

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO BE READY FOR THE END OF ANALOG TV BROADCASTING?

In 2005, Congress mandated that all full-power television stations switch to digital television. They recognized that digital television offers improved pictures and sound, and is more efficient and more flexible than traditional analog broadcast technology.

Preparing for the DTV transition is easy and requires you to take one of three steps by February 17, 2009:

1. Purchase a digital-to-analog converter box that plugs into your existing TV set. The boxes, which cost between \$40-70, are now available for purchase at electronic retailers nationwide. Households can request up to two \$40 coupons towards the purchase of converter boxes that will allow you to continue watching free “over-the-air” television on an analog set. You can apply for coupons at www.DTV2009.gov or call 1-888-DTV-2009.
2. Purchase a new television set with a built-in digital (ATSC) tuner.
3. Subscribe to cable, satellite or other pay TV service that carries the local broadcast stations you want.

DO I HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL AFTER FEBRUARY 17, 2009 TO WATCH DIGITAL TELEVISION?

No. ABC 7 Chicago offers digital right now. If you watch over-the-air television today, using the built-in digital tuner in one of the newer HDTV sets, or with a digital-to-analog converter box, you will be able to access Channel 7’s digital signals. This includes high definition and multicast programming from ABC 7. (ABC 7’s high definition Channel is 7-1 and its multi-cast Channels are 7-2 and 7-3.) It may help to visit www.antennaweb.org to determine which VHF/UHF antenna type best meets your needs and to learn which stations are already broadcasting in digital.

I’M A CABLE CUSTOMER. WILL I BE AFFECTED BY THE TRANSITION?

Television sets connected to cable, satellite or other pay TV service will not require a converter box.

DO CABLE CUSTOMERS WITH ANALOG TV SETS HAVE TO BUY OR RENT A SET-TOP BOX (CONVERTER BOX) FROM THEIR CABLE COMPANY?

Cable and satellite subscribers should check with their providers before February 17, 2009, to see how they are handling the transition.

CAN I KEEP MY OLDER ANALOG TV SET AFTER FEBRUARY 17, 2009?

Yes. A digital-to-analog converter box will allow you to continue using your existing analog TV set to watch over-the-air digital programming. If your analog set is hooked up to a subscription service, such as cable or satellite TV, it should continue to function as before. Analog sets should also continue working with gaming consoles, VCRs, DVD players and similar products that you use now.

CONVERTER BOXES

WHAT IS A TV DIGITAL-TO-ANALOG CONVERTER BOX?

A TV digital-to-analog converter box is a stand-alone device that allows your antenna to receive and convert digital signals into a format analog television sets can display. This newly designed product is now available in stores nationwide. A TV converter box is a one-time purchase and costs between \$40-70.

HOW DO I INSTALL A TV CONVERTER BOX?

Depending on your TV, converter boxes plug into either the back or front of the set. You will still need an antenna, which works with the TV converter box. Each TV converter box comes with installation instructions from the manufacturer. A generic "Quick Start Guide" and installation video are available at www.digitaltips.org.

WHERE CAN I PURCHASE A CONVERTER BOX?

Electronics retailers nationwide are selling TV converter boxes in their stores, online and by telephone. If you intend to use one or more of the government coupons, you will also be provided a list of nearby participating retailers. In addition, please note that the government is providing two \$40 coupons per household towards the purchase of converter boxes. You can only use one coupon per converter box.

COUPON PROGRAM

HOW DO I GET MY COUPONS?

Up until March 31, 2009, consumers can apply for up to two \$40 coupons per household **while supplies last** by calling 1-888-dtv-2009 (1-888-388-2009), BY APPLYING ONLINE AT WWW.dtv2009.gov or by mailing an application to P.O. Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000. Applicants will receive their coupons in the mail. If you don't have a computer, try one of the public computer terminals at your library.

WHAT IS MEANT BY AN “ELIGIBLE” TV CONVERTER BOX?

TV converter box models must meet technical and performance standards determined by the U.S. Commerce Department’s National Telecommunications and Information Administration ((NTIA) in order to qualify for the coupon program.

DOES SOMEONE HAVE TO COME TO MY HOME TO INSTALL THE CONVERTER BOX?

No. You should be able to install the converter box yourself using the instructions provided by the manufacturer. For specific questions, call the manufacturers technical support hotline or ask your local retailer.

HOW BIG IS THE CONVERTER BOX?

Converter boxes are about the size of a paperback book. Most will fit on top of a small to medium-sized TV set.

DO I NEED TO PURCHASE A TV CONVERTER BOX THAT IS THE SAME BRAND AS MY TV?

No, the brand of converter box can be different than your TV set.

WILL I RECEIVE CLOSED CAPTIONING THROUGH A CONVERTER BOX?

Yes, but the features vary by box.

