

Title:

LCD TV Checklist: Are You Prepared?

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Summary:

LCD flat screen TVs provide a superior picture as compared to a traditional television - and they can come in more attractive styles to boot. A flat screen LCD TV can be mounted on a wall, under a cabinet, on the ceiling... or can sit on a stand or on top of furniture. LCD TVs are versatile, flexible, and provide a better entertainment experience... but how do they work?

LCD flat screen TVs, and LCD technology itself, is based on the properties of polarized light. LCD TVs cons...

Keywords:

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Article Body:

LCD flat screen TVs provide a superior picture as compared to a traditional television - and they can come in more attractive styles to boot. A flat screen LCD TV can be mounted on a wall, under a cabinet, on the ceiling... or can sit on a stand or on top of furniture. LCD TVs are versatile, flexible, and provide a better entertainment experience... but how do they work?

LCD flat screen TVs, and LCD technology itself, is based on the properties of polarized light. LCD TVs consist of two, perpendicularly arranged panes of polarized glass "stuck together" by a liquid-crystal-filled polymer solution. When they are exposed to electrical currents, the crystals untwist to varying degrees, permitting specific amounts and colors of light to pass through them. Flat screen LCD TVs are, in effect, projection TVs that depend on an extremely bright lamp as their light source, so they're considered a "passive" display.

So how do you choose the right flat panel LCD TV for you? You should at least consider the following factors when shopping for a flat panel LCD TV.

1. Look for a HDMI input. This port keeps the signal all-digital, avoiding degradation that can occur as the signal passes through other components (like your cable box). HDMI carries high-definition audio as well as video. Some satellite receivers and DVD players also connect through this port.

2. Match the LCD TV size to the size of the room where it will be placed. Because LCD TVs have higher resolutions than conventional TVs, you can sit closer than you normally would, so you can view a larger screen comfortably. (Keep in mind a 42-inch screen may overwhelm a small room, though.)

3. Decide if you want the picture-in-picture feature. The picture in picture feature allows you to simultaneously view two video sources at once, with one appearing as a small window on the screen. If you do want picture-in-picture in your flat panel LCD TV, keep in mind that single-tuner picture-in-picture lets you watch TV in one window and another source (like a DVD) in the second window. A flat panel LCD TV with two tuners lets you watch two television sources at once.

4. Do you need HDTV? A flat panel LCD TV with EDTV is cheaper, but it can't display high-definition signals. The price difference between smaller flat panel HD-ready LCDs and ED-ready LCDs is fairly low, so you're better off buying a HD-ready set. In fact, most experts say there's little reason to buy a non-HD LCD television. These lower resolution LCD TVs won't be able to accept high-definition signals, so the picture won't look any better than regular analog TV. And small HD-ready LCD TVs can be found for \$500 or less, which is cheap enough that there really isn't much to "save" on a non-HD LCD TV.

5. Check to see if the TV comes with a stand or mounting hardware. Most flat panel LCD TVs come with a basic table stand, but wall-mounting hardware costs an additional \$100 to \$200.

6. Look into the manufacturer's warranty policy before buying online. Some manufacturers have strict policies regarding authorized dealers. If you buy a Sharp LCD Television, for example, from an unauthorized dealer, Sharp may not offer warranty coverage. (However, the retailer may offer a substitute warranty that sufficiently covers you.) The difference in price between an authorized Sharp dealer and a discounter can sometimes be hundreds of dollars, so make sure you're comfortable with the risk of not having a warranty, or make sure you ask the dealer for information about their warranty terms for the flat panel LCD TV you're considering.

7. Finally, learn about LCD TVs. There are far more things to learn about LCD TVs than the above mentioned points. Get educated on how to buy an LCD TV.