

Dear Brad,

Your phone calls travel all different ways – through different wires and different kinds of radio, including microwaves, which can be aimed in straight lines and carry lots of information (data) that has been cut up into chunks called data packets. Since those radio waves travel in straight lines,

satellites in orbit around Earth can reflect, or bounce, them

Jax Place



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Use your TV's remote control to turn off the TV, but do it from another room.

You can do that by using some cooking pot lids like mirrors to bounce the signals from the remote control to the TV. A few friends might be needed to help you because it could take 1,

2 or 3 lids, depending on where you are and

where the TV is. Remember the remote's signal will

move in line-of-sight straight lines.

around all over the place.

There are now hundreds of communications satellites orbiting Earth, bouncing radio waves just like you bounced your remote control's signals around a few

corners.

The first active relay satellite was named Telstar and

was launched by the phone company AT&T and the

British and French post offices.

That was in olden tymes, in 1962, and the satellite was so popular, a hit song named "Telstar" was released the same year. You can hear it at www.tinyurl.com/k8l98wz or at www.beakman.com.

P.S. from Beakman: Most TV remote controls send out pulses of infrared radiation, which is sometimes called infrared light.