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How to Record Over-the-Air TV





Free over-the-air TV is one of the most powerful tools at a cord cutter's disposal. With an over-the-air antenna, you can watch all the free TV you want to without a cable or satellite contract. But what about one of cable's more modern perks: the ability to pause, rewind, and record live TV? Can you use a DVR without cable? Is there such a thing as an antenna DVR?

There is! Thanks to OTA DVRs, it is possible to pause, rewind, and record live TV using an over-the-air TV antenna. Below, we'll explain the concept, show you how to record over-the-air TV and how to use a DVR without cable, and lay out your best options for OTA DVRs and similar solutions.

How to Record Over-the-Air TV

When you plug an antenna into your television, you're connecting it to a TV tuner that reads the over-the-air TV signals picked up by your antenna and then displays them on your TV. That means, generally, that you can't do much besides just watch the free over-the-air TV – recording it is out of the question if all you're using is a TV and an antenna. And for each additional TV, you'll need an additional antenna.

Again, though, that's only the case if you use nothing but TVs and antennas. But what if we open up our options a bit and start considering additional technologies that work with over-the-air antennas? Well, then we'll find that we actually don't need an antenna for every TV in the house.

WHY STREAM TV?

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- 2. Watch on all devices
- 3. Greater flexibility to change or cancel

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Cordcutters save \$100/mo. on average. Click below and use our channel finder tool to find the best streaming service for you. Buy the service, cancel cable and start saving serious cash.

> Find Your Stream

One type of device in particular – the OTA DVR – is particularly relevant to this discussion. An OTA DVR is just an antenna DVR. Like a regular DVR, it has an input for your TV source (just plug in the antenna where the cable would go) and writes what it records to a hard drive, allowing you to later access that recording and play it on demand.

Let's take a closer look at the OTA DVR, our best answer to the question of how to record over-the-air TV.

OTA DVRs and How They Work

A typical OTA DVR looks something like this:



That's the Tablo, but there are plenty of other dark gray boxes on the market for your purchasing pleasure. Somewhere on the thing, you'll find a coaxial jack, which is what you plug one of these into:



There's one of those on your over-the-air antenna, so, naturally, that's what you'll stick on the coaxial jack on the OTA DVR.

Then you'll need a hard drive to store all the good stuff you'll be recording. On some models, this is built in; in other cases, you'll need to rely on an external hard drive that you'll purchase separately.

Next up: actually recording the shows. There are two main ways that OTA DVRs work in this respect.

The first is to use an app. The Tablo up there doesn't actually connect to your TV at all – you can put it (with its attached antenna) in a totally different room, if you so desire. That's because it uses Wi-Fi to allow you to pick recordings – and play them – with an app. You can get the Tablo app for smartphones and other devices. You can get it for streaming devices like the Roku, so if you still want to select recordings with your TV and a remote, you can do that. It's just that the device recording the stuff isn't actually physically connected to your TV – it's using Wi-Fi.

Then there are OTA DVRs that do connect to your TV. In these cases, you're still plugging the antenna straight into the DVR, but you are then connecting your DVR to your TV with another cable. Some of these devices also have apps, though, so the difference is kind of academic: in all cases, you can set recordings from mobile apps or right on your TV, and can view the recorded goodies on your TV.

One more thing is worth mentioning here: OTA DVRs, like regular DVRs, typically have subscription fees. In many cases, you can get bare-bones functionality without paying for a subscription, but the bells and whistles – like fancy program descriptions and mobile features – require you to sign up for a premium service. In some cases, you can swap the monthly fee for a big lump sum payment that nets you a lifetime subscription. Those sorts of specifics depend on which brand and which device you choose.

Which OTA DVR Is Right for You?

You can use a DVR without cable! There are a lot of great companies out there making OTA DVRs right now. Let's cover a few of them right here.

TiVo

TiVo is the biggest and baddest of the DVR companies, and for good reason – they have been doing this quite literally since the invention of the DVR. They're well known for their cable DVRs and their history with the technology, but they also make OTA DVRs, and their products are excellent.

TiVo OTA DVRs:

TiVo Roamio OTA

Tablo (Nuvyyo)

Tablo's claim to fame is that they were a cord cutting company from the start. Or, technically, *Nuvyyo* was a cord cutting company from the start, and they made a *product* called the Tablo – but they never use "Nuvyyo" on their stuff, and everything from their website to their ads says "Tablo" and not "Nuvyyo," so it's confusing. Don't worry about it, though, because the point here is that they make really good OTA DVRs.

Tablo OTA DVRs:

- Tablo Dual OTA DVR
- Tablo Dual LITE OTA DVR
- Tablo 4-Tuner OTA DVR

Channel Master

Channel Master has been in the over-the-air TV game for ages, so it's only natural that they also make products to help you record over-the-air channels. Channel Master has phased out some of their older and clunkier models and is getting ready to launch the Stream+, a device that has the whole cord cutting community pretty excited.

