

DIGITAL TELEVISION IN THE UK

Starting in 2008 and ending in 2012, television in the UK will go completely digital. By turning off the analogue signal and converting the whole broadcasting network to digital will mean for the first time, everyone will be able to access a range of free digital channels through their aerial.

During this change it's essential that no one be left behind. This is why the Digital Switch Over Help Scheme has been created. Alongside the general assistance on offer from Digital UK, it will provide practical help to convert one TV set and support for approximately seven million people.

Those eligible will be the over 75s, those with significant disabilities (in receipt of attendance allowance or disability living allowance), those who are registered blind or partially sighted or those requiring assistance in the run-up to switch over in their region.

Research shows that take-up of digital TV among these groups is often well below the national average even though it offers many benefits, including extra channels, more programmes with subtitles and audio description of programmes for those who are blind or partially sighted. The help scheme will provide the necessary equipment to convert one TV set, help with installation and follow-up support if needed. The scheme will be free to those on income support, job seeker's allowance or pension credit and other eligible households will be asked to make a contribution of £40.

For more information about digital television and the help available, call the Digital UK help line: 08456 505050, or go to: (www.digitaluk.co.uk/helpscheme).