

Which Streaming Device is Best for You

Published 2021-05-24 By [Dennis Restauro](#)



More Americans are Streaming TV and Movies at home than ever before. A [recent Nielsen report](#) shows streaming video accounts for 25% of total TV usage among adults. You can bet that number is higher for children. With all that streaming, people will want to get the streaming device that will allow them to stream the media they want at an affordable price. In this guide, I'll explain how to choose the perfect streaming device for you and your family.

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Which Streaming Devices to Consider

There are dozens of different streaming devices on the market. I recommend sticking with a proven brand. For this article, we'll look at Roku, Amazon Fire TV, Chromecast, Apple TV, and Nvidia Shield. Let's take a brief look at which each of these brands and what they have to offer.

Once you have picked the streaming services you would like to use; the next step is figuring out which streaming device to use. I recommend getting a Roku. Roku supports most apps and provides a very intuitive interface and supports about every streaming service mentioned in this guide. To learn about Roku, check out my post: [Which Roku is Right For You](#).

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Roku



Roku has been making streaming devices since 2008. They are known for their ease of use and vast app support. The current fleet of Roku devices offers the flexibility to satisfy the various needs and functionality of different streaming users. Roku currently offers:

- [The Roku Ultra](#)
- Roku Premiere
- [Roku Express 4K+](#)
- [Roku Streaming Stick Plus+](#)

We currently see the recently released Roku Express 4K+ as the best budget option for new streamers as it's very

affordable and provides features like 4k Video and HDR10+ support. We even like it more than the Roku Streaming Stick+. Both are priced around \$40, but the new Express 4K+ provides some newer features not available on the Streaming Stick+. However, I recommend reading our [Roku device guide](#) for detailed information on all the models available.

Roku TV

If you want to upgrade your TV and are interested in a Roku streaming device, I strongly recommend purchasing a Roku TV. A Roku TV is a quality TV with a Roku built-in. The best part of a Roku TV is that all television input connections are treated as a separate app. For example, if you connect an Xbox One and an Antenna to your TV, you click the Antenna “app” to watch live TV or the “Xbox” app to play video games. I purchased a TCL Roku TV, and [I love it](#).

Amazon Fire TV Cube and Stick



Amazon offers a few flavors of Fire TV. There are three versions of the Amazon Fire TV stick. Then there is the Fire TV Cube. Here is a brief explanation of the various devices.

Amazon Fire TV Stick 4K – Priced at \$49, the Amazon Fire TV Stick 4K is an excellent choice for 4K HD streaming. The Fire TV Stick also integrates Amazon’s virtual assistant Alexa into the platform. You can use Alexa to issue voice commands and control TV power and volume through the remote. This device also supports Dolby Atmos Audio ([Order for \\$49.99](#))

Amazon Fire Stick – For \$10 less, you can get this version, but it only supports up to 1080p video resolution and doesn’t stream in 4K video. It does include the same remote as the Fire TV Stick 4K. This device also supports Dolby Atmos Audio ([Order for \\$39.99](#))

Amazon Fire Stick Lite – If you want to save a little more money, you can go with this version. The remote that comes with this version doesn’t allow you to control your TV and the Dolby Audio is via HDMI audio passthrough ([Order For \\$29.99](#))

Amazon Fire TV Cube – This streaming device provides all the functionality of the Fire Stick 4k but comes with a built-in speaker. It’s basically a streaming device that doubles as an Alexa device. The Cube allows you to use Alexa apart from your TV. Therefore, you can use the Fire TV Cube to act as the hub of your smart home. ([Order For \\$119.99](#))

You can also check out our article, [Fire TV Stick vs. Fire TV Cube](#), to compare both. Much like Roku TV’s, you can purchase a [Fire TV Edition Smart TV](#) with Fire TV built into the television.

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Apple TV



Boasting Siri functionality and the app store, providing the ability to install apps, Apple TV has made some brilliant decisions since its launch in 2007. There are currently 2 versions for sale from apple. They are:

Apple TV 4K – This device supports 4K UHD video, Dolby Vision, HDR10, a redesigned Siri remote, and Dolby Atmos support. This device runs a whole host of streaming services to watch quality content on your television with just an internet connection, and it supports both Wi-Fi and Ethernet. While you don't need any other Apple product to realize the value of an Apple TV, you can stream any content on an iPad, iPhone, or iPod that supports Apple Airplay. ([Order for \\$179](#))

Apple TV HD – Has many features available to the Apple TV 4K, but the video resolution maxes out at 1080p. The hardware is a bit older, and it lacks support for Dolby Atmos. ([Order for \\$149](#))

Apple TV is beautiful in design. However, as I said in [my review of the Apple TV](#), only the most ardent Apple fan would find value in these devices at that price.

