

DTV FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



DTV BACKGROUND

WHAT IS DTV?

DTV can refer to:

- » digital television signals that provide high quality picture and sound;
- » the technology for broadcasting digital signals; or
- » a TV set with a digital tuner that receives over-the-air digital signals.

WHAT IS THE DTV TRANSITION AND WHEN IS IT HAPPENING?

The DTV transition refers to the nation's move from analog to digital television broadcasts. Many broadcasters already transmit DTV in tandem with their traditional analog signals. By June 2009, all high-power broadcasters will stop broadcasting their analog signals and move to exclusively broadcasting DTV. However, some stations are going all-digital before June.

WHY IS THE DTV TRANSITION HAPPENING?

DTV has many advantages over the older analog system. The move to an all-digital television broadcast system will provide benefits such as improved sound and picture quality and more channel choices.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DTV AND HDTV?

The terms digital television (DTV) and high definition television (HDTV) are often used interchangeably, but they are NOT the same thing. HDTV is the highest quality form of DTV. Not all DTV is high definition.

WILL MY TV STILL WORK AFTER THE TRANSITION?

Yes, however it may need an upgrade. If your TV is connected to cable or satellite, it should be fine. If your TV has a digital tuner, it will be fine. If, however, your TV uses an antenna and does not have a digital tuner, you will need to either install a converter box or subscribe to a pay TV service to continue using the same TV set.

CAN I STILL GET FREE TV?

Yes, you will still receive free television over the air with an antenna as long as your TV either has a digital tuner or is connected to a converter box.

PREPARING FOR DTV

HOW WILL THE DTV TRANSITION AFFECT ME?

Whether or not the DTV transition will affect you depends on how you currently receive television.

If your TV is connected to a pay TV service, such as cable or satellite, check with your service provider. You should not be affected by the change.

If your TV has a digital tuner, you should already receive DTV signals and your TV will not be affected by the change.



If your TV receives its signal over the air with an antenna and does not have a digital tuner, you have three options to continue receiving TV:

- » Install a digital converter box. A converter box will cost \$40.00 - \$70.00. The Government is offering coupons to reduce the cost of the boxes. To request coupons or learn more about the coupon program, call 1.888.DTV.2009 or visit www.dtv2009.gov;
- » Replace your TV with a new digital tuner equipped TV. A wide range of DTVs is available starting at \$100.00;
- » Connect your TV to cable, satellite or another pay service.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY TV SET HAS A BUILT-IN DIGITAL TUNER?

Consult your owner's manual or check the manufacturer's Web site. Some TVs with digital tuners have labels containing the words "integrated digital tuner," "digital receiver," "digital tuner," "DTV," "ATSC," or "HDTV." If your set is labeled "digital monitor," "HDTV monitor," "digital ready," or "HDTV ready," this does not necessarily mean it has a built-in digital tuner.

WHEN DO I NEED TO MAKE THE SWITCH?

To ensure that you don't miss any of your TV stations, you should get ready today. Many TV stations have already moved to all-digital broadcasts.

WILL I NEED AN ANTENNA TO WATCH TV?

If you currently rely on an antenna to get your TV signal, you will still need one after the transition to DTV.

DIGITAL CONVERTER BOXES AND DISCOUNT COUPONS

WHAT IS A DIGITAL CONVERTER BOX?

A digital converter box is a set-top device that connects to a traditional analog television set and enables it to receive digital broadcast signals.

HOW MANY CONVERTER BOXES DO I NEED?

One converter box is needed for each TV set without a digital tuner that relies on an antenna to receive a TV signal.

WHERE CAN I GET A TV CONVERTER BOX?

Converter boxes are for sale at several local retailers. If you apply for and receive a government coupon, you will also receive redemption instructions and a list of local and web retailers. A list is available at www.dtv2009.gov.

WHAT IS THE COST OF A TV CONVERTER BOX?

FCC-approved converter boxes cost \$40.00 - \$70.00 each. This is a one-time charge with no monthly fee. To offset the cost, coupons valued at \$40.00 each are available upon request, subject to availability and eligibility, from www.dtv2009.gov or 1-888-DTV-2009. One coupon can be applied to each box.

HOW MANY GOVERNMENT COUPONS MAY I REQUEST?

Every U.S. household may request up to two coupons, which are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

HOW CAN I REQUEST COUPON?

UPDATE: NEW COUPON APPLICANTS ARE BEING ADDED TO A WAITING LIST.

- » Apply online at www.dtv2009.gov
- » Call 1.888.DTV.2009 or TTY 1.877.530.2634
- » Fax an application to 1.877.DTV.4ME2 (1.877.922.4632)
- » Mail an application to
P.O. Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000

If you chose to mail or fax your coupon application, request an application form by calling 1.888.DTV.2009.

To find out more about DTV—including how-to and troubleshooting tips—watch "Get Ready for Digital TV" on your local PBS station (check your local listings) or visit www.pbs.org/dtv