

Cutting the Cord

Watch Video Programs on Your Terms

Presenter

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Who Am I?

Besides being a loving husband and father, I am best described as a **tech enthusiast and a deal hound**.

Convinced my wife to **cancel our pay TV subscription** by asking her to try cutting the cord **for six months**.

Eight years later, we still don't pay for a traditional pay television service.

Have spent some of our saved money on **other video content and interests**.



I'm Here to Help

I host a free, drop-in tech session every Thursday from 6-8pm at the library. I fix devices and answer questions. We can have a chat about your own personal TV viewing needs.



What Does Cutting the Cord Mean?

Cord cutting refers to the process of **cutting** expensive cable or satellite subscriptions in order to change to over-the-air (OTA) free broadcast with an antenna, and/or still subscribe to Internet service and stream video content over the Internet with lower-cost TV channel subscriptions and/or on demand services.



Free TV? How?

With an antenna you can get local broadcast channels for free. **Think rabbit ears or roof mounted.** I placed mine in my attic for aesthetics.

What Channels Can I Get?

Up to **40 channels** from 11 over-the-air stations may be received at this location. **Source: anntennaweb.org**

ABC (7)

Fox (2)

MyTV (20)

TCT (18)

CBS (62)

IND (38)

NBC (4 & 25)

CW (50)

ION (31)

PBS (56)

Which Antenna is Right For Me?

Consider an antenna from [channelmaster.com](https://www.channelmaster.com).

One TV? Their \$10 FLATenna plugs directly in to your TV and has a 35 mile range.

More TVs? Their line of outdoor antennas can be mounted on your roof, chimney or **attic** and connect to your home's existing coaxial network. \$49 - \$109 depending on range.

Ready to Switch?

Pros and cons for switching to an antenna.

Pros

- No subscription and no rising fees. I save **\$1,200 a year... \$9,600 over 8 years.**
- Enjoy the extra time and \$\$\$ on **other interests and hobbies.**
- Consider spending saved \$\$\$ on other **video content of your choosing.**

Ready to Switch?

Pros and cons for switching to an antenna.

Cons

- Access to live programming is drastically lower. Especially **sports, national news and movies**.
- Recording and pausing of programs is only available with **expensive hardware (getting cheaper.)**
- Pay TV providers often **bundle in Internet and phone** so your savings may not be as much as mine.



Questions About Antennas and OTA?



How Can I Get Some of the Content* I'll Be Missing?

* Primarily sports, national news and movies.



Shameless Plug for the Library

Over 11,000 DVD and Blu-ray titles available for checkout.

Over 10,000 video titles available for immediate viewing on your mobile device or TV via our **Kanopy** and **Hoopla** subscriptions.

Over 100,000 eBooks, 30,000 audiobooks, 26,000 music, 5,000 comics, and almost 300 magazines titles available for immediate viewing on your smartphone or tablet.



I Want More Content Than That!

There are dozens of **video streaming services** that include popular (and not so popular) movies, TV shows, kids' programs and documentaries.

The most popular services are **Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, and HBO Go (or Now)**.

They all **require a paid subscription**. No contract, though.

Netflix

Arguably, the best streaming video provider for **movies, documentaries and kids' programming.**

\$9 per month for streaming on one device at a time, **\$13 for two devices, \$16 for four devices.**

No commercials.

I subscribe to Netflix.

Hulu

Arguably, the best streaming video provider for TV programs as you can **stream episodes most often the day after they air on TV.**

\$6 per month with commercials, **\$12 per month** with limited commercials.

Can stream on only **one device at a time.**

I subscribe to Hulu (with a \$1 per month promotion for 1 year.)

Amazon Prime

Arguably, the streaming video provider with the **worst content**, but has **some good benefits** including free shipping from Amazon.com, Kindle Book library lending, free music streaming, and more.

\$119 per year with no commercials (**Student 50% discount.**)

Can stream on **two devices at a time.**

I subscribe to Amazon Prime.



HBO Go (or Now)

Access to the entire HBO library of movies, documentaries and kids' programs.

\$15 per month with no commercials.

Can stream on **three devices at a time**.

I used to subscribe to HBO Now (1 year free promotion from other streaming service.)



What About Live TV?

The most popular services are **SlingTV**, **DirecTV Now**, **YouTube TV**, and **Hulu + Live TV**.

They all **require a paid subscription**. No contract, though.

SlingTV

The first true Internet-delivered alternative to traditional cable and satellite TV, providing 34 (and growing) live channels including ESPN, AMC, TNT, CNN, Disney, History and more. **No local channels.**

\$25-35 per month with commercials.

\$5 add-on packs to add DVR (limited), more kids, sports and movies content.

Can stream on **one device at a time.**

DirecTV Now

Has many of the live channels (about 50-70 in total) offered by your local cable provider. **Includes locals.**

\$50-70 per month with commercials. HBO is included at \$50. HBO and Cinemax is included at \$70. Limited DVR capabilities.

\$11 per month for other premium channels.

Can stream on **two devices at a time**. \$5 per month for an extra device.

YouTube TV

Arguably, the streaming provider with the best selection of sports channels. Includes ESPN, ESPN 2, ESPN U, ESPN News, Fox Sports Detroit, Fox Sports 1 & 2, Big Ten Network, CBS Sports, NBC Sports, Golf Channel, SEC Network and Olympic Channel. 84 total channels. **Includes locals.**

\$50 per month with commercials. **Unlimited DVR.**

Can stream on **three devices at a time.**

I subscribe to YouTube TV.