Channel Master OTA DVRs:

• Channel Master Stream+ (pre-order)

Alternatives to OTA DVRs

If you're a tech-savvy person, you may have realized by now that an OTA DVR is a pretty simple device. It's just a TV Tuner, a little computer, and a hard drive. As you might suspect, this means that you have some DIY and semi-DIY options for recording over-the-air TV.

For starters, you'll need a PC TV tuner like this Hauppauge model that we reviewed a while back.

They typically come with software, and sometimes that means basic OTA DVR functionality right out of the box. But unless you want to watch everything on your computer, your next step is to start thinking about servers.

There are various ways to set up free media servers and OTA DVR programs to get OTA content (including live and recorded content) onto other devices. But for simplicity and functionality, it's hard to beat Plex, one of our favorite media services.

If you're willing to pay for Plex's premium subscription service, Plex Pass, you'll get live TV and OTA DVR support. Run a Plex server on your computer with an antenna connected via PC TV tuner, and you'll be able to stream live and recorded OTA TV on any device running

the Plex app. And since the Plex app is widely available for popular streaming devices, this makes things pretty simple!

The Power of Over-the-Air TV

So there you have it: now you know how to record over-the-air TV. But this is just one example of the ways in which you can get more out of your free over-the-air TV setup. So be sure to check out all of our free over-the-air TV coverage here on Cordcutting.com, and follow us on social media for more tips and tricks for getting the most out of OTA TV!

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5 Methods to Record TV Shows without DVR in 2021

by Christine Smith • 2021-07-14 11:17:45 • Proven solutions D ** *** *** ****

Today, technology has advanced and provided us with so many choices to make a consideration over our entertainment ways. Television is a choice of all, but with the changing work schedules and due to some uncertain events, we do miss out on our favorite shows. So, what to do? How to still watch it within our schedules? Well, we do have an answer to your query. Simply **record shows** and watch them when you want. But then again, a question which arises here is how to record it? We have so many choices to do so, but here in this article, we are about to discuss how to record TV shows without a DVR. There are so many options available around. Use a USB drive or record the same Over-the-Air (OTA) antenna. Options also exist to use the available online software to record your favorites. Let's take a look below and get in detail over each method with a step-by-step guide on how to record TV shows without a DVR.

- Part 1. Best Way to Record TV Shows for Windows and Mac Recommended
- Part 2. Record TV Shows via USB Stick
- Part 3. Record TV Shows via Windows Media Center
- Part 4. Record TV Shows via Media Portal
- · Part 5. Record TV Shows via Movavi Screen Recorder

Part 1. Best Way to Record TV Shows for Windows and Mac Recommended

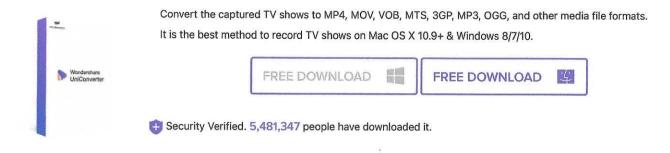
If you want to record TV shows effortlessly and with high-quality on Mac/Win, install <u>Wondershare UniConverter</u> today! This desktop app is super-duper easy to use and offers powerful screen recording tools. For starters, users can capture desktop screens in full-screen mode or choose a specific capture area. It also allows you to add voice narrations, PIP (Picture in Picture) effects, and annotations like texts, drawings, and shapes. Even better, it lets users edit the recorded TV shows by converting, cutting, cropping, adding watermarks, and more.

Wondershare UniConverter - Best Desktop Screen Recorder



It can record shows on desktop or laptop in full-screen mode or choose a customized capture area. It allows you to add voice narrations, PIP effects, and annotations like shapes, arrows, and texts to your recordings.

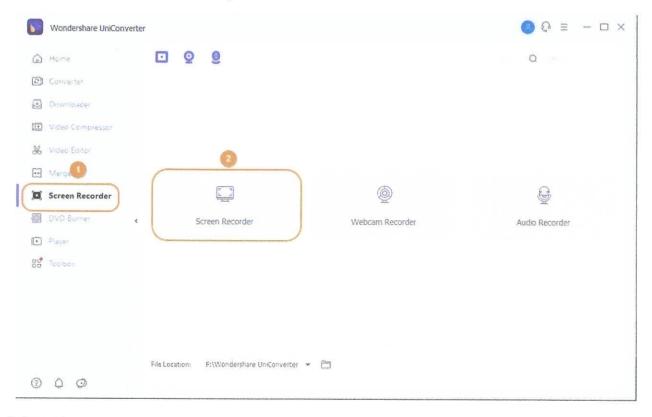
Edit the recorded TV shows by trimming, cropping, adding subtitles, applying watermarks, and more.



