

78 Reasonable Questions to Ask about Any Technology

<p>Ecological</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are its effects on the health of the planet and of the person? • Does it preserve or destroy biodiversity? • Does it preserve or reduce ecosystem integrity? • What are its effects on the land? • What are its effects on wildlife? • How much and what kind of waste does it generate? • Does it incorporate the principles of ecological design? • Does it break the bond of renewal between humans and nature? • Does it preserve or reduce cultural biodiversity? • What is the totality of its effects, it's "ecology"? <p>Social</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it serve community? • Does it empower community members? • How does it affect our perception of our needs? • Is it consistent with the creation of a communal, human economy? • What are its effects on relationships? • Does it undermine conviviality? • Does it undermine traditional forms of community? • How does it affect our way of seeing and experiencing the world? • Does it foster a diversity of forms of knowledge? • Does it build on, or contribute to, the renewal of traditional forms of knowledge? • Does it serve to commodify knowledge or relationships? • To what extent does it redefine reality? • Does it to raise a sense of time and history? • What is its potential to become addictive? 	<p>Moral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What values does its use foster? • What is gained by its use? • What are its effects beyond its ability to the individual? • What is lost in using it? • What are its effects on the least person in the society? <p>Aesthetic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it ugly? • Does it cause ugliness? • What noise does it make? • What pace does it set? • How does it affect quality of life (as distinct from standard of living)? <p>Practical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does it make? • Who does it benefit? • What is its purpose? • Where was it produced? • Where is it used? • Where must it go when it's broken or obsolete? • How expensive is it? • Can it be repaired? By an ordinary person? • What is the entirety of its cost, the full cost accounting? <p>Ethical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How complicated is it? • What does it allow us to ignore? • To what extent does it distance us from effect? • Can we assume personal, or communal, responsibility for its effects? • Can its effects be directly apprehended? • What ancillary technologies does it require? • What behavior might it make possible in the future? • What other technologies might it make possible? • Does it alter our sense of time and relationships in ways conducive to nihilism? 	<p>Vocational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is its impact on craft? • Does it reduce, deaden, or enhance human creativity? • Is it the least imposing technology available for the task? • Does it replace, or does it aid, human hands and human beings? • Can it be responsive to organic circumstance? • Does it depress or enhance the quality of goods? • Does it depress or enhance the meaning of work? <p>Political</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is its mystique? • Does it concentrate or equalize power? • Does it require, or institute, a knowledge elite? • Is it totalitarian? • Does it require a bureaucracy for its perpetuation? • What legal empowerments does it require? • Does it undermine traditional moral authority? • Does it require military defense? • Does it enhance, or serve, military purposes? • How does it affect warfare? • Does it foster a mass thinking or behavior? • Is it consistent with the creation of global economy? • Does it empower transnational corporations? • What kind of capital does it require? <p>Metaphysical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What aspect of the inner self does it reflect? • Does it express love? • Does it express rage? • What aspect of our past does it reflect? • Does it reflect cynical or linear thinking?
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From the book "Turning Away from Technology" by Stephanie Mills and originally derived from 76 questions by Jacques Ellul.