

Digital switchover

.....
Help with making
the change to digital
.....

**Work &
learning**



***Age UK is the new force combining
Age Concern and Help the Aged.***

***With almost 120 years of combined
history to draw on, we are bringing
together our talents, services
and solutions to do more to enrich
the lives of people in later life.***

***The Age UK family includes
Age Cymru, Age NI and Age Scotland.***

This information leaflet has been prepared by Age UK and contains general advice only, which we hope will be useful. Nothing in this leaflet should be construed as specific advice and it should not be relied on as a basis for any decision or action. Age UK does not accept any liability arising from its use. We aim to ensure that this information is as up to date and accurate as possible, but please be warned that certain areas are subject to change from time to time. Please note that the inclusion of named agencies, companies, products, services or publications in this leaflet does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by Age UK.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this leaflet is correct. However, things do change, so it is always a good idea to seek expert advice on your personal situation.

Date of publication: March 2011 © Age UK 2011

Age UK is the new force combining

AGE
Concern

and

HELPTHEAGED WE WILL



Mixed Sources

Product group from the following
Forest Management Certificates:
Sustainable Forestry Initiative
FSC C01002348
© 2011 Forest Stewardship Council

Contents

Introduction	2
What is the digital switchover?	3
How will it affect me and what do I need to do?	5
What are my options?	6
Equipment	9
What will the cost be?	11
Am I eligible for help and will I have to pay?	12
What help will I get?	13
Digital radio	14
Useful organisations	15

Introduction

There have been lots of adverts on the TV and in the newspapers talking about the digital switchover. But what exactly is it, when will it happen, and how will it affect you?

This leaflet will help you with the answers to these and lots of other questions you might have, so that when the digital switchover happens in your area, you'll be ready.

Throughout this leaflet you will find suggestions for organisations that can give further information and advice about your options. Their contact details can be found in the 'Useful organisations' section (see pages 15–16). Contact details for local organisations can usually be found in your local phone book. If you have difficulty finding them, your local Age UK/Age Concern* should be able to help (see page 15).

As far as possible, the information in this leaflet is applicable across the UK.

Key



This symbol indicates where information differs for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.



This symbol indicates who to contact for the next steps you need to take.

*Many of our local partners will remain Age Concern for a while yet.

What is the digital switchover?

The Government wants everyone to have a choice of ways to get digital TV. The traditional analogue signal will be switched off and replaced with a new, stronger digital TV signal. Digital TV is the new way of broadcasting TV and the change is often referred to as a digital switchover because the new signals will be digital and will only work on digital equipment. There are a number of benefits to the switchover, including:

- more TV channels
- better picture quality
- an on-screen programme guide
- interactive features
- special services for people with hearing and visual impairments, such as recordable subtitles and some audio description (from some sets)
- radio through your TV.

The date you'll be affected by this change depends on which TV region you live in. The switchover started in 2008 and will be completed by 2012. All of us will be able to receive digital TV through our aerial, by satellite, cable or broadband.

To find out when your TV region is switching over, look at the list below.

TV region	Date
Anglia	2011
Border	2008–09
Central	2011
Channel Islands	2010
Granada	2009
London	2012
Meridian	2012
Scottish TV	2010–11
Tyne Tees	2012
Ulster	2012
Wales	2009–10
West	2010–11
West Country	2009
Yorkshire	2011

**what
next?**

To confirm when your region is due to switch, call the Digital UK contact centre on 08456 50 50 50 or visit www.digitaluk.co.uk/when_do_i_switch

How will it affect me and what do I need to do?

It's important to make sure that your TV can receive digital signals. If all the TVs in your home are already digital, you will just have to retune them when your region switches over to digital. But any TV set you have that hasn't been changed to receive digital signals will no longer work once your region is switched over to receive only digital signals.

Remember: if you decide to get new TV equipment, make sure it has the digital tick logo (see page 9).

what next?

Call the Digital Logo helpline on 0870 190 2851 or visit www.digitallogo.co.uk for information on TV and aerial equipment that has been registered by companies under their digital equipment certification mark licences.

What are my options?

You can receive the digital signal in one of four ways: through an aerial, with a satellite dish, by cable or through a telephone line.

Using an aerial

Most places can receive digital signals with an aerial, but there are areas in the country where households converting their equipment using the aerial system will not be able to watch digital channels until the switchover has been made in their region. You will be able to receive digital terrestrial channels and Freeview services free of charge. With Freeview you can subscribe to additional channels using Top Up TV. Visit www.topuptv.com to find out more.

