



Australian Government

Digital Switchover Taskforce

Are you

READY

for
digital TV?

Important facts you need to know



READY

Between 2010 and 2013, analog free-to-air TV signals are being switched off and replaced with digital-only signals. In this brochure, you'll find answers to the most commonly asked questions.



What is digital TV?

The word 'digital' simply refers to the way in which TV signals are broadcast (sent) and received by TVs in homes around Australia. Currently in Australia, TV is broadcast in **both digital and analog**. However, the analog signals will be gradually phased out across the country between 2010 and 2013, and Australian TV will become digital-only.



For a better understanding of the phrases used in this brochure, please refer to the commonly used terms on page 14.

Why is Australia moving to digital TV?

To improve your viewing experience

- Picture and sound quality on digital TV is better
- Pictures on digital TV can be seen in widescreen
- You'll still have the same free-to-air channels, plus some new ones, so you'll have more choice
- The public broadcasters (the ABC and SBS) and the commercial networks (the Seven Network, the Nine Network and Network TEN) have already introduced new digital services

To keep up-to-date with technology

- It's important that Australia keeps pace with worldwide changes in technology
- Overseas programs are increasingly being produced in the digital format only
- Australian TV shows need to be produced in the digital format to be easily exported overseas

To free up broadcast space

- In Australia, TV is currently broadcast in both digital and analog signals
- This is costly and inefficient
- Turning off the analog signals will free up space that could be used for other services for the community

Are other countries going digital?

Yes. The world is switching to digital TV. Countries like the United States of America, Sweden and the Netherlands have already changed to digital TV, while the United Kingdom, Belgium, Japan and Canada have begun to switch.

What do I have to do?

To keep receiving free-to-air TV after the digital switchover in your area, you'll need a television that is capable of receiving digital signals.

Most importantly, **you do not have to buy a new TV if you do not want to**, because virtually all current analog TVs will be able to receive digital TV by adding a digital set top box or a digital TV recorder. **One** set top box or digital TV recorder is required for **each** TV you wish to convert.

There are a number of ways to get digital ready, including:

Scenario 1

Convert your existing analog TV using a digital set top box or digital TV recorder



Scenario 2

Upgrade to a television with a built-in digital tuner

Please note, most antennas should work after the digital switchover, but a few may require an upgrade or new cable connections.

Refer to page 11 on how to seek assistance from Antenna Installers.

For more information on transmission coverage in your area, visit the Digital Ready website or contact the Digital Ready Information Line. Contact details can be found on the back page of this brochure.

What is a set top box?

A set top box converts digital signals back to analog, so you can see digital free-to-air TV on an analog set. The cost of your set top box will vary depending on the option you choose.

Set top boxes range from basic standard definition (SD) models to more advanced high definition (HD) models and digital TV recorders.

Set top box



Digital TV recorder



With an SD digital set top box you receive SD digital versions of all the current analog channels available in your area, plus any new SD channels. Note, an SD set top box will **not** receive any HD services.

Only with an HD digital set top box will you be able to receive both the SD and HD channels available in your area.

Where do I put my set top box?

Your set top box does not have to sit on top of your TV. It can be placed next to, or underneath it.

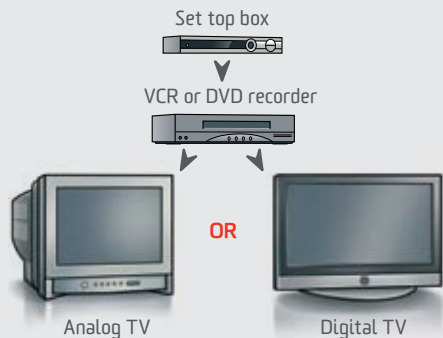
You'll be able to install your own set top box by following the instructions that come with it or by calling the manufacturer advice line.

How do I record digital TV?

After the analog TV signals are switched off you'll still be able to **play** all your old analog videos or DVDs without any new equipment. However, if you want to **record** digital TV, you have two main options.

Option 1

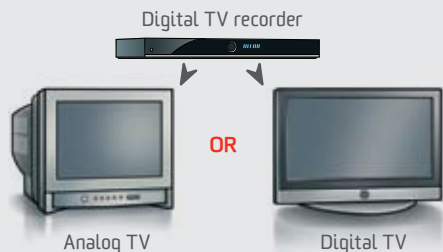
- Connect a digital **set top box** to your current analog VCR or DVD recorder.*



*This method may not be appropriate for all equipment models. Talk to your local retailer or contact the manufacturer for more information.

Option 2

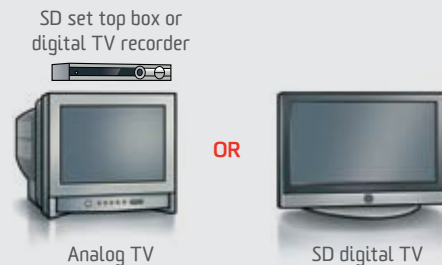
- Buy a **digital TV recorder** to replace your current VCR or DVD recorder.
- This will also act as a set top box, so you do not need an additional set top box for your analog TV.



