuits/02calculator.html>