You will either have to convert your existing television by adding a digital set-top box, which costs around £25, or by buying an integrated digital television. These cost from about £150 upwards. With either option, you may need a new aerial, which could cost between £60 and £180. To check whether this is necessary for where you live, visit www.freeview.co.uk. Most aerials will be fine, however.

Using a satellite dish

Sky is a television satellite provider. It offers a subscription service with a range of different packages of channels costing from around £18 to over £48.50 a month. Standard installation costs £30. For more information, call 08442 41 42 43 or visit www.sky.com. Sky also offers a free subscription service called Freesat from Sky. You will have to pay £175 to have this installed. To find out more, call 08442 41 05 95 or visit www.freesatfromsky.com

Another provider of a free-to-air satellite TV service is Freesat offered by BBC and ITV. You pay £80 for installation and from £65 for a box. Call 0845 313 0053 or visit www.freesat.co.uk for more information.

Using cable

This is only an option if cable has been installed in your area. To check, contact one of the cable companies:

Virgin Media
Tel: 0800 052 2525
www.virginmedia.com

SmallWorld (available in Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland)
Tel: 0800 070 6150
www.smallworldcable.com

WightCable (in the Isle of Wight)
Tel: 0800 785 1000
www.wightcable.com

Newtel Solutions (in St Helier)
Tel: 01534 506 400
www.newtelsolutions.com

Cable is only available on a subscription basis. The cost will depend on which package you choose, e.g. whether telephone and/or broadband internet access is included. You may have to pay installation costs.

Using your phone line

This technology is based on the existing telephone network and you will need a broadband internet connection.

These services are only available in some regions, and only on subscription. Contact BT Vision for more information on 0800 678 1984 or visit www.bt.com/vision

The right option for receiving your signal will depend on certain factors.

- Where you live: different digital television options are available in different areas.
- Whether you want to pay a subscription to get more channels: if you choose to have more channels you have a choice of satellite or cable or telephone line digital television.
- Planning restrictions: in some areas of the country there may be local planning restrictions that prevent you from having a satellite dish installed on your property. Check with your local council to find out whether you live in such an area.
- If you are a tenant or leaseholder: check with your landlord or managing agent to see if they are doing anything that will affect your choice.

You will not need a separate licence to receive digital television. Your existing licence will cover all your digital viewing.

**what
next?**

For more information visit www.digitaluk.co.uk

***You will not need a
separate licence to
receive digital television.***

Equipment

If you need to buy new equipment, make sure that it displays the digital tick logo shown below. This logo means that the equipment will continue to work when the television signal is switched over to digital.

digital 

DVD and video recorder: You will be able to use your video and DVD recorder but it's likely you won't be able to watch one channel while you're recording another. However, you can do this by buying a digital TV recorder.

Aerial: Most rooftop and some set-top aerials will continue to work after switchover. As a general rule, if you're getting a good analogue signal now, you should get a good digital signal after the switchover. If you think you need to repair or replace your aerial, look for an installer with the digital tick logo. Only registered digital installers (RDIs) are permitted to use the logo. Find a local RDI by visiting www.rdi-lb.tv or www.cai.org.uk. They will be able to advise you on your digital requirements as well as install your new aerial. Never agree to have an aerial installed by someone who calls without an appointment.

If you live in a flat, you will probably have a shared aerial. Speak to the person who manages your building – like a landlord, freeholder, property manager or managing agent – to make sure you can receive a digital signal in your home.

TV: All TVs can be converted with a digital box. There's no need to have an HD (high definition) TV for switchover.

Scart lead: A scart lead is the cable connecting your digital box to your TV. You will need a scart lead for many of the pieces of equipment you want to connect to your TV. Check the back of your TV to see if there is a socket for the cable. If there isn't, you will need to ask for a digital box with an RF-modulator.

**what
next?**

To find a retailer to give you the best advice on TV and recording equipment visit www.digitaluk.co.uk/wheretobuy. Ricability (an independent research charity) has a website that explains the digital switchover and has test results on the equipment that you may need. Visit www.ricability-digitaltv.org.uk or call 020 7427 2460.

What will the cost be?

The cost of the switchover will depend on:

- how you receive your digital television, i.e. by cable, satellite or telephone line
- the service: your digital provider (e.g. Sky) and the number of channels you choose
- your equipment: any additional extras you may need to buy such as cables and scart leads.

Since there are a number of options, it's important to choose wisely and think about your TV watching requirements.

**what
next?**

For a list of service providers available in the UK call the Digital UK contact centre (see page 16).

Am I eligible for help and will I have to pay?

The BBC has set up the Switchover Help Scheme to provide practical help if you think you might have difficulty with making the switch to digital TV.

