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Post-Uverse TV Options at Opera Plaza

Three TV options

Over the air (OTA)

Streaming services

Xfinity cable*

*May not be available in all units

Over the air TV – What is it?

Over the air (OTA) TV is television that's broadcast from a local TV station's antenna.

- Since 2009 stations have been broadcasting in digital – big improvement over analog
- At Opera Plaza we receive most over the air (OTA) TV broadcasts from Sutro Tower so the signal is very good
- 80+ channels available at Opera Plaza in units where tested
- All major networks (ABC, CBS, Fox, NBC, PBS) plus others
- Equipment needed: Indoor digital TV antenna
- Cost:
 - \$10-\$50 one-time expense of indoor antenna
 - No additional monthly or annual cost

Over the air TV – Antennas

- Opera Plaza is close to Sutro Tower, so an indoor antenna with no amplification should work in most units
- Available anywhere that sells TVs
- Wall panel antennas can be painted or hidden behind many types of artwork (nothing metallic)



OTA TV - Pros and cons

- Advantages:
 - Free except cost of antenna
 - Works even during an internet outage (if there is electricity)
 - Access to local TV stations for SF news/weather/sports
- Disadvantages:
 - No “on-demand” viewing
 - No cable channels (CNN, ESPN, etc.)
 - Recording shows requires purchase of an OTA DVR device (about \$150)



Streaming services -How do they work?

- Content delivered to your TV via the internet, not a cable service
- Receive content using either a) smart TV or b) streaming device
 - A smart TV is a TV with built-in internet connectivity and apps for viewing content
 - A streaming device is a piece of hardware that connects your existing TV to give you access to streaming content
- Thanks to our new high-speed fiber internet, streaming services should work very well
- Streaming devices:
 - Roku
 - Apple TV
 - Amazon Fire TV
 - Chromecast

Types of streaming services

- Streaming services fall into two broad categories: content providers and cable replacement services
 - Content providers like Netflix and HBO stream their own content via their own apps
 - Cable replacement services mimic cable service to offer a full channel lineup including many cable channels like ESPN and CNN
- Equipment needed: A smart TV or a streaming device connected to your current TV
- Cost:
 - \$5-\$70/month depending on the service)
 - Purchase of streaming device (\$20-\$100) or a smart TV (\$250-\$1500 depending on size and brand)



Streaming service providers

- Streaming content providers
 - Netflix
 - Prime Video (Amazon)
 - Apple TV+
 - Disney Plus
 - HBO Max
 - PBS
 - Peacock
 - Many cable channels (eg CNN also have streaming apps)
- Cable replacement streaming services
 - Philo
 - Sling Orange
 - Sling Blue
 - FuboTV
 - Hulu with Live TV
 - YouTube TV
 - DIRECTV STREAM
 - Pluto (free!)

Streaming services – Pros and cons



- Advantages:
 - View shows on demand – whenever you like
 - Wide variety of content
 - Possible to connect TVs via wifi
 - Many cable replacement services offer cloud-based recording
 - Easily switch from one service to another
 - *No annual contract*
 - *No provider-specific cable box*
- Disadvantages:
 - Cost of new TV or streaming device
 - Relies on internet to work

Cable (Xfinity)

It might be possible to get Xfinity (Comcast) cable connected in your unit. Check with Xfinity. Be sure to be clear that you only want cable (not internet service)



Preparing for the transition

- Consider getting an inexpensive indoor digital antenna for access to local TV
- Keep a diary of the shows and channels that you are currently watching
 - Use this diary to choose the right TV watching option for you
- Consider upgrading to a smart TV or getting a streaming device (e.g. Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, Chromecast)
- You can test your new TV viewing options even before Uverse is terminated (be aware that the quality of streaming services should greatly improve once the new fiber internet service is activated)



Should I buy a new smart TV, or a streaming device?

- Consider buying a smart TV if:
 - Your TV is more than 10 years old and the picture isn't as good (4K) as current TVs
 - You want to deal with only one remote control
- Consider keeping your existing TV and buying a streaming device if:
 - Your TV isn't very old, but it isn't a smart TV
 - Your TV is very large and you are happy with the picture
 - You don't want to spend much money.



Things to think about when buying a smart TV or a streaming device

- Be sure that the smart TV or streaming device you are buying has the apps that you want (for example, some don't have the PBS Passport app)
- Do you have a hearing impairment? Look for a TV or device that can transmit audio wirelessly to a headset (also good for keeping the peace when someone in your household doesn't want to listen to the Warriors game)
- Look at the remote control. Be sure that you'll be comfortable using it. Some have tiny buttons. Some devices don't even have a remote control – they are controlled by a smartphone.

More information

- Over the air channels that should be available at Opera Plaza:
<https://nocable.org/availability-report/zip/94102/>
- How to install a wall-mounted indoor antenna:
<https://www.channelmaster.com/products/flatenna-35-amplified-indoor-tv-antenna-cm-4001hdbwa#video>
- Comparison of cable-replacement streaming services:
<https://www.cnet.com/tech/services-and-software/hulu-youtube-tv-sling-tv-fubotv-philodirectv-stream-top-100-channels-compared/>
- Smart TVs and streaming devices that offer the PBS Passport app:
<https://help.pbs.org/support/solutions/articles/12000011972-can-i-view-passport-shows-on-my-smart-tv->



- + • Presented by Marceline Therrien

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HELP@TeineiTech.com