

Hotels, B&Bs, Guesthouses and Holiday lets

How the digital TV switchover may affect you.



What is the digital TV switchover?

TV in the UK is going digital, and the existing analogue signal is being switched off TV region by TV region between now and 2012.

Digital UK is the independent not-for-profit company responsible for leading the digital TV switchover.

Use our postcode checker

Use Digital UK's postcode checker at:

digitaluk.co.uk

to find out when your region switches to digital and what services you will be able to receive after switchover.

What does switchover mean for hotels?

Any TV not converted to digital will not work after the switchover. You need to ensure that all the TVs on your premises are converted to digital.

For many hotels, B&Bs, guesthouses and holiday lettings, changes may have to be made to the system delivering the TV signal, and to the equipment in rooms.

There are a number of options available and several factors for you to consider including budget, your guests' expectations and the switchover dates for your area in relation to the holiday season. You may need to start planning now to ensure that your guests aren't left without TV.

How do I convert my TVs?

- Connect a digital box to your existing television. Remember the digital box will have its own remote control.
- Get a digital TV (IDTV) with a digital box built-in.

When considering how to upgrade the aerial system and TVs, don't overlook the needs of residents with sensory disabilities. We recommend that positive steps should be taken to ensure that subtitling and audio description can be accessed by your guests. If your chosen system does not allow access to these services, consider ensuring they are provided in at least some rooms.

You can receive a digital TV signal in a number of ways:

1. An aerial
2. A satellite
3. Cable or phone line

1. Through an aerial

Individual aerials

Most rooftop and some set-top aerials will continue to work after switchover. To check the condition of your aerial, visit **Teletext p284**.

Communal aerial systems

All communal aerial systems (an aerial or satellite dish serving multiple TV connection points) over ten years old may need checking, and possibly upgrading, because of age or condition. There are several different types:

- A traditional **Master Antenna TV System** (MATV) can carry analogue and digital terrestrial television signals (Freeview) through an aerial. A MATV upgrade re-using the existing cabling and outlet sockets should cost from £40 per outlet. Installing a new MATV system typically starts from £130 per outlet.
- If you are replacing an existing system, you might want to consider installing an **Integrated Reception System** (IRS). It carries satellite services through a satellite dish as well as analogue and digital terrestrial television signals (Freeview) through an aerial. A basic IRS system with a single outlet in each flat or room should cost from £200 per outlet. IRS systems for Sky+ and freesat+ with High Definition and recording will cost more.

- A central **head-end distribution box** can provide five digital channels without the need to change the existing analogue TVs. However, this system provides the viewers with a limited choice of channels and does not provide interactive services, audio description or subtitling. This costs from £500.

At each stage of switchover, channelised communal TV aerial systems may need to be re-tuned. Pre-set filters may need to be replaced and electronic filters will need re-tuning.

For more details about this and your options see www.digitaluk.co.uk/propertymanagers

2. Through a satellite dish

There is a range of non-subscription services available such as freesat or Freesat from Sky, or subscription services from Sky. Service providers can advise on the necessary equipment and installation for your business.

3. Through a cable or phone line

In many regions you can access digital TV through a cable or phone line. The provider will install and provide all equipment needed.

Pay TV and other features

Many hotels offer pay TV to guests. These systems are normally supplied and maintained by a service provider who should be able to make all the necessary changes to ensure a smooth transition through switchover. Many will already provide access to digital TV. Contact your system supplier to check that you are ready.



For more information on the digital TV switchover contact Digital UK.
Call us on **08458 455 455*** or visit us at digitaluk.co.uk/propertymanagers



get set for digital

*Calling rates to a UK based 0845 number may vary according to your network provider or mobile operator. The standard business hours for Digital UK's contact centre are 8am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 4pm on Saturday. Opening hours will be extended during switchover in each area. Digital UK, PO Box 26833, Kirkcaldy, KY2 9AG.