

DirecTV review: The best cable replacement you can stream

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DirecTV has emerged as one of the [best live TV streaming services](#) on the market, thanks in no small part to its robust channel selection and new skinny genre package offerings.

We tested [DirecTV](#) for weeks on several devices, including a Samsung TV, iPhone, and MacBook. Our comprehensive testing process evaluates channel lineups, on-demand offerings, user interface, DVR capabilities, and overall user-friendliness. For the purpose of this review, we tried out the Signature DirecTV Entertainment streaming plan.

We'll break down absolutely everything you need to know about DirecTV, including a cost overview, a roundup of supported devices, and a brief comparison to similar live TV streaming services. Most importantly, we'll outline whether it's worth it to subscribe.

Previously known as AT&T TV, DirecTV offers streaming access to a large selection of live channels, including most key networks typically found in traditional cable packages.

[Check price at DirecTV](#)

What we like

- Massive on-demand catalog
- Allows add-ons like HBO Max, STARZ, and Paramount+ with Showtime
- Offerings similar to cable

What we don't like

- Slightly less intuitive interface and TV guide
- Signature plans are some of the pricier live TV packages on the market

What is DirecTV's streaming service?

Originally known as AT&T TV (which replaced AT&T Now), DirecTV spun off into its own entity, DirecTV Stream, in 2021. In 2025, the service dropped the Stream and just became known as DirecTV. The streamer offers a similar experience to cable, but it most notably has a no-commitment, month-to-month structure for its plans, so subscribers can cancel anytime without being locked into a long-term contract with penalties. This also means that you can get most of the perks of cable without any equipment, like a cable box or satellite.

It's important to note that DirecTV still offers [satellite plans](#) with long-term contracts, but this review evaluates the month-to-month DirecTV Entertainment streaming plan.

How much is DirecTV?

DirecTV offers four Signature month-to-month plans ranging from \$89.99/month to \$169.99/month. These options serve as genre-spanning cable alternatives. The streaming service also introduced new [genre packs](#) in early 2025, which focus on a special package of channels pegged to popular genres like sports and entertainment. Genre packs cost anywhere from \$19.99/month to \$69.99/month. All plans have unlimited Cloud DVR. Below, you can find a breakdown of each plan's cost and minimum number of channels.

It's important to note that the Choice, Ultimate, and Premier tiers typically have extra monthly costs, like regional sports fees. These can add about \$18 extra each month, but the exact additional pricing depends on plan, location, and relevant introductory offers.

A streaming device isn't required to access the Signature plans (you can simply watch through the DirecTV streaming app on your TV if you want), but if you opt for a Gemini device, you'll pay an extra \$10 lease fee each month. However, choosing a streaming device typically unlocks additional monthly savings and other perks.

Plan	Price	Channels
MyKids	\$19.99/month	10+

MyEntertainment	\$34.99/month	60+
MiEspañol	\$34.99/month	60+
MyNews	\$39.99/month	10+
MySports	\$69.99/month	20+
Entertainment	\$89.99/month	90+
Choice	\$94.99/month	125+
Ultimate	\$124.99/month	160+
Premier	\$169.99/month	185+

What channels come with the DirecTV Signature plans?

DirecTV offers pretty much every major channel out there, and it's just a matter of choosing the right plan and/or add-on. We've yet to find a pesky blackout, although you might have to subscribe to the highest tier of the service to get some of the more niche offerings. All Signature plans include access to ESPN Unlimited, and additional plans and device options automatically unlock other streaming services (you can find more info below in the DirecTV Add-ons section).

DirecTV Entertainment is the service's original base plan. Plans include at least 90 live channels, including pretty much everything you'd find in a basic cable package, including broad local channel coverage (ABC, NBC, FOX, CBS), ESPN, FS1, CNN, and TNT, among other channels.

DirecTV Choice is the next step up and a great way to get extra sports channels, like the NFL Network, Golf Channel, NBA TV, and MLB Network, in addition to others. Most notably, Choice carries college sports and regional sports networks. Choice comes with at least 125 live channels, including everything already available in the Entertainment tier.

DirecTV Ultimate comes with over 160 channels, including all of those found in the Entertainment and Choice plans. Ultimate also includes the NHL Network, CBS Sports Network, FS2, STARZ Encore channels, and more.

The streaming service's highest tier, DirecTV Premier, lives up to its title. The plan includes everything you'd find in Entertainment, Choice, and Ultimate, plus extra premium networks and streaming access, including HBO Max, STARZ, Cinemax, and Paramount+ with Showtime (Premium) channels. All in all, it offers a whopping 185+ live channels.