Below are the steps to record shows on Mac/Win with Wondershare UniConverter:

Step 1 Launch the recording function.

First of all, install and run Wondershare UniConverter before clicking the **Screen Recorder** tab. After that, tap the **Screen Recorder** button at the center of the window to launch the recording tool.



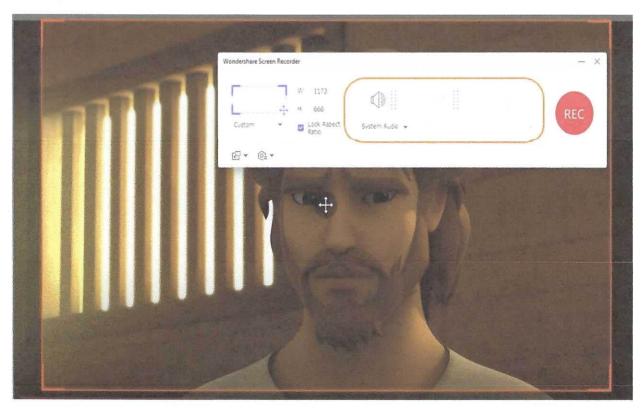
Step 2 Set a capture area.

Click the **Recording Mode** function then drag the cropper to set a screen capture area. Alternatively, open the drop-down menu, then choose either **Custom or Full Screen**. With Custom, you can enter the frame dimensions, then tap **Lock Aspect Ratio** to ensure the outcome looks attractive.

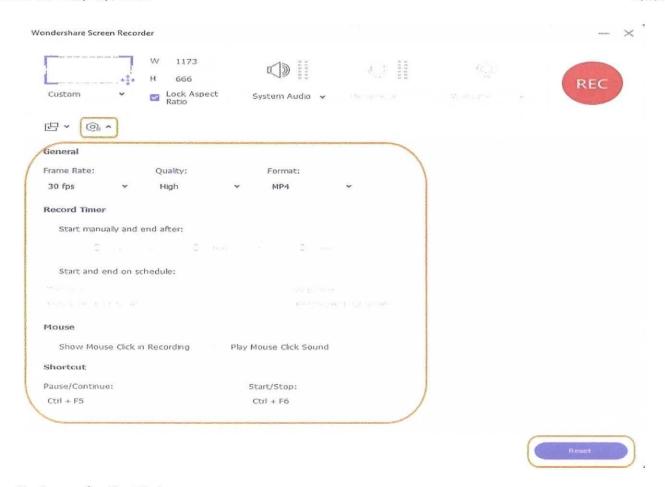


 $\ensuremath{\mathtt{Step}}\ \ensuremath{\mathtt{3}}$ Configure your recording preferences.

Next, open the **System Audio** menu to choose a sound output device. Now select a voice narration device under **Microphone**, and a Facecam for adding PIP effect under **Webcam**.

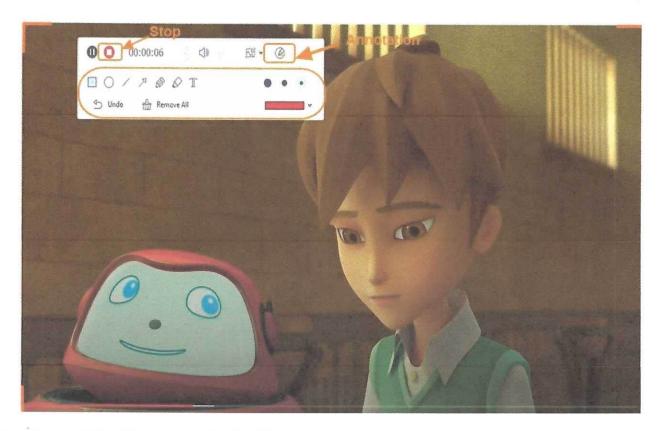


In addition to that, click **Settings** then open the Format menu to set the target format to MP4, AVI, or FLV. You can also customize the keyboard hotkeys, recording timer, folder path, output quality, and frame rate.



Step 4 Start recording the TV show.

If you're satisfied with the recording preferences and the capture area, click the **REC** button to start recording your desktop screen. To add annotations like texts, shapes, and drawings, launch the recording taskbar, then press the **Annotation** button. Here, you can also take a screenshot, disable input and output devices, and finish recording by clicking **Stop**. And yes, you can retouch the recorded TV show using the **Video Editor** tool.



Part 2. Record TV Shows via USB Stick

Here are the other 4 simple ways on how to record TV shows without a DVR:

USB Stick

Most of the TVs come with the PVR software (built-in). Using these features, one can easily convert and get themselves a DVR recorder for TV. Just follow these simple steps and get to know how a USB stick works to record shows:

- 1. Look for the USB slot on your TV back and know if you can record videos without the use of DVR.
- 2. Check the TV manual for the PVR settings (if they are in TV set menu functions).
- 3. Once done, you can check by adding a USB stick or a USB device (larger) if the PVR works.



