

Who would have thought all the work that is needed to buy a new HDTV? But the saga doesn't end just yet. When making your new purchase you should also consider the features that your new set has. 1080p seems to be the buzz word being thrown around. Personally, it's just used for boosting high end HDTV sales. People think they need it in order to watch HDTV content. That simply is not the case and rather a misconception.

I'm not telling you to ignore 1080p HDTVs because it technically does deliver more detail, which can enhance the viewing experience for more detail oriented viewers. But in order to notice a difference from 720p to 1080p you're going to have to sit closer to the screen. 1080p works well with HD DVDs and Blu-Ray players and that's pretty much it. Cable and satellite providers do not offer 1080p content and probably never will do to bandwidth issues. And if you're planning on getting a HD DVD player or Blu-Ray player you can probably afford the upgrade anyway. For the rest of us we will wait to see who will win the next format war.

Resolution	Resolution in pixels	Do you need This Feature?	Frequency
1080p	1,920x1,080	You only need this feature if you plan to watch Blu-Ray or HD-DVD. Cable TV networks probably will not broadcast 1080p content until bandwidth issues are fixed.	Rare but getting more common especially in larger TVs Flat-panel LCD; DLP, LCD, and LCoS projection; very high-end plasma. PS3 offers 1080p output.
1080i	1,920x1,080	Most New TV Sets whether it is Plasma, LCD, and DLP can do this resolution. Cable networks such as CBS, NBC, PBS, DiscoveryHD, and can delivery content in 1080i;	Common resolution on all New HDTV Sets and Flat-panel LCDs. Xbox 360 Games are in 1080i
768p	1,366x768	TV sets with a 768p native resolution will have to scale 720p images to 768p. It isn't a very difficult process and there is no gain or loss in resolution or picture quality.	Very common in all screen sizes.
720p	1,280x720	ABC, Fox, ESPNHD check locally for details.	Common in rear-projection but not flat-panels DLP, LCD, and LCoS projection
480p	852x480	Fox wide-screen; progressive-scan DVD players	

The premium for 1080p is still pretty steep, and unless you're getting a very large set, say 50 inches or more, I don't recommend basing a buying decision on whether or not the television has 1080p native resolution. Fortune Magazine says that in a "Side-by-side tests between two 46-inch LCD HDTVs, one with 1366x768 resolution and the other with 1080p resolution, using the same 1080i source material, was extremely difficult to see any difference. It becomes even more difficult at smaller screen sizes or farther seating distances--say, more than 1.5 times the diagonal measurement of the screen."

Common Questions To Buying A HDTV:

What features should I look for?

Features play a big part of your new HDTV purchase.

The key features I would look for are Resolution, HDMI inputs and expansion slots. Check the HDTV native resolution. You want a native resolution of at least 720p (1,280 x 720). Find out if it upscales content. Make sure the set has multiple HDMI and component inputs. Check for expansion slots so you can add more inputs later.

Do I need speakers?

Half the experience of watching HDTV is the sound that you will experience. HDTV has 5.1 surround sounds.

Yes! But the speakers are only as good as the receiver that delivers the sound.

What's 1080p and do I need it?

1080p is an over hype selling point.

1080p is mostly useful for Sizes over 50 inches. Keep in mind that you will pay about 600+ bucks for this feature and you only benefit from 1080p if you have a HD-DVD player or Blu-Ray player. However if you want to future proof your HDTV get 1080p.

Do I need HDMI Connections?

HDMI combines Digital Audio and Digital Video into one compact cable.

Yes, the more you have the better. Try to find a set that supports HDMI 1.3.