What is the difference between SD and HD?

Free-to-air channels on digital TV are broadcast in either standard definition (SD) or high definition (HD). Digital TVs, set top boxes and recording devices come in SD and HD formats.

Standard Definition

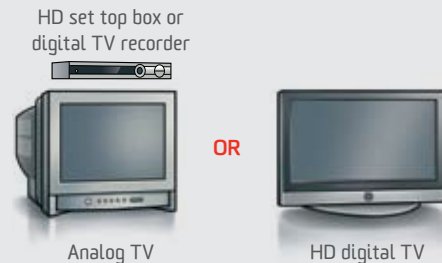


Receives:

- All current analog free-to-air channels
- Plus digital SD channels

With SD you get slightly better picture quality than analog, depending on the resolution of your TV screen.

High Definition



Receives:

- All current analog free-to-air channels
- Digital SD channels
- Plus HD channels

With HD you get better picture quality than SD or analog, depending on the resolution of your TV screen.

Which broadcasters will be providing digital TV services?

The Australian Government's Digital Switchover Taskforce is working closely with broadcasters to ensure the smooth transition from analog to free-to-air digital TV across Australia.



Look out for these labels

If you're buying a new TV, set top box or digital TV recorder, to make it easier for you, the Australian Government has developed these special labels, which you'll find in electronics retailers.



Digital TV Capable only with a set top box

- This label indicates that the TV is an analog TV
- It's capable of receiving digital signals only when attached to a digital ready set top box



Digital TV Ready Standard Definition

- This label indicates that the TV, set top box or digital TV recorder is digital
- It can receive only standard definition digital channels



Digital TV Ready High Definition

- This label indicates that the TV, set top box or digital TV recorder is digital
- It can receive both high and standard definition digital channels

Making sure you have access to digital TV information

The Australian Government has introduced a Quality Assurance Scheme and is working with electronics suppliers, retailers and antenna installers to ensure you have access to up-to-date and reliable information about digital TV products and services.

What is the Retail Advisor Scheme?

To help you get ready for digital TV, staff from participating stores are taking part in an Australian Government program to become approved Digital Advisors. Approved Digital Advisors will wear an Australian Government badge displaying the 'get ready for digital TV' logo, their name and the date their Digital Advisor status ends.

Digital Advisors can provide you with information about the meaning of the Government's digital TV labels, when the switchover will happen in your local area, and the full range of options to help you get ready for digital TV. A list of participating stores is on the Digital Ready website.



These badges are worn by approved Digital Advisors.

What is the Antenna Installer Endorsement Scheme?

The scheme has been put in place by the Australian Government and endorses antenna installers who have had their skills assessed online against agreed industry standards. You can recognise these installers by their badges, which have the 'get ready for digital TV' logo on them.

Contact an endorsed installer for advice about antennas and antenna installation services for digital TV in your area. An up-to-date list of endorsed installers can be found on the Digital Ready website.