Pros:

- You can convert your TV into a PVR and learn to record shows.
- You do not need to spend any more on the high-ranged digital TV recording device.
- They are portable and has good capacity if you considered the same before buying.

Cons:

- This method works only if the TV is compatible with the PVR option.
- You won't be able to record for long hours and especially if you are trying with high definition content as it takes high GBs, and your USB flash drive has much of recorded shows or data that it cannot work beyond.
- It might get costly if you try to buy a huge capacity device.

Part 3. Record TV Shows via Windows Media Center

Windows 7 primary entertainment component is Windows Media Center. It has a sleek interface for allowing one to watch and easily record their favorite shows on PC. You can do so, either you are viewing it or can even schedule (ahead of time) the recording of the show in your absence using your TV guide.

Follow the following steps to scheduling a program record in the future using Windows Media Center:

- 1. Click on start, go to all programs, and select the Windows Media Center. Alternatively, look out on the media center remote control a green button and press it.
- 2. On the media center main menu simply double-click TV.
- 3. Once done, choose the guide option or press the same on your media center remote.

Once done, the online TV guide will appear. Simply select the program you wish to record there. Your computer should be equipped with the TV tuner card and also to be hooked up with the local cable system or your satellite TV dish. If all is done, then the only way you will be able to watch live TV in the windows media center. After this, you should also go through the live TV setup process of Windows 7 media center and start.

- Simply select any of the programs you wish to record.
- 2. Press Enter key and wait for the screen to display the program info option.
- 3. Once done, decide if you want to record on a scheduled time and click on the record button, or you can even press on the media center remote, the same.
- 4. On the program info media center screen, select the record series button and ensure all the episodes of the show to be recorded even in your absence.
- 5. Just in case, anytime you feel like stopping the program to record, click on do not record button and ensure the recording to finish.

It will be easy to use this option and record regularly if you add to your Windows 7 desktop, the Windows Media Center Gadget. The Windows Media Center Gadget enables one to display links to their favorite recorded show on either the computer or on the web.



Pros:

- Use the Skip button (triangle-shaped pointing on to the vertical bar on the media center remote control or you can even find it on media center playback controls) to skip and get rid of the annoying commercials while watching recorded TV shows.
- You can record while you are watching a program by simply using the Record button, which is available on the displayed playback controls (check media center window, lower-right corner) or media center remote.

Cons:

- The process is lengthy and can be hard to remember at times.
- Technical process. One might not find it as easy as a DVR to record TV shows.

Part 4. Record TV Shows via Media Portal

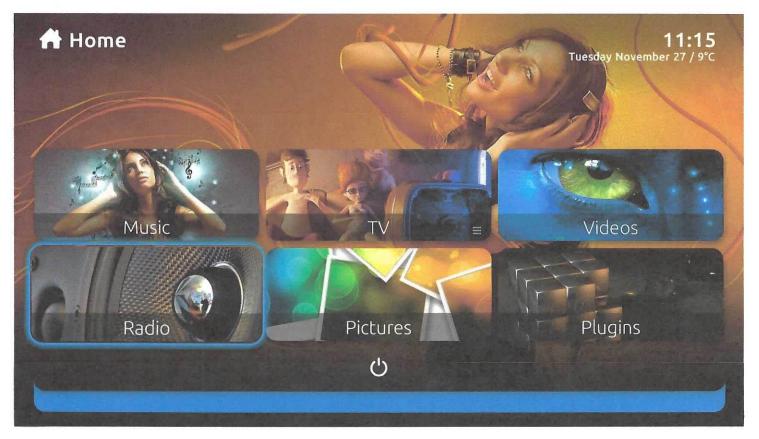
If you think it was the best to have DVR to record TV shows, guess you haven't heard about Media Portal. It is much better than the VCR or even the DVD Recorder. It is advanced and is known as a personal video recorder, just like the TiVo. It though has a lot more than what TiVo offers as functions for the users and is easy to get started. Not much to follow like a Windows Media Center, and your whole family can use it easily.

A guide for how to record TV without DVR, using Media Portal in varied ways:

- 1. Check the remote and press the Record button to start recording.
- 2. You can even record while you are watching TV. Use the record Now option or F9 or even you can start recording by going to info or more remote button.

- 3. On the TV home screen, select the record now button. Once you press the button, a dialog appears for you to select if you wish to record the current program or record continuously (needs to be manually stopped).
- 4. In the TV guide, select any of the programs and schedule the same to record.

Check either the upcoming episodes screen or the program info. You will find many options to choose from for recording. To look for details related to all the options, check the scheduled recordings.



Pros:

- It is an advanced version of a DVR or a VCR and offers many more functions.
- You can record multiple shows at once here on the numerous TV cards having different settings.
- It provides many ways to record.

Cons:

One can get confused between so many choices offered for recording.

