

Title:

HDTV: Buying Guide, Part One

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Summary:

There's never been a better time than now to buy a high-definition television (HDTV). Whether your primary source of television programming is local over-the-air broadcasts, cable or digital satellite TV, you will find that there is now a wealth of high-definition programs available.

Keywords:

HDTV, TV, DVD, technology, satellite TV

Article Body:

There's never been a better time than now to buy a high-definition television (HDTV). Whether your primary source of television programming is local over-the-air broadcasts, cable or digital satellite TV, you will find that there is now a wealth of high-definition programs available. If you have a standard-definition television you will also enjoy all of your widescreen-format DVDs that much more on a HDTV. And with Toshiba now shipping their first-generation HD-DVD players and Blu-Ray players coming to North America next month, there are even more reasons why it makes sense to take the plunge and buy an HDTV.

Now that you're convinced you need to go out and buy a brand new HDTV the question is what type of unit to buy. First, you should decide what size HDTV makes sense for you. Because HDTV's have a wider aspect ratio (16:9) compared to a standard television (4:3) you will want to choose a larger diagonal screen size for your new HDTV than you might expect. CNET has a great guide you can check to find out the right size that meets your needs.

Now that you've chosen what size HDTV to get the next question is what type of technology you should look at. Older CRT analog televisions were all based on the same basic technology, but now you have a potentially confusing array of choices: LCD, plasma, DLP, LCoS, and D-ILA. LCD and plasma are both flat panel technologies that can be mounted on walls. If you're looking for an HDTV less than 42 inches then LCD is probably your best choice. Plasma is a better choice for HDTVs over 42 inches, as current LCD units get very expensive in larger size formats.

I just pre-ordered the new Samsung HLS-5087W 50 inch rear projection DLP HDTV.

Many believe that DLP technology offers the best price/performance in the 50 inch plus category of HDTV today. Sony has made a large investment in LCoS technology which it brands as SRXD, while JVC brands their LCoS line D-ILA. LCoS (Liquid Crystal on Silicon) is most similar to DLP (Digital Light Projection) technology, however many believe the DLP camp has made faster progress on reducing manufacturing costs to offer consumers a better price/performance ratio. While rear projection DLP HDTVs lack the flat panel appeal of LCD and plasma units, they are much lighter and have far less depth than the CRT televisions of the past.

You've chosen the right size and technology for your new HDTV, and now you're trying to understand what is 720p versus 1080i versus 1080p. Let me help you out here - don't bother getting a 720p today. I'd recommend at least a 1080i, better yet a 1080p. My new Samsung is both 1080p input as well as output. In order to understand what all of these strange numbers mean, well, you've have to wait until my next article.