DirecTV's base Signature subscription has a wealth of on-demand offerings, from popular TV shows to blockbuster films. DirecTV

What channels come with the DirecTV genre packs?

[MySports](#) was DirecTV's first foray into genre packages. The package comes with 20+ sports channels, from basics like ESPN and TNT to niche offerings like the ACC and SEC Networks. While the lineup also includes a few non-sports channels — like CNN and Fox News — it has almost all of the sports essentials found in DirecTV's more expensive packages. However, local channel coverage varies by region. While FOX and NBC are pretty widespread, ABC and CBS availability varies by region. The plan also comes with access to ESPN Unlimited thrown in.

MyEntertainment's 60+ channel lineup focuses on entertainment and lifestyle options. Channels include hit cable offerings like Bravo, FX, TLC, and more. The pack also includes the ad-supported HBO Max and the ad-supported Disney+ and Hulu bundle at no extra cost.

MyNews has about 10 key news channels from a variety of popular cable networks, including CNN, MSNBC, and Fox News. Like MyEntertainment, MyNews offers select local channels, but these vary from region to region (FOX and NBC are available in most, ABC and CBS vary from region to region).

MyKids carries 10+ popular child-friendly channels, such as Disney Channel, Disney Jr., Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon, Teen Nick, Nick Jr., and more. The pack also includes access to ad-supported Disney+.

MiEspañol is DirecTV's Spanish-language pack. The package offers 50 to 60+ channels, including key networks like ESPN Deportes, TUDN, Telemundo, and CNN En Español. Subscribers also gain access to ViX Premium with ads.

DirecTV add-ons

DirecTV has several add-ons available, including the Sports Pack and Movies Extra Pack for Signature plans. While these niche channels are included in higher tiers, they're great add-ons to the Entertainment tier.

The genre packs also have add-ons. MySports subscribers can tack on the MySports Extra or MyHome Team add-on, while any MyNews, MyEntertainment, or MySports subscribers can add on MyCinema.

MySports and all DirecTV Signature plans automatically include access to ESPN Unlimited at no extra charge. DirecTV MyEntertainment comes with ad-supported HBO Max, as well as the ad-supported Disney+ and Hulu bundle. DirecTV MyKids includes ad-supported Disney+.

Additionally, all Signature plans come with ad-supported Disney+ and Hulu if you opt for a Gemini device (which comes with monthly lease fees). Premier plans also come with access to additional streaming services.

People can also subscribe to external streaming services through their DirecTV subscription. The available add-ons include HBO Max, Paramount+ Premium (with Showtime), Prime Video, STARZ, MGM+, Cinemax, Peacock Premium, AMC+, Discovery+, Fox Nation, ALLBLK, Acorn TV, BET+, Apple TV, MLS Season Pass, and NBA League Pass, among others. You can check out the [DirecTV premium add-ons page](#) for more information.

Does DirecTV have a free trial?

DirecTV plans come with a five-day free trial. This option is only for new subscribers. You'll still need to input your credit card and billing info, but you won't be charged as long as you cancel within those five days. The service also occasionally has other introductory offers. All Signature plans and select genre packs (including MySports, MyEntertainment, and MiEspañol) offer some savings on the first month or two of service. Signature subscribers are often able to save on the following 23 months of service, especially if they're leasing a Gemini device to watch.

Can I watch DirecTV for free?

Beyond the free trial for the paid subscriptions, DirecTV also has a free plan, [MyFree DirecTV](#). It's the service's FAST (Free Ad-Supported Streaming TV) option that offers 90+ channels. While you won't find key networks like ESPN or CNN here, it's a great option for niche offerings (or for those just looking to have something on the TV). Some of the MyFree DirecTV channels include Court TV, ABC News Live, T2, and True Crime Now. You just need to create an account and download the app to get started, but there's no credit card required. From there, you're welcome to upgrade to a paid package, but you can also just stick with the free option forever.

How do I watch DirecTV?

DirecTV is compatible with various devices. We've outlined some of the most common ones below, but you can consult [DirecTV's website](#) for a full list of compatible devices, models, and versions. For example, Apple iPhones, iPads, and iPod Touches must run version 14+, and versions 13 and below cannot use the DirecTV app. Currently, DirecTV is unavailable on gaming consoles like Xbox and PlayStation.

What is DirecTV like to use?

DirecTV functions a lot like cable, including the signature TV guide. When you open the app — whether on a TV, laptop, or cellphone — it automatically begins playing the most recent channel you've watched. You can play programming while you scroll on all devices we tested, an upgrade from most of the service's live TV streaming counterparts, which usually don't allow for streaming while scrolling.