Part 5. Record TV Shows via Movavi Screen Recorder

It is an amazing program for capturing or recording of the online video or seize the streaming video or even the screen activities. The program Activation key is light-weighted and a powerful video recorder. You can also tune this program from many websites and do a lot more.

Follow the steps to use this amazing program and download the latest version of the same:

1. Once you download this tool, extract the zip file using either WinZip or WinRAR.

- 2. The program gets installed on your device.
- 3. Run the program.
- 4. Do ensure yourself to always read the Readme file.
- 5. In the c/program files, Copy and paste the crack file.
- 6. Install and run the software.
- 7. Now enjoy the full version of this program easily.



Pros:

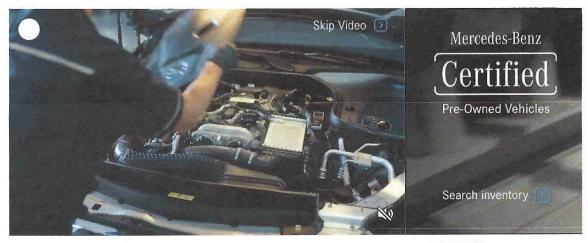
- High-quality recordings.
- It offers one to take advantage of so many features within the program.

Cons:

- You might have to spend additional for WinZip or WinRAR if you do not have the subscription for the same to extract the file.
- Complicated and might make you think, how to record series on a spectrum DVR, as that would have been easier.
- You cannot distribute the recorded footage from the same, as it is considered illegal.

Conclusion:

Remember, when you have a facility, you will learn to use it. If not one, use the second option or third probably. We are sure you will find one suitable for yourself, just like here, where you don't need to worry, how to record TV without DVR, as we have provided you with 5 alternatives at large. Use either of the same and enjoy the recordings just as you want and just as when you want. Have a great watch!



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UPDATED Best DVR for cord cutters

Tivo vs. Tablo vs. Channel Master vs. Plex: None are ideal, but one might work for you.



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Here's the hard truth for cord-cutters right now: The ideal over-the-air DVR doesn't exist.

While some products are better than others, all of them—from Tablo to TiVo to HDHomeRun with Plex—have at least one critical weakness. If you want to record broadcast TV channels from an antenna, you must decide which of those weaknesses you'll tolerate.

DVR BUYERS CHEAT SHEET

Our quick-hit recommendations:

- Best OTA DVR for most people: Nuvyyo Tablo Quad DVR (http://buy.geni.us/Proxy.ashx?
 GR_URL=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.amazon.com%2Fdp%2FB07PLVF8B7%3Ftag%3Dthtrx29-20%26linkCode%3Dogi%26th%3D1%26psc%3D1%26ascsubtag%3DUS-003-3173175-007-1442813-web-20)
- Best OTA DVR for power users: Channels DVR (2020) (https://go.redirectingat.com/?
 id=111346X1569484&url=https%3A%2F%2Fgetchannels.com%2F&sref=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.techhive.com%2Farticle%2F3173175%2Fbest-dvr-for-cord-cutters.html&xcust=US_003_3173175_007_1444670_web|xid:fr1634574258628hgg) [channels.com]

The good news is that the lowly antenna is experiencing a rebirth (https://www.techhive.com/article/246217/smart-tv/kiss-your-cable-bill-goodbye-with-these-hdtv-antennas.html), and we're likely to see even more over-the-air DVR products. But if you want to start recording broadcast channels now, here's a rundown of where the current products stand.

Updated February 1, 2021 with our Nuvyyo Tablo Dual HDMI review (https://www.techhive.com/article/3605112/tablo-dual-hdmi-review.html). If video quality is crucially important to you, this over-the-air DVR will record broadcast video in its native MPEG-2 format at a full 60 frames per second. That means you'll experience no degradation in video quality. On the downside, the Tablo Dual HDMI can't stream video outside your home or to mobile devices. Despite that drawback, it is one of the best products in its class, but it doesn't quite rise to top-pick status.



[Further reading: The best media streaming devices] (http://www.techhive.com/article/3187462/streaming-hardware/best-media-streaming-device.html)

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The best OTA DVR for most cord-cutters

(https://www.techhive.com/article/3394861/tablo-quad-dvr-review.html)
Nuvyyo Tablo Quad DVR (https://www.techhive.com/article/3594861/tablo-quad-dvr-review.html)

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\$190.63 (http://buy.geni.us/Proxy.ashx?

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See It (Http://Buy.geni.us/Proxy.ashx?

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on Amazon (Prime Eligible) (http://buy.geni.us/Proxy.ashx? GR_URL=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.amazon.com%2Fdp%2FB07PLVF8B7%3Ftag%3Dthtrx29-20%26linkCode%3Dogi%26th%3D1%26psc%3D1%26ascsubtag%3DUS-003-3173175-005-1442813-web-20)

Tablo's quad-tuner DVR maintains an edge over competitors with simple setup, reasonable prices, and some neat new features.

