Michael Faraday.

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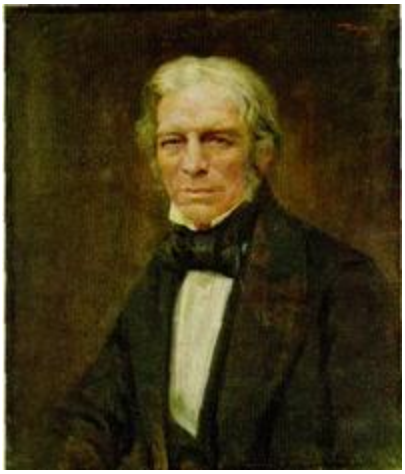
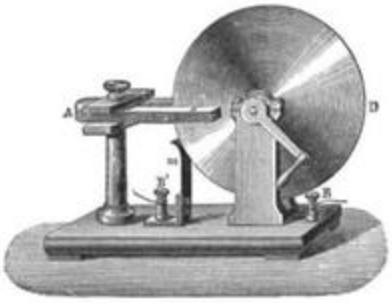
- **Born:** September 22, 1791
- **Birthplace:** Newington (now in London), Surrey, England
- **Died:** August 25, 1867
- **Place of death:** Hampton Court, Surrey, England

Michael Faraday was a British **physicist** . A physicist studies **matter** , motion, and how things work. Matter is everything around us. Faraday was also a **chemist** , a scientist who studies chemicals and how chemicals change matter. He discovered the chemical benzene. Faraday's important work with electricity led to the invention of the electric motor.



1840 portrait of Michael Faraday. ETH Library / Public domain



Drawing of Faraday disk, the first electromagnetic generator, invented by British scientist Michael Faraday in 1831. Émile Alglave / Public domain

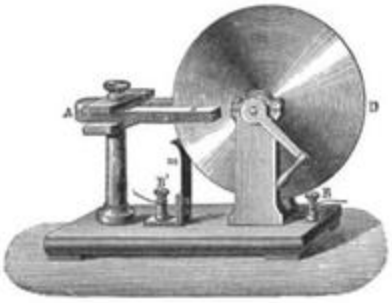
His Life

Faraday was born in England in 1791. His father was a **blacksmith** . A blacksmith is someone who works with metal. Faraday's family did not have money to send him to school, so he taught himself. He worked at a book-making shop and he read books about science. He also listened to lectures, or talks, by a famous scientist named Humphry Davy. Davy thought Faraday was smart. In 1813, Davy hired Faraday as an assistant.

Faraday became a very famous scientist during his lifetime. He taught at universities and belonged to important scientific groups. He also gave many popular lectures so that all kinds of people could learn about science (not just scientists). He received many honors for his discoveries.

His Work

Faraday discovered how to use magnets to produce electricity. This is called **electromagnetism** . In 1831, Faraday began a great series of experiments in electromagnetism that lead to the invention of the electric motor. Many modern machines, such as car motors, were invented using **electromagnets** .



Drawing of Faraday disk, the first electromagnetic generator, invented by British scientist Michael Faraday in 1831. Émile Alglave / Public domain

He also discovered how **electrolysis** works. Electrolysis changes a liquid by passing electricity through it.

Faraday also discovered the chemical benzene. This chemical was later used to make many different kinds of products, such as plastics, dyes (used to change the color of something), and drugs (to help sick people get well).

Faraday died in 1867 at the age of 75.

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