



Australian Government



## Antenna trouble shooting checklist

### Receiving digital free-to-air television services

To receive free-to-air digital TV, your television needs to be able to receive digital signals. To do this, you will need to connect a digital set-top box or digital video recorder to your analog television, or have a television with a built-in tuner.

### Where can I find information about digital television services in my area?

For information about your local television services, the frequencies they are transmitted on, and the expected coverage of the transmitter serving your local area, go to **mySwitch** on the Digital Ready website. Information available in **mySwitch** will help you to discuss your digital reception issues with an antenna installer, if you choose to engage one.

To find your nearest Australian Government Endorsed Antenna Installer you can call the Digital Ready Information Line on 1800 20 10 13 or go to **mySwitch** and click on 'Endorsed Antenna Installers' in the box headed 'Switchover information' on the left side of the page. Keep this factsheet handy to use when discussing your reception difficulties with your antenna installer.

### What can I do about poor digital TV reception?

You may want to engage an Australian Government Endorsed Antenna Installer to assess your antenna set up and provide you with advice about improving your digital TV reception.

To help you get the best digital TV reception, you should ask your antenna installer:

- Which TV transmitter site provides the best signal to my house? (see **mySwitch**)
- Which television channels should I be able to receive in this area? (see **mySwitch**)
- Is my antenna the right type for the channels available in this area? (VHF or UHF or both)
- Is my antenna pointing towards the transmitter providing the strongest signal, and is it correctly polarised: horizontal (H) or vertical (V)? (see **mySwitch**; Transmitter information)
- Do I need a high gain antenna? (The signal reaching your antenna may be weak because of the distance from the transmitter or because the signal is obstructed)
- Do I need a masthead amplifier? (To boost weak signal strength)
- If I already have a masthead amplifier installed, do I need it? (If a new local transmitter is set up in an area where viewers have previously been using a masthead amplifier or booster to receive their signal from a more distant transmitter, the booster is unlikely to be

needed and should be removed)

- Is my signal still too strong for my TV or set-top box? Do I need an attenuator?
- Is my antenna in good condition and securely mounted?
- Is my cabling and connections between the antenna and the TV good quality and in good condition?

## What should an antenna installer do at my house?

An antenna installer assessing your set up will need to measure the strength of the digital signal at your house to ensure that you have adequate reception. In particular, the installer will measure the MER, which is the best overall measure of the quality of a digital TV signal. The MER should be equal to or greater than 24 dB.

The easiest place to measure the MER is at the wall plate, however if the measured signal is not adequate there, the installer should measure the signal at other locations around your property to find the strongest signal.

If the measured MER is less than 24 dB at ground level, the installer may need to climb onto your roof (or take a measurement at 10 metres above ground level) to measure the signal.

The installer should also check the condition of your current antenna, and find the best position and height for your antenna to receive digital signals (a position that has provided good analog reception may not be the best position for good digital reception).

Before your installer carries out any work they propose for your antenna system, you should discuss with the installer whether the changes being proposed will improve your terrestrial reception. If it is not possible to improve your reception, you may need to consider moving to the Viewer Access Satellite Television (VAST) service to receive digital television.

You should ask your antenna installer for a copy of the signal strength measurements taken at your house.

For more detailed information about antennas, please refer to the factsheet 'Standard antennas for digital TV', which is available from the Digital Ready website.

## What if I share an antenna with others in my building?

There are a number of tools and factsheets available specifically for people with shared antenna systems. The Antenna Systems eToolkit (ASeT) provides detailed information about antenna equipment, cabling and installation, as well as cost estimates for a range of technical solutions to ensure your building can adequately receive and distribute TV signals.

## Where can I get more information?

For more information about the possible causes of poor digital TV reception, please refer to the factsheet 'Digital TV reception'.

For detailed technical information on antennas and installation, please refer to the Digital TV Antenna Systems Handbooks on the Digital Ready website.

If you'd like to know more about the switch to digital TV, reception issues or to find out the nearest Australian Government Endorsed Antenna Installer in your area call the Digital Ready Information Line on **1800 20 10 13** or visit **[www.digitalready.gov.au](http://www.digitalready.gov.au)**