If you don't need four over-the-air tuners, the <u>Tablo Dual Lite DVR (https://www.techhive.com/article/3268934/streaming-hardware/tablo-dual-lite-dyr-review.html)</u>—our previous top pick in this category—remains a compelling value. The Tablo Quad DVR is slightly more expensive, but it makes the fewest trade-offs and of any product in this class. We do have a few nits to pick—interlaced video can't play back at 60 frames per second, and there's a limited number of streaming boxes you can use for out-of-home viewing—but in a field that doesn't include the perfect OTA DVR, the Tablo Quad DVR comes the closest.

Runner-up

(https://www.techhive.com/article/3321002/amazon-fire-tv-recast-review.html)

Amazon Fire TV Recast (75-hour model) (https://www.techhive.com/article/3321002/amazon-fire-tv-recast-review.html)



(https://www.techhive.com/article/3321002/amazon-fire-tv-recast-review.html) (https://www.techhive.com/article/3321002/amazon-fire-tv-recast-review.html)

\$169.99 (http://buy.geni.us/Proxy.ashx?

GR_URL=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.amazon.com%2Fdp%2FB01J6A6H74%3Ftag%3Dthtrx29-20%26linkCode%3Dogi%26th%3D1%26psc%3D1%26ascsubtag%3DUS-003-3173175-005-1441704-web-20)

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20%26linkCode%3Dogi%26th%3D1%26psc%3D1%26ascsubtag%3DUS-003-3173175-005-1441704-Web-20)

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Amazon's over-the-air DVR nails the little details, but it has some major limitations.

For those who are all-in on Amazon hardware, the Recast is simple to set up, has no subscription fees, and lets you launch live channels by voice with Alexa. But because this over-the-air DVR is only compatible with Amazon's Fire TV devices, it's a non-starter for users of Roku, Apple TV, or Android TV players.

Best OTA DVR for power users



(https://www.techhive.com/article/3229007/channels-dvr-review.html)

Channels DVR (2020) (https://www.techhive.com/article/3229007/channels-dvr-review.html)

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on Channels

This DVR software of for cord cutters justifies its premium price with features you won't find elsewhere.

Channels DVR can be tricky to set up, as it requires you to bring your own media server <u>hardware</u>, and its \$8 per month subscription fee is pricier than other over-the-air DVR solutions. But for those who invest the time and money, Channels provides an unparalleled level of polish, video quality, and power user features.



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Here are the 7 best free antivirus programs for Windows, chosen by experts (https://ad.doubleclick.net/ddm/clk/484420500;29II58806;c)

What to look for in an over-the-air DVR

Evaluating over-the-air DVR solutions is tough, because there are so many factors that can make or break the experience. If you want to investigate further, here are some factors to consider:

Ad-skipping features: Advertising is still a staple of broadcast TV, but some DVRs provide tools to help you skip them. TiVo is the best in this regard, providing an auto-skip button for some programs, and a 30-second skip button for everything else.

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Antenna placement options: Over-the-air DVR is useless if your antenna can't receive channels, so unless you've got coaxial cable wired to the roof, you'll need to set up your DVR in a place with solid indoor antenna reception. Tablo can operate anywhere in the house, HDHomeRun must be wired to your router, and TiVo and Channel Master are tied to your television. Plan accordingly.

Granular recording options: Perhaps you'd like to keep only a certain number of recent episodes, or replace your recordings with higher-resolution versions when available. Not all DVRs are equal in the recording controls they provide. Our full reviews

(https://www.techhive.com/article/3173175/streaming-hardware/best-dvr-for-cord-cutters.html#toc-6) will provide more details.



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Live TV time-shifting and catch-up: Want to pause for snack breaks? How about watching partway through a program so you can skip the commercials? Most DVR solutions support this type of time-shifting, but HDHomeRun and Plex currently don't.

Number of tuners: More tuners means more simultaneous recordings or live viewings. TiVo has four tuners, Tablo has two- and four-tuner options, and HDHomeRun lets you daisy-chain multiple dual-tuner units together.

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Out-of-home streaming: Tablo and Plex both allow you to watch live and recorded TV from outside the house. TiVo requires a \$130 TiVo Stream for mobile device access.

Storage options: With the exception of TiVo Roamio OTA, all the DVRs we reviewed support storage on external hard drives. Tablo has also started beta testing a cloud-based storage service, but we don't yet know what it'll cost, and we haven't tested it yet.

Whole-home support: Unless you only plan to watch on a single television, you'll want a whole-home system, which means buying a networked tuner (Tablo or HDHomeRun) or setting up extenders (such as TiVo's \$150 Mini units).

