

Digital TV Explained

Digital TV can be received in four different ways, each with its own features and suppliers. The service that you are able to receive may depend on whereabouts you live.

Digital Cable TV is supplied by either Telewest or NTL depending on where you live in the country. You receive your digital TV through cables in the ground via a set top box. Cable companies also offer a host of competitive broadband and telephone packages alongside digital TV. It will usually be cheaper to buy a package comprising all three services than to obtain them individually from different service providers.

Digital Satellite TV is supplied by Sky Digital. Digital signals are sent and received by satellites meaning you need a mini-disc attached to your property in order to receive digital satellite TV via a digi-box. Sky Digital now offers free broadband to their customers. Sky is well known to be the UK's main supplier of Premiership Football, indeed having exclusive rights in recent years to show live Premier League. Although this monopoly has now been broken, the vast majority of top flight football is still with Sky. Their top packages include 4 dedicated in-house sports channels plus their extensive movie suite, Sky Movies.

Normally, both cable and satellite television customers will have a similar choice of channels, grouped into packages, such as sport, films, news, music and education. It is therefore possible to tailor your channels to your tastes and therefore save money compared to ordering the full selection.

Cable and Satellite viewers tend also to have access to interactive services unlike terrestrial customers. This includes enhanced sports coverage where viewers may select their camera angle, or additional behind the scenes footage for their favourite soap opera or drama. Cable customers subscribing to Telewest can choose to watch selected television programmes on demand through the new Teleport service, which includes many past series of comedy, drama and documentaries, as well as programmes aired on the BBC over the past 7 days.

From a technical angle, both of these options (satellite and cable) will require a technician to come to your home for installation, although this is commonly carried out free of charge if you choose carefully when to order.

Free to Air Digital TV is received via your existing TV aerial and decoded using a set-top box or integrated digital TV. The most common form is Freeview. Your ability to receive free to air digital TV depends on where you live and the type of aerial you have. Existing aerials can be upgraded in order to receive the service if necessary. The Freeview service is a cut down version of Sky's digital satellite selection, and Telewest and NTL's cable choices, and is primarily made up of content supplied by the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation). At the time of writing, Freeview carries over 30 channels, covering news, politics, terrestrial channels (in digital quality), comedy, drama, films and sports news amongst others

Digital ADSL TV is received via a high speed internet connection through a standard telephone line. This service is strictly limited to trial areas for the time being. It is widely anticipated that this will become a commonplace method of viewing for a large section of the population in the future.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

Guide to TV discusses television options for residential customers, primarily for the UK market. Find out more about getting the best option for your home at <http://www.guide-to-tv.com>