Hulu + Live TV

Includes the Hulu library of on demand shows and movies. Has many of the live channels (about 60 in total) offered by your local cable provider. **Includes locals.**

\$45 per month with commercials. 50 hours of DVR.

\$9-15 per month for premium channels.

Can stream on **two devices at a time.**



Which Live TV Service is Best For Me?

Look at suppose.tv (not .com) for a curated list of recommended streaming Live TV services.

Suppose is a tool for searching and comparing video services. Based on your preferences, Suppose shows you detailed information about your video service options so you can make the best choices.



What Other Services are Available?

Showtime. \$11 per month or less.

Starz. \$9 per month.

Acorn TV. \$5 per month or \$50 per year for British TV fanatics.

ESPN+. \$5 per month for select games from many sports.



What About Free Streaming Services?

Crackle. Not so recent movies with commercials.

YouTube. User created how-to, product review, opinion pieces and “funny” videos.

PlutoTV. Over 100 channels full of TV shows, movies, news, sports, classic toons and Internet videos.



Get Much, Much More Content For Free*!

* Free for you, but not your friend or relative who pays for TV and **shares their account login** with you.

Many pay TV channels provide streaming access for their **paying subscribers**.

Thanks mom and dad! Not anymore as they cut-the-cord and I share my YouTube TV, Netflix, Hulu and Amazon Prime.



What Channels Have These Apps?

A&E

CBS New

Fox

PBS & PBS Kids

ABC

CBS Sports

FX

Red Bull

ABC Family

CNBC

History

Smithsonian

ABC News

CNN

Lifetime

USA

Big 10

Disney

National Geo

WSJ

Bloomberg

ESPN

NBC Sports Live

... and more!



What About More Live Sports?

You may become a regular at **your local sports bar**.

If you don't subscribe to a streaming TV service or use the login from your friend who does, you will be missing out on Fox Sports Detroit, Big 10 Network, ESPN and NBC Sports. You can **subscribe to many professional sports leagues** apps ala carte, though.

MLB

MLS

NBA

NFL

NHL

WWE

Questions About Streaming Services?





What Do I Need to Stream to My TV?

Smart TV. Hard not to buy a TV these days that isn't "smart," but the **user experience is usually subpar.**

PC or Tablet. Use your TV as a monitor by plugging these in to your TV. **Not easy to control and often poorer picture quality.**

Streaming Device. Connects your TV to the Internet and allows you to **stream video and music much easier.**



Don't Forget About High Speed Internet!

Streaming video also **requires high speed Internet.**

At least **3 mbps** is needed to stream to one device with limited buffering. **Minimum of 6 mbps per device is recommended.**

Check your Internet account, or use [speedtest.net](https://www.speedtest.net), to see what speed you get at your house.



How Do I Choose the Right Device?

There are many devices to choose from that range in price from **\$35 to \$200**.

How committed are you to **certain ecosystems**? Have you already paid for content from iTunes or Amazon Prime?

Do you own a **smartphone or tablet**? What kind?



How Are the Devices Similar?

Every streaming device provides **access to all of the popular streaming services** I mentioned earlier.

No ongoing fees except for streaming services that you wish to subscribe to.

All are **compatible with all TVs** that have an available HDMI port (even smart TVs).

Apple TV

Arguably, the **best user experience** as it is the easiest to navigate and search for titles.

Most expensive at **\$150 - \$200** depending on features including storage size and 4K resolution.

Allows you to use your voice to search for **titles, actors, ratings, weather and sports scores.**

My primary device on our main TV.

Demo Apple TV



Roku

Arguably, the **most open** as it isn't tied to a particular ecosystem.

More affordable at **\$30 - \$100** depending on features including voice capabilities and processing speed.

Newest version allows you to use your voice to search for **titles and actors**. Remote allows you to **use headphones for private listening**.

I currently own a Roku TV.

Demo Roku



Amazon Fire TV

Arguably, the **most goodies** if you also subscribe to Amazon Prime as you get all the additional benefits mentioned earlier (free shipping, Kindle ebook lending, etc.)

Even more affordable at **\$40 - \$70** depending on features including voice capabilities and processing speed.

More expensive versions are **optimized for gaming and expandable storage**.

I have never owned an Amazon Fire TV.

Chromecast

Arguably, the **simplest** as you use your familiar Android or Apple smartphone or tablet as the remote.

Most affordable at **\$35**.

Very **convenient to take with you** when travelling.

OTPL **lends six of them** for one week.

I own a Chromecast.

Questions About Streaming Devices?



My Devices

Apple TV (\$150) plugged in to living room 50" LG TV (\$600).

55" TCL Roku TV (\$330) in bedroom. Great deal still at Costco.

Nvidia Shield (\$200) plugged in to basement 120" Epson projector (\$800). Shield offers the Google's Android TV UI.

LG or Vizio soundbars (\$100-400) at each location. I feel soundbars or external speaker systems are a must have.

List prices, not what I spent. I spent less.

My Services

Internet with Charter Spectrum. \$66 per month for 200 mbps. Unlimited data usage. AKAIK, only available in northern Orion.

YouTube TV (\$50), Netflix (\$16), Hulu (\$6), Amazon Prime (\$10).

I share them with 2 different family households. Considering cancelling all for \$45 per month Hulu + Live TV. \$50 for 3 views.

Bonus: Home phone for \$0 monthly using a \$40 Obihai adapter and porting my long held phone number to Google Voice.



Recommended Websites

thewirecutter.com – Very informative product reviews and comparisons. Updated often and trustworthy, in my opinion.

slickdeals.net – Where to find the best deals at any given moment. Sign up for deal alerts for interested products.

suppose.tv – Helps you figure out what TV service is best for you based on your desired channels.

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