Streaming service integration: Many of the DVR products we've reviewed are whole-home solutions that you access via apps on your existing streaming devices. In these cases, you can access all your favorite streaming services alongside over-the-air video without having to switch inputs. TiVo is a notable exception. It supports some major streaming services such as Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hulu, but you'll still need a separate streaming box to access others, such as Sling TV (https://www.techhive.com/article/2877276/streamingservices/sling-tv-review.html) and Philo (https://www.techhive.com/article/3252250/streaming-services/philo-review.html).

OTA DVR solutions still in development

The over-the-air DVR space should get more competitive over time. If you're on the fence about today's solutions, here are some future developments to consider:

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tv%2F5712157.p&sref=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.techhive.com%2Farticle%2F3173175%2Fbestdvr-for-cord-cutters.html&xcust=US_003_3173175_005_1439516_web|xid:fr1634574258628jjb)

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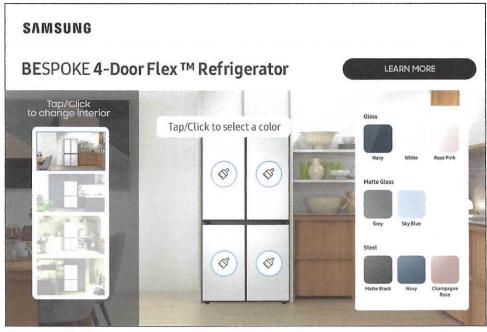
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ATSC 3.0: Broadcasters are starting to test a new broadcast TV standard called ATSC 3.0

(https://www.techhive.com/article/3238869/smart-tv/what-is-next-gen-tv-and-when-will-it-launch.html) (also known as "Next Gen TV"), which can support 4K HDR video, better surround sound, interactive features, and easier access on phones and tablets. This new standard is incompatible with most of today's over-the-air DVR solutions, which rely on the current ATSC 1.0 standard instead.



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Still, it's early days for ATSC 3.0 (https://www.techhive.com/article/3604331/atsc-3-0-in-2021-its-still-early-days.html). Major broadcast networks haven't yet committed to supporting features like 4K, and the FCC is requiring all markets to support ATSC 1.0 until at least February 2023. That means you can still buy current over-the-air DVR solutions with confidence, even if they're not guaranteed to last forever.

Our OTA DVR reviews

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Jared Newman covers personal technology from his remote Cincinnati outpost. He also publishes two newsletters, Advisorator (https://www.advisorator.com/) for tech advice and Cord Cutter Weekly (https://jarednewman.com/cordcutterweekly/) for help with ditching cable or satellite TV.

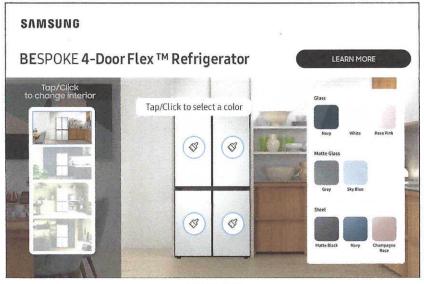
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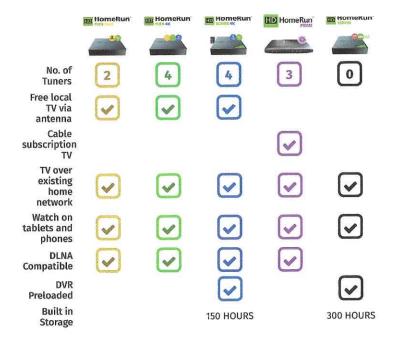


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There are two types of Tablo OTA DVRs

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For cord cutters who watch TV on multiple screens and devices, inside and outside the home.

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Save \$31 Off Storage-Included Tablo OTA DVRs! (Sale Ends 10/31) (https://www.tablotv.com/blog/no-cable-tricks-just-tablo-treats/)

Tablo Blog

<u>Tablo FAQs – How Do I Get a TV Guide for Over-the-Air Antenna TV? (/blog/faqs-how-do-i-get-a-tv-guide-for-over-the-air-tv/)</u>

iii January 28, 2021

One of the big questions new cord cutters have when switching to an Over-the-Air antenna is how to access TV guide listings without a cable box.

Thankfully, there are many options for cord cutters wanting a TV guide for OTA TV, but the quality and availability of those guides will vary depending on the type of data being provided and the equipment you're using.



Keep reading to learn more...

A Tale of Two TV Guides

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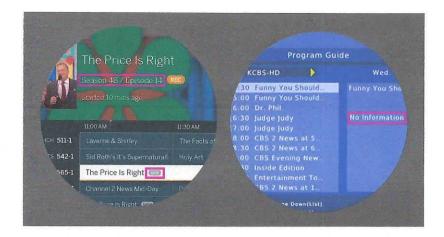
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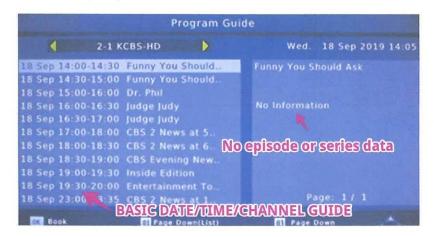
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Before getting into how cord cutters can access a TV guide, let's talk a little bit about the two main types of Over-the-Air TV guide data available: PSIP and enhanced third-party data.

