

4-H DTV Team!



Helping you tune into the 2009 broadcasting change.

What is changing in television broadcasts and how will it affect me?

On February 17, 2009, United States full-power television stations will switch all broadcasting to digital. After the switch, televisions that use rooftop and “rabbit ear” antennas to receive a signal will not work without a converter box, which will translate the new signal. In order to help people prepare for the change, the government is providing free coupons to offset the cost of purchasing converter boxes.

What is Digital Television (DTV)?

Currently, television broadcasting is in analog, which sends over-the-air TV programming to rooftop or “rabbit ear” antennas. After the switch on February 17, 2009, all television signals will be broadcasted in digital (DTV), which will provide a clearer picture, more programming options, and will free up airwaves for use by emergency responders.

Analog TV sets (most TV sets made before 2004 and some sold up until today) which receive free TV broadcasts via an antenna will not work after February 17, 2009 without a converter box.

How do I make sure my TV will work after the DTV transition?

Here is a checklist to determine what you need to do to prepare:

- **If you have a digital TV with a built-in tuner**, you don't need a converter box. Digital TVs typically are marked “Integrated Digital Tuner,” “Digital Tuner Built In,” “Digital Receiver,” “Digital Tuner,” “DTV,” or “ATSC.”
- **If you have cable or satellite TV**, you should be all set – no need to do anything. If you experience any difficulties, contact your cable or satellite service provider.
- **If you don't have cable or satellite service**, you have options:
 - Buy a TV converter box that connects to your TV set and antenna, and converts the digital signal. Converter boxes will also enable you to see additional programming from local TV stations. Older TVs with “built-in” antennas that only have screws connecting an external antenna will need an additional adapter to connect the converter box (*converter boxes need inputs to connect.*)
 - Buy a new TV (*which will have a built-in digital tuner.*)
 - Subscribe to cable or satellite TV service.

How do I get a free coupon toward a converter box?

Two free \$40 coupons per household are being provided by the government to offset the cost of the converter boxes. **Lost or expired coupons will not be replaced.** Only one coupon can be used per converter box purchased. To obtain a coupon:

- Apply online: <https://www.dtv2009.gov/ApplyCoupon.aspx>.
- Call the Coupon Program 24-hour hotline **1-888-DTV-2009** (1-888-388-2009).
- Download a Coupon Application at https://www.dtv2009.gov/docs/Coupon_Program_App_en.pdf and mail it to: PO BOX 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000.
- Fax a coupon application to 1-877-DTV-4ME2 (1-877-388-4632).
- Deaf or hard of hearing callers may dial 1-877-530-2634 (English/TTY) or 1-866-495-1161 (Spanish/TTY). TTY Service is available from 9 AM - 9 PM Eastern Time Monday through Friday.

Does the coupon expire?

YES – the coupon is only good for 90 days after they're mailed. So it's important that you are prepared to use them when you order them. If your household has been issued its two coupons, they will not be replaced if lost, stolen or expired.

Why can't I wait until next year to get a coupon or converter box?

Coupon supplies are limited and are only available while supplies last. Demand for the free coupons has been unexpectedly high, so you need to apply soon to ensure your chances of receiving coupons. Because of the high demand for coupons, delivery should take 2-3 weeks, but may be substantially longer due to backlogged orders.

How do I get a TV converter box?

Your free coupon can only be used toward select TV converter boxes, which are available at participating retailers such as Target, Best Buy, Wal-Mart, Sears, RadioShack and Circuit City and other local electronics retailers. Converter boxes can also be purchased online or by telephone and can be shipped directly to your home.

To find a local, online or telephone retailer that sells coupon-approved converter boxes, call 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009) or go to www.dtv2009.gov.

What does a TV converter box cost?

The government is providing two \$40 coupons per household to buy TV converter boxes, which generally cost about \$50-\$75. Only one coupon can be used per converter box purchase.

If I buy a new TV, what do I do with my old TV?

Best Buy has just launched a free electronics recycling program. Contact your local Best Buy retailer to find out where to drop off your old TV for free. To find additional recycling options, contact your local waste disposal service or go to your county's web site and search under "environment."

What if I need more help?

Your local 4-H DTV Team wants to help community members understand the DTV transition process and what you need to do to be ready. Contact the following 4-H DTV Team member to find out how your local 4-H DTV Team can help you get ready for the DTV transition.

