

## How to Get Even More Information

Have more questions about television's digital transition? Contact your local cable company or go to [GetReadyForDigitalTV.com](http://GetReadyForDigitalTV.com).



The organizations listed below also have useful consumer education information.



National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) Coupon Program:

<http://www.DTV2009.gov>  
1-888-DTV-2009



Federal Communications Commission (FCC):

<http://www.DTV.gov>



Digital Television Transition Coalition:

<http://www.dtvtransition.org>



AARP:

[http://www.aarp.org/money/wise\\_consumer/telephones/digital\\_tv.html](http://www.aarp.org/money/wise_consumer/telephones/digital_tv.html)



## Cable Helps You Transition to Digital TV!

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On February 17, 2009 Broadcast TV  
Is Switching From Analog to Digital

## Are You Ready?



# The “Digital Transition” Explained

The next frontier of television is coming. Are you ready for it?

It's called the “digital transition,” a dramatic overhaul of the nation's full power over-the-air TV broadcasting system. The good news is that as a cable customer, and with only a little preparation, you'll continue to get the best that TV has to offer.

## What is the digital transition?

The nation's full power over-the-air local television stations are moving from an old system known as “analog” broadcasting to a new system known as “digital” broadcasting. The U.S. government has set midnight, at the end of February 17, 2009, as the time for this change. At that time, TV stations will stop transmitting their programs in analog technology, and will start transmitting them only in digital.

## Why change a system that has worked for decades?

Changing to a digital format will free up signal capacity, some of which will be made available to first-responders such as local police and fire departments. This will enhance public safety across the country. In addition, a change to digital broadcasting can allow TV stations to improve sound and picture quality and even use the new digital technology to transmit high-definition TV (HDTV) signals and introduce additional channels.

## What does this mean for TV viewers?

There's an incompatibility between this new way of broadcasting TV signals, and many older TV sets still in use. After February 17, 2009, analog TV sets — that is, TV sets without digital tuners — must be connected to a service such as cable, or outfitted with a special digital-to-analog converter, in order to continue displaying full power over-the-air TV signals.

## How to Know if You're Ready

As a cable customer, the good news is, you may not have to do anything to continue enjoying full power commercial broadcast TV stations in their new digital format. **As long as your older analog TV sets are connected to cable, they'll continue to display local commercial broadcast stations even after the digital transition on February 17, 2009.**

Your cable company already has technology in place to carry local full power over-the-air TV stations in the new digital format. It does this by capturing these digital signals and sending them to your home through the same cable connection that delivers popular national channels like ESPN, CNN, HBO and hundreds of others.

So, any TV set connected to cable will continue to display local TV signals no matter the level of service to which you subscribe. And, if you've signed up for Digital Cable service, you're already enjoying the full benefits of digital TV, including more channel choices, and better quality picture and sound.

## But what if all my TVs aren't hooked up to cable?

Even if you're a cable customer, you may have some analog sets that aren't hooked up to cable, and instead use an antenna. These secondary sets are likely to be older and “analog” — that is, they probably don't have the digital tuners that are featured in the newer “digital” TV sets available today. These older sets won't be able to tune in the signals that full power TV stations will start broadcasting in February 2009, although they should continue to receive analog low power, Class A or translator TV stations.

## How do I keep these sets useful?

You can call your local cable company and get your secondary sets connected to cable service, so all of the TV sets in your home will be able to display TV stations transmitting in the new digital format.

Or, there's a do-it-yourself method: You can buy a special “converter” that will let your old TV sets pick up and display full power over-the-air digital signals. These converters, expected to be introduced by retail stores early in 2008, cost between \$50 and \$75 each. To help consumers pay for them, the federal government has a program through which each home can request up to two coupons worth \$40 each. More information is available at [www.DTV2009.gov](http://www.DTV2009.gov), or by calling toll-free 1-888-DTV-2009.

## How do I know if my TV set has a digital tuner and is able to receive digital signals by itself?

The best way to determine whether your TV set has a digital tuner is to consult your owner's manual. If that's not possible, you may be able to look up information about your TV set on the manufacturer's website. Or, you can take an up-close look at your TV set. It may have an image or label on the exterior indicating it is digital. Or, you could check your set for an “input” connection labeled “digital input” or “ATSC” (it's the acronym for the new digital TV format).

Here are some other general guidelines that may help:

If you bought your TV set before 1998, it probably doesn't have a digital tuner. Almost every TV set made before 1998 was an “analog” set that can't display digital TV signals without either a special converter or a cable TV connection.

If you bought a big-screen, projection TV between 1998 and 2004, it's possible there's a built-in digital tuner inside. But chances aren't great. Only a limited number of projection TV sets included digital tuners before 2004.

If you've purchased a new TV set since 2004, your chances of having a built-in digital tuner improve dramatically. But it's not a sure thing. Some newer TV sets are purely display monitors that can't pick up digital broadcasts. Usually these sets were advertised as “HD-ready” or “HDTV monitor” sets.

## If I have a new HDTV set, how do I get real high-definition television?

You can ask your cable company to connect you to Digital Cable with HDTV. You'll get lots of national and local channels in crystal-clear, high-definition resolution. Or, you can use a special HD antenna to receive broadcast TV HD channels that are broadcast over the air in your area.