While DirecTV's cellphone app and computer webpage versions have a standard landing page, the TV version of the app doesn't. Instead, you must click the down button to get to options like Guide, Watch Now, My Library, Sports, and On Demand. These tabs are shown transparently over what you're watching, so you can still watch programming while you browse (rather than having to click away from your show or have it forced into the corner of your screen while you search).

Within the iOS app, it's a bit harder to navigate to the TV guide than its counterparts. Overall, the TV guide and navigation are a little bit less intuitive than some of DirecTV's competitors, but the above perks offset this. Plus, it's something that you eventually get used to, but it might just be a bit jarring the first few times you use the service.

When watching recorded programming, we haven't noticed any of the playback issues we've noted with some other similar streaming services. You can freely fast-forward and rewind without having the content glitch or restart.

Is DirecTV worth it?

DirecTV is definitely worth it. Our team has spent combined years testing live TV streaming services, and DirecTV has the widest channel availability out of all the services we've tried. While it might cost a chunk of change to get you there, you can access pretty much any cable channel you can think of (and most outside streaming services) under one service, an asset in a streaming environment that often necessitates subscribing to a dozen different apps separately.

The bottom line

DirecTV is the best cable replacement among the current slate of live TV streaming services. While it has many merits (and a few pitfalls), the robust channel offerings are undeniable and outweigh any hiccups when it comes to the interface. It's the only live TV streaming service without any major blackouts. Sling TV is missing some local channels, Fubo (despite all of its regional sports offerings) lacks all Warner Bros. channels, Hulu + Live TV omits select cable staples like AMC and NBA TV, and even YouTube TV doesn't have some of the basics like Lifetime and History. Additionally, a carriage deal dispute between Disney and YouTube TV means that [YouTube TV is currently missing all Disney-owned networks](#), including ESPN, ABC, and FX, among others.

DirecTV's starting price point of \$84.99/month (now \$89.99 a month) for its standard Entertainment package might have seemed like a stretch in October 2024 when the service initially hiked its prices above \$80 and the closest competitors' starting prices were Fubo at \$79.99/month, Hulu + Live TV at \$76.99/month, and YouTube TV at \$72.99/month. But as of November 2025, all of the direct competitors have raised their prices, with Fubo hitting \$84.99/month, Hulu + Live TV increasing to \$89.99 a month, and YouTube TV reaching \$82.99 a month for their main base plans.

The streamer's foray into "skinny" genre packs has only bolstered its status as one of the leading live TV streaming services. The same can be said for the robust number of add-on options across all plans. In an era of skyrocketing streaming prices, DirecTV's new offerings keep consumer choice and personal taste in mind.

Overall, DirecTV offers the most bang for your buck when it comes to channel lineups. While those who cut the cord because of price and don't mind missing a few channels might want to check out Sling (starting at \$45.99/month) or Philo (\$33/month), DirecTV is the way to go for those seeking a genuine cable replacement in their month-to-month live TV streaming service.

Interested in learning more about DirecTV? The [DirecTV website](#) has a full breakdown of all Signature plans, genre packs, add-ons, and more.



Lillian Brown is the Senior Associate Editor of Streaming at Business Insider. A lifelong entertainment and media buff, she specializes in helping you find how to watch your favorite shows, movies, and sporting events. Experience Lillian has been writing about entertainment, sports, TV, and film for over six years, starting her career in the Living/Arts department of *The Boston Globe*. She went on to write entertainment features, roundups, and conduct celebrity interviews for publications like *Vulture*, *TV Guide*, *Esquire*, *Time*, and *The Daily Beast* before joining Business Insider as a streaming specialist on the Reviews team. In her current role, she writes about everything from finding the right VPN for watching overseas soccer games to choosing between the endless number of streaming services out there. When she's not writing, she is editing stories from freelancers or fellow Reviews team members. Lillian is also an expert deal hunter. She loves the thrill of sharing an amazing discount with readers, whether it be on her favorite streaming services or on products she knows our team loves and recommends. She plays an active role in writing about sales and deals for the Reviews team. Why you can trust Lillian Whether she's testing streaming platform interfaces or actively comparing channel offerings between services, Lillian always has her finger on the pulse of what's new in entertainment. She has tested nearly every streaming service and is an expert when it comes to VPNs. She is the first person to know when a streaming service has changed its price, and whether or not it's still worth paying for. As a sports fan, she also knows exactly where the next big playoff game is streaming, what time it starts, and where they're playing. Expertise

- Streaming services
- How to watch your favorite films, TV, sports
- VPN services for legal streaming
- Deals

Outside of work Most of the time, you can find Lillian watching a horror movie, WNBA game, or long-distance running. She is located in Boston.

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