

Hi ,

I am sure that you have heard about the major change in over-the-air broadcast TV happening in February 2009. You might be a bit confused as to what is happening and whether it will affect you or not, so this month I will try to demystify the change coming.

If all of your TVs receive their TV signal via a cable or satellite company cable, then you can ignore this email because the change coming in February will not affect you.

If you use a cable or satellite company to provide you with your TV signal and all of your TVs are connected via a cable or satellite company box or RF cable (pictured here), then there is nothing that you need to do. The cable or satellite company's equipment already takes care of the necessary conversion for you so just sit back and enjoy your picture.



If some of your TVs get their signal over-the-air and the TV is an older analog TV, then this email is for you.

This email is only for people who still have a TV that gets its signal via "rabbit ears" or roof top antenna and is an older analog TV. Some people have cable or satellite for most of their TV's but might have one kitchen or spare bedroom TV that is not connected to cable or satellite, then this email is for you.



The sun is setting on the use of old analog TVs and over-the-air antennas. If you still have a TV setup like this then you have two choices:



1.) Buy a digital-to-analog converter box. These boxes start at \$60 and can be found at retailers like Radio Shack, Circuit City and Best Buy. Radio Shack sells the [Digital Stream DTX9950](#) for \$60 with good reviews.



Also, for a limited time the federal government has a **\$40 TV Converter Box Coupon Program** to help with the cost. To get your coupon go to <https://www.dtv2009.gov/> and sign up to receive up to two coupons per household (or call 1-888-388-2009). There is a limited number of coupons authorized so if you need one sign up right away. Once you have your coupon then you can go shopping for a converter box.



or

2.) Upgrade your TV to a new digital TV. If you decide instead to get a new TV then make sure to buy a new LCD or Plasma TV. Not only are these TVs digital ready but they use a lot less electricity than the old cathode ray tube (CRT) TVs and are easier on your eyes. The website [cNet.com](http://cnet.com) has great [TV reviews](#). As an added benefit, with a new digital HDTV and a new set of rabbit ears you will also be able to get free High Definition TV and the new sub-channels (see below).



Important note about antennas:

You may or may not be able to use your existing antenna with either the converter box or a digital TV. You might have to get some adapters to make the old antenna work. See [Setting Up Your Digital-to-Analog Converter Box \(Basic with twin-lead antenna wire\)](#) for more information.

Better yet, just buy a new antenna. A new antenna will allow you to pickup free High Definition over-the-air signals and the new sub-channel signals (The new digital conversion allows for sub-channels per channels).



For example, you can now get not only channel 7 but also channels 7-1, 7-2, 7-3). And yes, you can get free HD channels over-the-air with a new HDTV and a new antenna. For starters try a simple Radio Shack [\\$17 model 15-1868 antenna](#) that works fine. If not, then you can look into more expensive antennas.

Why are we switching to DTV?

"An important benefit of the switch to all-digital broadcasting is that it will free up parts of the valuable broadcast spectrum for public safety communications (such as police, fire departments, and rescue squads). Also, some of the spectrum will be auctioned to companies that will be able to provide consumers with more advanced wireless services (such as wireless broadband).

Consumers also benefit because digital broadcasting allows stations to offer improved picture and sound quality, and digital is much more efficient than analog. For example, rather than being limited to providing one analog program, a broadcaster is able to offer a super sharp "high definition" (HD) digital program or multiple "standard definition" (SD) digital programs simultaneously through a process called "multicasting." Multicasting allows broadcast stations to offer several channels of digital programming at the same time, using the same amount of spectrum required for one analog program. So, for example, while a station broadcasting in analog on channel 7 is only able to offer viewers one program, a station broadcasting in digital on channel 7 can offer viewers one digital program on channel 7-1, a second digital program on channel 7-2, a third digital program on channel 7-3, and so on. This means more programming choices for viewers."

Want more details? [Difference between Analog and Digital](#)

Everything seems to be switching from analog to digital. In the music world we saw the LP and cassette tape switch to CDs. In the photography world we saw film switch to digital cameras. And now in the TV world we hear that broadcast TV will switch from analog to digital.

How Stuff Works.com has an excellent article on [How Analog and Digital Recording Works](#) if you would like to know more about the process.

The basic principal is that **digital recordings convert the analog wave into a stream of numbers and records the numbers instead of the wave**. This allows for greater accuracy, identical reproduction every time and greater information in less space.

Links:

[The Digital TV Transition What You Need to Know About DTV](#)

[TV Converter Box Coupon Program Website](#)

[AntennaWeb.org. Maximize your antenna reception](#)

I hope that I have clarified and not confused you. If you need more help sorting out your options just let me know and we can figure it out together.

Claude

Newsletter Archive

[Click here](#) to read my past newsletters on:

Wireless Explained (June 2008)

Updates Galore (March 2008)

What is RSS all about? (January 2008)

One Laptop Per Child (November 2007)

Backups 2007 Style (October 2007)

Going Green with Technology (August 2007)

Credit Card Safety, Personalized Email (April 2007)

Should you upgrade to Windows Vista? (January 2007)

Personal Computer Tutor

Claude Kerno

719.650.9916

ckerno@pctutor.com - www.pctutor.com

Email Marketing by