You are eligible for help if:

- you or your partner are aged 75 or over
- you, your partner or dependent child get or could get Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Constant Attendance Allowance or mobility supplement
- you have lived in a care home for six months or more
- you, your partner or dependent child are registered blind or partially sighted.

Digital UK asks you to pay £40 towards the help scheme. If you are eligible and you also get Pension Credit, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, the help will be free.

what next?

For more information on the Switchover Help Scheme visit www.helpscheme.co.uk. Age UK is working with local charities helping to ensure that support is available in the run-up to switchover. So if you're not eligible for help from the Switchover Help Scheme, contact Digital UK for information on the events and support in your area.

What help will I get?

If you are eligible for help, Digital UK will make contact eight months before the area where you live switches over to digital. They will send you details of how to apply for the help scheme in the post. You can then register for help and they will arrange for someone to come round and install the equipment.

If you are eligible for help, a representative from Digital UK can come to your home, explain digital TV clearly and simply, install what you need and make sure that you are happy with how it works. They can also provide you with a 12-month digital TV aftercare service.

The help includes:

- easy-to-use digital equipment
- home delivery and installation if you wish
- an aerial check and replacement, where possible
- a helpline and retuning advice
- a 12-month digital TV aftercare service.

***The BBC has set up
the Switchover Help
Scheme to provide
practical help.***



Digital radio

No decision has yet been made about switching over to digital radio. The Government has announced that it is committed to doing so, but only when certain criteria have been met. The Government will give us two years' notice before a switch takes place. Should the switchover happen, all the national radio programmes will only be receivable through digital, while small local and community radio stations will remain on analogue (FM). Digital radio also has a number of advantages including more choice, radio text, clearer sound, ease of use and no need to retune on the move.

what next?

If you are considering buying a digital radio, try to ensure that it is capable of receiving both DBA and DAB+ so that it will work if there is a switchover.

Useful organisations

Age UK

Age UK is the new force combining Age Concern and Help the Aged. We provide advice and information for people in later life through our Age UK Advice line, publications and online.

Age UK Advice: 0800 169 65 65

www.ageuk.org.uk

In Wales, contact

Age Cymru: 0800 169 65 65

www.agecymru.org.uk

In Northern Ireland, contact

Age NI: 0808 808 7575

www.ageni.org

In Scotland, contact

Age Scotland: 0845 125 9732

www.agescotland.org.uk

Confederation of Aerial Industries (CAI)

Online directory of aerial installers.

Tel: 01923 80 30 30

www.cai.org.uk

Digital Logo helpline

For information on TV and aerial equipment that has been registered by companies under their digital equipment certification mark licences.

Tel: 0870 190 2851

www.digitallogo.co.uk

Digital Television

Government website, explaining why the switchover is happening, and how to make the switch.

www.digitaltelevision.gov.uk

Digital UK

Not-for-profit organisation formed by the broadcasters to assist consumers in the conversion to digital TV.

Tel: 08456 50 50 50

www.digitaluk.co.uk

(see 'Costs and options' for service providers)

Registered Digital Installers Licensing Body (RDI-LB)

Official body to register licensed digital aerial and TV systems installers.

Tel: 01353 64 40 40

www.rdi-lb.tv

Ricability

Charity devoted to consumer-testing products for older people and people with disabilities.

Tel: 020 7427 2460

www.ricability.org.uk

Switchover Help Scheme

Set up by the BBC, this organisation will provide practical help to those who have difficulty with making the switch to digital TV.

www.helpscheme.co.uk

***Digital TV is the new way of
broadcasting TV. The switchover
started in 2008 and will be
completed by 2012.***



What should I do now?

For more information on the issues covered in this guide, or to order any of our publications, please call Age UK Advice free on **0800 169 65 65** or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/workandlearning

Our publications are also available in large print and audio formats.

The following Age UK information guides may be useful:

- *Internet security*
- *Making the most of the internet*
- *Leisure and learning*

The Age UK Group offers a wide range of products and services specially designed for people in later life. For more information, please call **0800 169 18 19**.

If contact details for your local Age UK/Age Concern* are not in the box below, call Age UK Advice free on **0800 169 65 65**.



*Many of our local partners will remain Age Concern for a while yet.

Age UK is a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England (registered charity number 1128267 and registered company number 6825798). The registered address is 207-221 Pentonville Road, London N1 9UZ. Age Concern England (registered charity number 261794) and Help the Aged (registered charity number 272786), and their trading and other associated companies merged on 1 April 2009. Together they have formed the Age UK Group, dedicated to improving the lives of people in later life. The three national Age Concerns in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales have also merged with Help the Aged in these nations to form three registered charities: Age Scotland, Age NI and Age Cymru. ID10319 03/11