ANTENNAS

WILL I STILL NEED AN ANTENNA TO RECEIVE DTV OVER-THE-AIR?

Yes, you will still need an antenna to continue watching free, over-the-air television after the digital transition. In general, the same type of antenna that gives you good quality analog TV signals now will also provide reliable DTV reception. We recommend the use of a good quality VHF/UHF antenna mounted in the attic or outside the house.

DO I NEED TO BUY A NEW ANTENNA?

After February 17, 2009, some television stations will be moving to a different channel in a different frequency band, which may require you to get another type of antenna from the one you use now. For example, some channels in the VHF band (Channels 2-13) may move to the UHF bands (Channel 14-51) and vice versa. That is why we recommend a combo VHF/UHF antenna.

At 12:01 AM on February 18, 2009, WLS-TV (ABC 7) will be moving back to VHF Channel 7 for DTV. You will need to re-scan (do a new channel search) via the menu of all your TVs and converter boxes on that day. This does not apply to satellite or cable users.

ARE ALL DIGITAL STATIONS ON UHF CHANNELS?

No. They are on both VHF and UHF.

AFTER PLUGGING IN THE CONVERTER BOX, I LOST MY RECEPTION. WHY DID THAT HAPPEN?

Because Channel 7 analog is broadcast in the VHF band, a simple VHF antenna (like rabbit ears) can pick up the signal. When you install a digital-to-analog converter box, Channel 7's digital signal is broadcast on the UHF band. This requires a different type of antenna. That is why we recommend a combo VHF/UHF antenna.

On February 18, when we go back to VHF Channel 7, you'll have to do a rescan (new channel search) on the converter box. You will need a VHF/UHF antenna at the time.

HOW DO I RESCAN?

Using your remote control, choose "Menu" and go into "Set-up," then look for a "channel search" or "channel setup" function. You will also have an option to choose between "Air" and "Cable." Select "Air" and perform the function.

YOUR TV

Will I HAVE TO DISCARD MY OLDER ANALOG TELEVISION AFTER FEBRUARY 17, 2009?

No. A digital-to-analog converter box will allow you to continue using your existing analog TV set to watch over-the-air digital programming. If your analog set is hooked up to a subscription service, such as cable and/or satellite TV, it should continue to function as before.

WILL MY VCR OR DVD PLAYER STILL WORK AFTER I PLUG A CONVERTER BOX INTO MY TV?

Yes.

WILL I RECEIVE HIGH DEFINITION TV (HDTV) WITH A CONVERTER BOX?

With a converter box, you will be able to watch HDTV programs, but not with HDTV quality. Although analog TV sets cannot display high definition resolution, your picture will generally improve with a TV converter box. If you want to experience true high definition TV, then you will need a newer TV set rated for high definition resolution.

IF I WANT A NEW TV SET, DO I HAVE TO BUY A HIGH DEFINITION TV (HDTV) TO WATCH DIGITAL BROADCAST TELEVISION AFTER THE TRANSITION?

No. The February 17, 2009 deadline refers to the end of analog broadcasting and the beginning of all-digital broadcasting. All new television sets will be able to receive and decode all formats of digital television, although you will need an HDTV set to watch programs that are broadcast in HDTV with full high definition quality. A standard definition digital TV (a set with an internal digital tuner), or a digital-to-analog converter box connected to an analog TV set, is all you need to continue watching over-the-air broadcast television programming.

CAN I WATCH TV AND RECORD PROGRAMS ON MY VCR AT THE SAME TIME?

Yes. However, if you want to watch one program and record a different channel at the same time, you will need two converter boxes.

I WANT TO GET RID OF MY ANALOG TV SET. WHAT ARE MY RECYCLING OPTIONS?

To obtain a list of programs for donating or recycling electronics products to <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserves/materials/ecycling/donate.htm>. Another great resource is www.mygreenelectronics.org. In Chicago, you can also recycle your TV for no charge at the Household Chemical & Computer Recycling Facility, 1150 N. North Branch (in Goose Island). Hours: Tues: 7am-Noon, Thursdays: 2 pm-7pm, first Saturday of the month, 8 am-3 PM. Phone: (312) 744-3060.

IF I LIVE IN A MULTI-UNIT DWELLING HOW WILL I BE AFFECTED?

Call your management or condo board to see how they are handling the transition. If they have technical questions, they can email the engineering department at our Web site, abc7chicago.com.

*****The [www. DTV.Gov](http://www.DTV.Gov) Web site provides “Frequently Asked DTV Questions” and other DTV information in multiple languages including English, Spanish, Polish, Chinese, among others. If you have general DTV questions and want to talk to an English or Spanish speaking operator you can call: 1-888-225-5322.**

*****For the hearing impaired TTY: 1-888-835-5322**

*****If you have specific problems with ABC 7 reception, email the ABC 7 engineering department at abc7chicago.com.**