

SONY

backstage101™



Overview

Learn about high-definition (HD) entertainment and find out if it's the right time to make your own move to HD.

Why Should I Make the Move to HD?

These days, you can find high definition (HD) entertainment almost everywhere. More and more movies, TV shows, and sporting events are being filmed in HD, and high-def televisions are flying off the shelves at an ever-increasing pace. But how do you know if it's the right time to make your own move to HD? Here are five key reasons to bring the HD experience into your home.

1. Amazing Picture Quality

Once you've seen the spectacular picture on an HDTV, it's hard to go back to watching "regular" television (that is, standard definition). HDTV sets deliver sharp, vivid detail combined with bright, beautiful colors. Some people compare watching HDTV to looking out a window -- the picture is startlingly realistic.

What's behind the amazing HD picture? For one thing, an HDTV has better resolution than a standard-definition TV set. The image displayed on a TV is composed of small picture elements -- called pixels. An HDTV packs together these pixels much more closely than a conventional TV, with the total pixel count reaching into the millions. Having more pixels leads to higher resolution, and that means better image quality.

In addition, many HDTVs use a different scan mode to provide more detailed images. The scan mode refers to the way a TV set "paints" a picture onto the screen. Standard definition televisions use interlaced scanning, which uses two fields of alternating horizontal lines to form a full picture. By comparison, all HDTVs with a fixed-panel display -- such as LCD, SXRD®, and DLP models -- use progressive scanning, which displays the entire picture all at once, refreshing one complete frame at a time. Progressive scanning delivers a smoother image that stays sharper during motion. It also gives a film-like feel to your TV viewing experience.

Sony's 2007 BRAVIA® HDTVs are designed to deliver outstanding picture quality. Many models include 10-bit video processing and a 10-bit display, which combine to deliver 64 times the levels of color expression of 8-bit displays for smooth, natural color transitions. This is a great way to avoid a paint-by-numbers look. Plus, Sony's Live Color Creation™ technology utilizes a special backlight (a WCG-CCFL backlight in LCD flat panels) to achieve wider color reproduction than can be achieved with conventional display technologies. As a result, you can see clear blues and deep reds and greens for an overall vibrant color for all scenes.

Sony also optimizes the quality of high-def motion, so the action sequences in your movies and games look better than ever. Sony's Motionflow™ High Frame Rate technology, found on select BRAVIA models, doubles the number of frames displayed -- giving fast motion a smoother, more natural look.

2. Incredible Surround Sound

Want a big picture with equally big sound? HDTV has got you covered. The HDTV standard supports Dolby® Digital surround sound, so you can get the immersive sound of a movie theater in the comfort of your own living room.

Many HDTV programs use 5.1 surround sound to create a listening experience like nothing else. To create the experience, HDTV shows and events are recorded, mixed, and transmitted with Dolby Digital coding that an HDTV can recognize and decode. There are five discrete channels of digital sound -- one each for the left, right, center, left-surround, and right-surround speakers -- as well as a separate channel for low frequencies such as thunder. (That's the .1 part of 5.1.) The best way to enjoy Dolby Digital surround sound is by including a home theater system in your HDTV setup.

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With a legacy in movies, movie cameras, and HDTVs, Sony understands how to enhance the audio for your movie-watching experience. Sony's Digital Cinema Sound™ technology -- found on select Sony home theater components -- helps recreate the acoustic environment of a movie theater in a home listening room. Sony has also created a host of other audio technologies designed to enhance the listening experience, even if you don't have a full surround sound set-up. Sony's S-Force® Front Surround enhancement function generates realistic surround sound from the two speakers in the TV. So, in nearly any home theater configuration you may have, it's possible to get three-dimensional sound from your Sony home theater.

3. Widescreen Viewing

One of the most obvious differences about an HDTV is its shape. Rather than the square-like shape of many traditional televisions (known as the 4:3 aspect ratio), HDTV sets have a wider, rectangular screen that more closely matches the movie theater experience (known as the 16:9 aspect ratio). This means, you can watch widescreen movies and HDTV shows without the need for those annoying black bars (called letterbox bars) across the top and bottom of the screen.

Sony BRAVIA televisions come in all shapes and sizes, so you can enjoy the widescreen format almost anywhere. Flat-panel displays are perfect for hanging on the wall (with additional mounting brackets) or placing on a stand. Or, if you need to fit your TV within built-in cabinetry or a wall unit, microdisplays are a good option. The choice is all yours.

4. Exciting HD Content

Once you have your new HDTV, what can you watch on it? The simple answer: almost everything in high definition. Broadcasters are already offering a wide range of HD programming, from prime-time sitcoms to Hollywood movies to sports. You can also go the next step, and actually interact with the content. It's possible for more audio and video to be transmitted with the digital HD signal, which opens the door to future capabilities like multi-casting, interactive programming, and other special features.

Sony's Blu-ray Disc® players and Playstation®3 systems make it easier to get even more enjoyment from HD quality. A single Blu-ray Disc can hold over 10 times the amount of data as a traditional DVD. As a result, there's room for hours upon hours of HD entertainment beyond the feature-length movie, including director's commentaries, deleted scenes, trailers, and the like. High-def games have also hit the market, enabling you to bask in the quality of vivid, high-resolution graphics and more lifelike scenes. It's a whole new level of gaming.

5. HD Programming Will Soon Be Everywhere

As of February 2009, analog television programming is scheduled to be shut down, so you'll need equipment that can receive the digital signal. Digital TV makes pictures and sounds more vivid, and liberates reception from old analog problems, such as snow, ghosts and other image distortions.

Many satellite and cable boxes already include digital receivers, so you could use your analog television with a set-top box to pull in the digital signal. However, as long as you're upgrading to digital, you may as well go for a television that's capable of displaying the highest quality digital TV available -- HDTV. Your favorite TV shows come alive with superb picture and sound, not to mention the wider format; plus, there's a wealth of new programming to enjoy in HD. With all the compelling reasons to move to HD, why wait? It's a great time to take this giant leap forward in your home entertainment.