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DTV.gov

# THE DIGITAL TV TRANSITION

## What You Need To Know About DTV

### The Digital Television Transition

Big changes are coming to broadcast television. By June 12, 2009, all full-power broadcast television stations are required to stop broadcasting in analog and continue broadcasting in digital only. This is known as the digital television (DTV) transition. Your local broadcasters may make the transition before then, and some already have. So be ready, and act now.

The DTV transition will be an historic moment in the evolution of TV. Broadcast television stations can offer viewers improved picture and sound quality and new programming choices. Since digital is more efficient than analog, it allows stations to broadcast several programs at the same time. This means broadcasters can offer consumers more programming choices. All-digital broadcasting also will allow us to significantly improve public safety communications and will usher in a new era of advanced wireless services such as the widespread deployment of wireless broadband.

#### What Does This Mean To You?

Not everyone will be affected by the DTV transition in the same way:

- If you receive your local broadcast stations through a paid provider such as cable or satellite TV, you are already prepared for the DTV transition. However, if you have an analog TV that does not receive local broadcast stations through your paid provider, you will need a “digital-to-analog converter box” to watch digital broadcasts (see below).
- If you have a digital TV (a TV with a built-in digital tuner), you are ready for the switch. (If your TV is more than 10 years old, it probably is not digital. If it is less than 10 years old, check your owner’s manual or ask the manufacturer.)
- If you have an analog TV with a rooftop antenna or “rabbit ears” on your set, you will not be able to watch full-power broadcast stations after June 12, 2009 unless you get a “digital-to-analog converter box.”

A digital-to-analog converter box is a device that will convert the digital signals from a broadcast station to an analog format that your analog television can display. Also, if your existing antenna receives a good quality signal on VHF and UHF analog channels, it should work for receiving digital channels as well. This is true both for an analog TV connected to a digital-to-analog converter box and for a digital television.

### For More Information:

1-888-CALL-FCC (Voice)

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1-888-TELL-FCC (TTY)



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Digital-to-analog converter boxes are available in stores that sell electronics equipment and through various online mail order retailers. The cost for a basic converter box is between \$40 and \$70. This is a one-time cost. Converter boxes can be hooked up today, and you can start receiving the benefits of digital immediately.

### Coupon Program

The federal government is offering each U.S. household up to two \$40 coupons that can be applied toward the cost of eligible converter boxes. The “TV Converter Box Coupon Program” is being administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, which is part of the Department of Commerce. The number of coupons available is limited, so you should apply now. (Please note that these coupons will expire 90 days after mailing). Coupons may be requested in one of four ways:

- Call the Coupon Program’s 24-hour hotline at 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009), TTY: 1-877-530-2634 (English TTY) or 1-866-495-1161 (Spanish TTY)
- Apply online at [www.dtv2009.gov](http://www.dtv2009.gov)
- Mail a coupon application to PO Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000
- Fax an application to 1-877-DTV-4ME2 (1-877-388-4632)

For more information on the DTV transition, call us at 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) or by TTY at 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322), e-mail us at [DTVinfo@fcc.gov](mailto:DTVinfo@fcc.gov), or visit our DTV website at [www.dtv.gov](http://www.dtv.gov), where consumer publications, fact sheets, and advisories on closed captioning and other DTV transition topics are available. FCC publications and other informational materials are also available in several foreign languages, in large print, in Braille, and on audio disc.

The FCC is committed to ensuring that Americans are aware of the DTV transition and what they need to do to be ready for the end of analog full-power television station broadcasting in June of 2009. With some preparation, all Americans can enjoy the benefits of the DTV transition.

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