In-Broadcast Data (PSIP)



All Over-the-Air TV broadcasts are supposed to include basic TV Guide data embedded within the broadcast stream that your antenna picks up. This is called Program and System Information Protocol (PSIP) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Program_and_System_Information_Protocol).

PSIP data usually includes basic program title information but episode and season details are often missing and availability of this data for a specific channel rarely extends beyond 2-3 days in advance.

Although it's free, because PSIP data is so basic, sometimes unreliable, and abbreviated, it's not terribly useful for applications like Over-the-Air DVRs that rely on more robust data to set recordings.

Enhanced Third-Party Data

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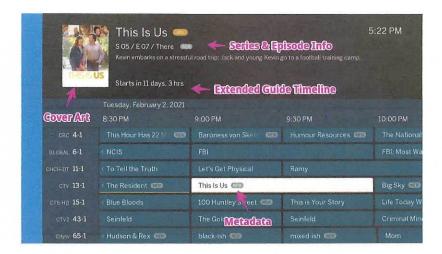
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There are two major companies in North America – Gracenote (owned by Nielsen) (https://www.gracenote.com/on-entertainment-tv-listings/) and Rovi (owned by TiVo) – that offer TV Guide data aggregation and delivery as a paid service.

These companies work directly with broadcasters and TV networks to gather and create enhanced TV Guide data that includes episode and series synopses, cover art, and metadata, like whether the episode is new or a rerun. The data is generally available two weeks in advance and is updated periodically as TV networks adjust their schedules.

This rich guide data is then sold to cable companies, television and DVR manufacturers, and other entities.

How to Get an Over-the-Air TV Guide as a Cord Cutter



There are several options for cord cutters seeking TV Guide data for Over-the-Air antenna TV. Some are free, some are paid, and some may require additional equipment, but there are options for every situation and budget.

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On Your Television



Many flat screen television models will display basic PSIP data as you flip between channels.

If you have a newer Smart TV like the Roku-enabled one above (https://www.roku.com/products/roku-tv/antenna), you may be able to access a Live TV grid guide with enhanced third-party data when your television is connected to the internet. The cost of this third-party data is baked into the price of many new Smart TVs as it in turn provides valuable viewership data to the TV manufacturer and its advertising partners.

Online Listings



If you've got a computer, tablet, or smartphone, you can access good quality TV listings for free via sites like TitanTV.com (https://titantv.com/). Titan provides third-party data paid for via advertising and sponsorships on its site. You can even customize your TV guide lineup.

Via an Over-the-Air DVR



Connecting your TV antenna (https://www.tablotv.com/blog/best-ota-tv-antenna-buyers-guide-cord-cutters/) to a compatible DVR is the best way to enhance your Over-the-Air experience with a TV guide and other features.

Quality OTA DVRs like Tablo (https://www.tablotv.com/products/) use third-party data, even for customers without an optional TV Guide Data Service subscription (https://www.tablotv.com/tv-guide-data-subscriptions/). This ensures that the data shown in the Tablo interface is as complete and accurate as possible so the DVR will reliably record your specified content.

For example, advanced Tablo features like one-touch series recording (https://www.tablotv.com/blog/how-set-recordings-your-tablo-ota-dvr/#series) use the metadata provided by metadata in the TV Guide Data Service to automatically set all new or all recordings of a specific series, no matter when it airs. Tablo DVRs will even remember to record a specific TV series when it comes back for a new season after a hiatus.

However, cheap 'converter boxes'

(https://www.techhive.com/article/3221804/mediasonic-homeworx-hw180stb-review-dirt-cheap-dvr-for-broadcast-tv.html) and lower-quality DVRs will instead often rely in PSIP guide data. Not only will this make it harder to set recordings on your DVR since you won't know what's airing beyond a day or two, but it can lead to failed or incorrect recordings if the program changes time slots or airs an extended episode.

It will also make it much harder to avoid filling your hard drive up with re-runs.

As you can see, there are many ways for cord cutters to access a TV Guide for Over-the-Air antenna TV. While not all TV Guides are created equal, unlike with cable you're free to choose the version that fits your needs and budget.

Liked this article? Check out these other related links:

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u=5052ededd9a051a3d0e2f4750&id=b862b4e737) to get the latest cord cutting industry news including updates on Over-the-Air TV shows, streaming services, set-top-boxes, gadgets, and more delivered straight to your inbox!

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Record TV Shows with 5 Easy Ways in 2021 (wondershare.com)

https://www.silicondust.com/hdhomerun

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