

COUNTDOWN BEGINS TO A DIGITAL SCOTLAND

Central Scotland will complete nation's switchover next summer

Central Scotland will start switching to digital TV in May next year, it was announced today.

The process will complete the following month in Edinburgh, when the final analogue TV signals will be turned off and Scotland will become an all-digital nation for the first time.

Digital UK and the Switchover Help Scheme are preparing to launch a public information campaign to ensure viewers are ready for the change. The campaign, due to kick off later this year will include roadshows, advertising and an information leaflet sent to every home. The Help Scheme will write to eligible older and disabled people offering support in making the switch, including equipment, installation if needed and aftercare.¹

Analogue signals will be switched off in two stages at each transmitter group.² The dates for switchover in the central belt are:

Area	Transmitter group	Stage one (BBC Two analogue off)	Stage two (all analogue channels off)
Parts of central Scotland, Argyll and Bute	Darvel	11 May 2011	25 May 2011
Rosneath	Rosneath		
Lothian, parts of Edinburgh and parts of Fife	Craigkelly	1 June 2011	15 June 2011
Glasgow, central Scotland and parts of Edinburgh	Black Hill	8 June 2011	22 June 2011

Paul Hughes, Digital UK's Scotland National Manager, said: "Today's announcement paves the way for a new era in Scottish broadcasting. Next summer, Scotland will enter a fully digital age in which everyone can enjoy more choice on TV.

"Digital UK and the Switchover Help Scheme will ensure people know about the change, and that advice and practical support are available for those who need it."

Get set for switchover with Digital UK's Top Five Tips:

1. Visit the switchover postcode checker at digitaluk.co.uk to find out when your area switches or ring the advice line on **08456 50 50 50**.
2. Remember the Switchover Help Scheme will offer equipment and practical support to older and disabled viewers. It will write to eligible viewers in the run-up to switchover. Call 0800 408 7654 or visit helpscheme.co.uk for more details.

- more -

3. Don't throw out your old TV - almost all sets can be converted with a digital box.
4. Check out the different ways of getting digital TV, including subscription-free options. Digital UK's postcode checker provides details of digital services available in your area.
5. If you have Freeview, check you know how to retune your TV or box – you'll need to do it at both stages of switchover. For more information visit digitaluk.co.uk/retuning.

- ends -

Notes to editors

1. **The Switchover Help Scheme:** People aged 75 and over, eligible for certain disability benefits, registered blind or partially sighted or living in care homes are entitled to practical help from the BBC-run Switchover Help Scheme. For £40, they will be given equipment to switch one TV per household to digital. They will be able to have that equipment installed if they want it, a demonstration of how it works and a number to call while they get used to things. If they're eligible and also on income-related benefits, the help will be free. Everyone eligible will be contacted directly before switchover. More information is available on 0800 408 7654 and online at helpscheme.co.uk.
2. **How switchover happens:** Analogue services will be switched off in two stages at each transmitter group. At stage one, analogue BBC Two is switched off and the first group of Freeview digital channels will become available from relay transmitters for the first time. At stage two, the remaining analogue channels will be permanently switched off and replaced with additional digital TV, radio and text services.
3. **Channel availability:** Before switchover, Freeview channels are available from main transmitter sites only, offering viewers with digital TVs or set top boxes a line-up of more than 40 channels. Switchover will see more than 1,000 local relay transmitters upgraded to digital. After switchover, relay transmitters will broadcast around 15 Freeview TV channels, including BBC One, BBC Two, STV, Channel 4 and Five, plus associated services. Viewers can use the postcode checker at digitaluk.co.uk to check channel availability in their area. Digital TV is also available via cable, satellite and broadband.

Digital TV switchover is the process of converting the UK's terrestrial television system to digital. Between now and 2012, analogue channels will be switched off region by region and replaced with free-to-air digital TV and radio services (Freeview). Switchover will extend Freeview coverage to the whole of the UK and free up airwaves for new services such as ultra-fast wireless broadband and mobile television. Digital services are also available via broadband, cable and satellite.

Digital UK is the independent, not-for-profit organisation established in 2005 to lead the implementation of digital switchover. It is jointly owned and funded by the public-service broadcasters (BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Five, S4C and Teletext), and the digital multiplex operators.

The Switchover Help Scheme is run by the BBC under an agreement with the Government to help older and disabled people make the change to digital TV. Every eligible person will be offered practical help to convert one of their TV sets to digital in the run-up to switchover in each region. People are eligible if they are aged 75 years or more, have lived in a care home for six months or more, get (or could get) certain disability benefits, or are registered blind or partially sighted. Most people will be asked to contribute £40 towards the help but for those on certain income-related benefits, it's free.

Images and video clips are available to media free of charge from vismedia.co.uk.

Contact

Stephanie Robertson
Weber Shandwick
0131 5566649
srobertson@webershandwick.com

digitaluk.co.uk /press