

## Digital Television



*It's like the difference between audio cassettes and CDs, or video cassettes and DVDs – better pictures, better sound... just better telly.*

### ▶ Good bye analogue - hello digital

The big switch to digital TV starts in 2008 and runs through to 2012, when the final analogue broadcast will take place. After that, you'll be able to enjoy the full benefits of digital TV wherever you live.

### ▶ LCD or plasma?

For most living rooms, an LCD TV is the best bet and the picture will be bright, sharp and full of colour. If you've got a hankering for something even more cinematic - say 37" or bigger across - then go for a plasma TV which many people praise for its superior contrast and richer range of colours.

### ▶ How do I get digital TV?

There are three ways to get digital TV:

- An inexpensive Freeview box which receives free digital channels like BBC4 and ITV3.
- A satellite receiver that comes as part of a subscriptions package.
- As part of a subscription to a cable TV service.

All these are available now – but remember, digital TV isn't the same as High Definition TV.

### ▶ Which TV should I choose?

Matching the TV to the room size makes sense, so a monster telly doesn't dominate the space too much. Apart from that, you need a very specific reason to look beyond a flat panel TV - these produce beautiful, crisp, colourful images and can catch a spring garden in bloom or a series of blazingly fast Ronaldo stepovers with equal clarity. The main technical thing to look out for is this: make sure the TV is HDTV ready. That means it'll be able to display high definition TV when the broadcasters start to transmit it.



### ▶ Connections

It's easy to get tangled up by the various kinds of audio and visual connections that are tucked away round the back of modern TVs and recorders. Here's our advice - the one that really matters is the HDMI connector. HDMI stands for High Definition Multimedia Interface and is the new way to connect all of your digital equipment like TVs, DVD recorders, set top boxes and so on; this single connection carries both the pictures and the sound, so that everything runs down one cable. Simple.



## WOW

Some broadcasters - including the BBC and Channel 4 - are already transmitting a few high definition TV programmes. To watch them you'll need an HD-capable set top box and an HD-ready TV.