

The U.S. Congress has mandated that the last day for full-power television stations to broadcast in analog is February 17, 2009. Over-the-air TV broadcasts will be in digital only after that date.

You will need to take action before February 17, 2009 if you currently watch TV on an analog TV set that is not connected to cable, satellite or other pay TV service. Cable and satellite TV subscribers with analog TVs hooked up to their cable or satellite service should not be affected by the February 17 cut-off date for full-power analog broadcasting.

If you have one or more televisions that receive free over-the-air television programming (with a roof-top antenna or “rabbit ears” on the TV), the type of TV you own is very important. A digital television (a TV with an internal digital tuner) will allow you to continue to watch free over-the-air programming after February 17, 2009. However, if you have an analog television, you will need a digital-to-analog converter box to continue to watch broadcast television on that set. This converter box will also enable you to see any additional multicast programming that your local stations are offering.

To help consumers with the DTV transition, the government established the Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Coupon Program administered by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), a part of the Department of Commerce. Every U.S. household is eligible to receive up to two coupons, worth \$40 each, toward the purchase of eligible digital-to-analog converter boxes.

The coupons may only be used for eligible converter boxes sold at participating consumer electronics retailers, and the coupons must be used at the time of purchase. Coupons are good for 90 days after date of issue. Manufacturers estimate that digital-to-analog converter boxes will sell from \$50 to \$70 each. This is a one-time cost. For more information on the Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Coupon Program, visit the NTIA’s website at www.ntia.doc.gov/dtvcoupon, or call 1-888-388-2009 (voice) or 1-877-530-2634 (TTY).

RESOURCES

[FCC Digital Television Website](#) [Digital Converter Box Coupon site](#)
[SeniorNet Television & Recorders Q&A Discussion](#)