

GET READY FOR DIGITAL TV



Be more



PBS

Digital TV or DTV is available now in most cities. By June 12, 2009 all high-power TV stations will broadcast exclusively in digital, but many will go all-digital before then.* What does this mean for you? Read on to learn about DTV, if you'll be affected and how you can get ready for digital TV.

WHAT IS DIGITAL TV (DTV)?

DTV can refer to:

- » digital television signals that provide high quality picture and sound;
- » the efficient and flexible technology for broadcasting digital signals over-the-air; or
- » a TV set with a built-in digital tuner (to receive over-the-air digital television).

WILL I BE AFFECTED?

Whether or not you will be affected depends on how the TVs in your home receive their signal. You will need to check every TV set you own to see how it gets its signal.

- » TVs connected to a pay TV service, like cable or satellite, won't be affected by the changes to television broadcasting and should be ready. Check with your service provider to be 100% sure.
- » TVs that get over-the-air signals with an antenna and have a built-in digital tuner are ready and should be receiving DTV.
 - › Tip: To find out if your TV has a built-in digital tuner, read the owner's manual or check the TV for one of these labels: "integrated digital tuner," "digital receiver," "digital tuner," "DTV," "HDTV" or "ATSC." TVs older than 1 year are less likely to have a built-in digital tuner. The following labels are not indicators of a built-in digital tuner: "digital ready," "digital monitor," "HDTV monitor" or "HDTV ready."
- » TVs that get over-the-air signals from either a rooftop or indoor antenna and do not have a digital tuner are NOT ready.

If you're ready for digital TV in your home, then pass this information on to a neighbor or friend to help make sure everyone is prepared.

If one or more of the TVs in your home are not ready, you'll need to choose one of these options:

- » Install a TV converter box. A converter box connects to your TV and works as an external digital tuner, making over-the-air DTV signals compatible with your TV. A converter box is a one-time purchase with no monthly fees.
- » Buy a new digital TV. Most TVs for sale today are DTVs; they have built-in digital tuners that can receive DTV signals. Prices range from a hundred dollars to several thousand dollars depending on size, quality and features.
- » Connect your TV to a pay service like cable or satellite. Options vary depending on where you live, so ask friends, family or a neighbor for recommendations.



* Low-power TV stations and translators are not affected by the legislation and do not have to stop using analog technology on June 12, 2009.

A CONVERTER BOX ALLOWS YOUR OLDER TVS TO RECEIVE THE NEW DIGITAL SIGNALS.

TIPS FOR PURCHASING AND INSTALLING A CONVERTER BOX

You will need one converter box for each non-digital TV that gets its signal over the air via an indoor or outdoor antenna. Converter boxes are for sale now from several retailers. There are a few things to consider before making a purchase:

- » You can apply for up to two \$40 government coupons to reduce the cost of approved converter boxes. New coupon applicants are being added to a waiting list. You may not receive your coupon until after some TV stations in your market have already gone all-digital.
 - › Call 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009) or visit www.dtv2009.gov to apply.
 - › Note that the coupons expire 90 days after issue.



- » There are different converter box models available, so research what's available in your area.
 - › Many major retailers including Best Buy, Kmart, Sears, RadioShack, Target and Wal-Mart, are selling the boxes.
 - › Your coupons will also come with a list of local retailers selling the boxes. This information is also available from the coupon Web site.
 - › You can also use your coupons to purchase converter boxes online.
- » There are many different converter box models. Research what kind of box is best for you. Consider:
 - › price (ranges from \$40 - \$80)
 - › if your market has low power TV stations or translators, look for a box with the "analog pass-through" function
 - › additional unique features such as enhanced Closed Captioning, detailed on-screen program guide, etc.)
- » Remember to ask the retailer about their return policy. Some boxes may perform better in different markets and you may find that one model works better than another in your home.



A TV WITH A BUILT-IN DIGITAL TUNER RECEIVES DTV SIGNALS, WHICH ALREADY ARE AVAILABLE IN MOST CITIES.

TIPS FOR BUYING A NEW DTV

There are many kinds of digital televisions, or DTVs, for sale today. Before making a purchase, consider factors such as picture quality, screen type, manufacturer reputation, price and return policy. You do not need an HDTV to receive digital TV. High-definition TV, or HDTV, is the highest quality form of digital television.

The Consumer Reports Web site has extensive information on buying a new DTV and has also reviewed numerous converter boxes. Visit www.consumerreports.org for the details.



WATCH "GET READY FOR DIGITAL TV"

A special TV presentation from PBS and This Old House Premieres this fall on your local PBS station

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PBS.

Find local program schedule information and more tips on how to get ready for DTV at pbs.org/dtv

- » ConsumerReports.org® is published by Consumers Union, an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to work for a fair, just, and safe marketplace for all consumers and to empower consumers to protect themselves.
- » PBS does its best to provide accurate, straight-forward information to inform and empower viewers to prepare for DTV. Details pertaining to the transition to DTV may evolve and as such, PBS is not responsible for changes that may impact the accuracy of information contained in this brochure.
- » Antennaweb.org is managed by NAB, a trade association for broadcasters nationwide, and CEA, a trade association promoting growth in the U.S. consumer electronics industry.