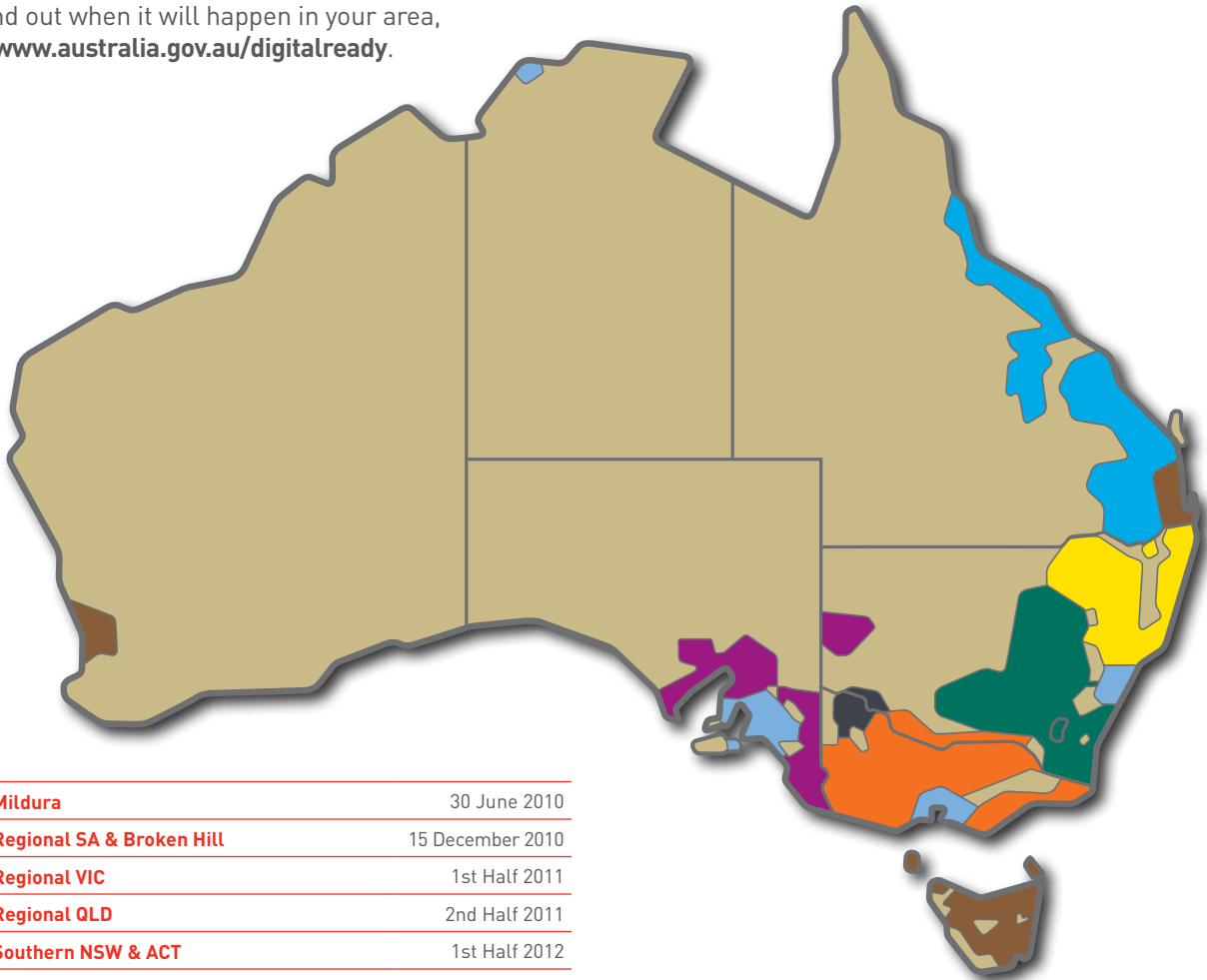


These badges are worn by endorsed Antenna Installers.

When will analog be switched off?

The switch off will be rolled out progressively around the country, region by region. The map and the table below shows you when and where the switch off will happen.

To find out when it will happen in your area, visit www.australia.gov.au/digitalready.



| | |
|--|------------------|
| ● Mildura | 30 June 2010 |
| ● Regional SA & Broken Hill | 15 December 2010 |
| ● Regional VIC | 1st Half 2011 |
| ● Regional QLD | 2nd Half 2011 |
| ● Southern NSW & ACT | 1st Half 2012 |
| ● Northern NSW | 2nd Half 2012 |
| ● Tas, Perth & Brisbane | 1st Half 2013 |
| ● Melbourne, Adelaide, Darwin & Sydney | 2nd Half 2013 |
| ● Remote Central and Eastern Australia, Regional and Remote WA and all other areas | 2nd Half 2013 |

Commonly used terms

Analog is a type of signal which works by transmitting sounds and pictures as a continuous wave. Analog technology is out of date and is being replaced worldwide by digital.

Digital Switchover is the point at which the analog signal is switched off in a region and replaced by digital signals only.

Digital TV recorder is a set top box that can record digital TV.

Electronic Program Guide (EPG) is an electronic version of the printed television program guide.

Full high definition is an enhancement of digital TV which refers to the highest quality picture available. It is sometimes shown as 1080i or 1080p, which refers to screen resolution.

High definition (HD) is an enhancement of digital TV which refers to a higher quality picture and allows you to receive all free-to-air analog channels, SD channels and HD channels. HD is sometimes shown as 720p, which refers to the screen resolution.

Resolution refers to the number of dots or pixels that make up the picture on the screen.

Set top box is a device which allows an analog TV to receive and show digital content.

Spectrum or broadcast space is the space or frequencies used to transmit television, radio and other forms of electronic communication.

Standard definition (SD) is a format of digital television which allows pictures to be received in widescreen format. SD has slightly less resolution or picture quality than HD – and is sometimes referred to as 576i or 576p. With SD you get all the analog channels you currently receive, along with standard definition only digital channels.

Widescreen digital television has a different aspect ratio (ratio of width to height) to traditional analog television. The aspect ratio of widescreen is 16:9, while analog uses a 4:3 aspect ratio.

Where can I find out more?

If you'd like to know more about the switch to digital TV

visit

www.australia.gov.au/digitalready

Call our Digital Ready Information Line:
1800 20 10 13
(Freecall within Australia)

Translating and Interpreting Service:
131 450

TTY service:

Users who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment can call 1800 55 56 77 and ask for 1800 20 10 13.

Write to:

Digital Switchover query
GPO Box 4112, Sydney, NSW, 2001



Australian Government

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