Google Chromecast



Google finally added its own user interface to Chromecast in 2020 with "[Chromecast with Google TV](#)." They still offer the Generation 3 Chromecast for those that still like casting from their mobile device. Below is a synopsis of the two current

Google Chromecast Devices.

Chromecast with Google TV: This Chromecast iteration includes a Voice Remote with an integrated microphone to interact with Google Assistant to navigate the Google TV interface built into this version of Chromecast. You don't need to cast media from another device to use this version of Chromecast. This is a top tier streaming device with video resolution up to 4K HDR. The device supports Dolby Vision, HDR10, and HDR10+, along with Dolby Digital, Dolby Digital Plus, and Dolby Atmos audio. (**retails for \$49.99**)

Chromecast (Gen 3): You will need an existing smartphone, tablet, or laptop to use Google Chromecast. Chromecast allows you to stream content from apps on a mobile device to your television. Installation is easy as all you do is plug it into your TV's HDMI port and set it up on your Wi-Fi network. There are no additional steps as you press the "cast" button on the app you want to show on your TV. This also works with the Google Chrome browser after installing a simple plugin. If you are comfortable using your phone as your main content delivery mechanism, this Chromecast is a good choice. Otherwise, I would look to Roku, Chromecast with Google TV, or Amazon Fire TV.



Choosing The Best Streaming Device

After looking at all the options, we can rule out an Apple TV for most people. While the Apple TV 4K checks all the boxes, it's just way too expensive for most people looking for a streaming device. Unless you like the idea of always needing a smartphone around to watch TV, we can likely rule out the Chromecast Gen 3 device as well.

That leaves us with Roku, Amazon Fire TV, and Chromecast with Google TV. To figure out which to choose, we need to consider what's important.

If You Value Affordability

Explore

streaming services. If the price is your main concern, then this is your choice.

If You Want 4K Video

If 4K video is your goal, but you don't want to pay for a top-of-the-line streaming service, I would go with the Roku Express 4K+ (**Order for \$39**). Roku is by far the most user-friendly of the major streaming devices. It supports up to 4K video

resolution with HDR with HDR10+. Its audio capabilities are decent with DTS Digital Surround and Dolby Audio over HDMI pass through. That said, if you want [Dolby Vision HDR](#), then I would opt for Chromecast with Google TV (Order for [\\$49.99](#)). I prefer Roku as I find the user interface and performance is much better than Chromecast, and while Dolby Vision HDR is better than HDR, many apps aren't using it.

If You Want all the Bells and Whistles

If you want the top of the line video, but are also looking for functionality like Ethernet support, top-end performance, remote finder, private listening, and more, I would look to the Roku Ultra ([order for \\$69.99](#)). The Ultra provides Dolby Atmos Audio, Dolby Vision Video, excellent 802.11ac MIMO dual-band wireless, and more. It provides a ton of features at a great price point.

Streaming Device Reviews And Guides

While this guide compares our top choices of streaming device, we have reviewed others. Below are links to all the TV streaming devices we've reviewed and other guides regarding TV streaming devices we've covered.

- [What is Roku](#)
- [Roku Ultra Review](#)
- [Roku Express 4K+ Review](#)
- [Roku Streaming Stick+Review](#)
- [Amazon Fire Stick 4K Review](#)
- [Amazon Fire Stick \(and Lite\) Review](#)
- [Amazon Fire TV Sticks vs Fire TV Cube](#)
- [Amazon Fire TV Cube Review](#)
- [Chromecast Review](#)
- [Chromecast with Google TV Review](#)
- [Nvidia Shield Review](#)
- [Apple TV Review](#)
- [Best Streaming Device for 2021](#)

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If this article didn't answer your specific question, head over to our [Home Page](#)! It will guide you to affordable internet providers, streaming services to meet your needs, information on antennas, and many more tools and resources to help you save money on TV and Internet access.

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Last Updated 2021-05-24

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