1835  Samuel Morse invents the telegraph.

1876  Alexander Graham Bell invents the telephone.

1880  *Scientific American* magazine runs an article about the possibility of distance vision (television).

1884  German scientist Paul Nipkow invents the optical scanning disk used in mechanical television systems.

1887  Heinrich Rudolph Hertz discovers radio waves.

1895  Guglielmo Marconi develops a wireless or radio telegraph.

1897  German scientist Karl Ferdinand Braun develops the first cathode ray tube.

1900  Russian scientist Constantin Perskyi coins the term “television” at the Paris World’s Fair.

1900  David Sarnoff immigrates to the United States from Russia.

1901  Guglielmo Marconi sends and receives radio signals across the Atlantic Ocean.

1907  Russian physicist Boris Rosing designs an electronic television receiver with a cathode ray tube.

1911  Boris Rosing and his assistant, Vladimir Zworykin, achieve the first successful transmission of crude television images, using a mechanical transmitter and an electronic receiver.

1912  The Radio Act of 1912 allows the U.S. government to issue licenses to people who wish to broadcast signals over radio waves.
1912 David Sarnoff, working as a telegraph operator, claims to have received distress signals from the sinking luxury oceanliner Titanic.

1919 The Radio Corporation of America (RCA) is formed.

1921 American inventor Philo T. Farnsworth, age 14, has a vision of an all-electronic television system.

1921 Commercial radio broadcasting begins in the United States.

1922 Philo T. Farnsworth explains his television system to his high school science teacher.

1923 Vladimir Zworykin applies for a patent on an all-electronic television system.

1925 Vladimir Zworykin demonstrates a TV system for his bosses at Westinghouse, but they decide against funding further TV research.

1926 Philo T. Farnsworth gathers investors and opens a television research laboratory in San Francisco, California.

1926 The National Broadcasting Company (NBC) is formed as a radio network.

1926 American Charles Francis Jenkins and Scotsman John Logie Baird independently invent working mechanical television systems.

1927 Philo T. Farnsworth builds his all-electronic TV system and successfully transmits an image.

1927 The Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) is founded as a radio network.

1927 Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover appears in the first long-distance transmission of television signals, between Washington, D.C., and New York City.

1927 The Radio Act of 1927 first mentions broadcasters’ duty to serve the public interest.

1928 The U.S. government issues the first permits for experimental TV stations.