

EDTV vs HDTV: Which is better?

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With all the new digital formats out there, it is of little surprise that there exists considerable confusion about EDTV and HDTV. First of all, EDTV stands for Enhanced Definition Television, while HDTV stands for High Definition Television. TVs equipped with either of these formats are capable of receiving and potraying images in a digital fashion - both of which are superior in visual quality to the standard TV (SDTV).

Which is better, EDTV, or HDTV?

This is a question that comes up quite often, and it really has a simple answer: HDTV is better. However, EDTV wasn't really made to be a competitor for HDTV, but rather a transition technology that was better than standard, but not all the way High Definition, as HDTV is. And although Enhanced Definition Television (EDTV) doesn't quite offer the outstanding life-like quality attributed to High Definition Television (HDTV), its picture is actually closer to HDTV than regular television. HDTV has an impressive 720 progressive scanning (1280x720 pixels) or 1080 interlaced (1920x1090 pixels) lines. Thus, it easily meets the requirement of high definition broadcasts. EDTV, on the other hand, displays pictures at 480 progressive scan (640x480 pixels), which is the the highest resolution available on DVD. In fact, EDTV is considered optimized for the DVD format. However, this puts a severe limit on EDTV, which is simply not able to display higher resolution HD content.

Our recommendation is that, when purchasing a new TV, you consider getting one that is "HD-ready." It is likely that all broadcasts will transition over to true HDTV format within the next decade or so. Be advised, however, that you will need to purchase an external set-top box with an ATSC (Advanced Television Systems Committee) tuner in order to receive digital HDTV programming. Many cable and satellite providers, if they provide HDTV content, may offer this tuner for free. One final note, you may want to consider buying a LCD TV, as most are HDTV ready, and do the best job of displaying those beautiful HD images.

Bradley James is a senior editor at SciNet.cc, a website containing many helpful consumer electronics review articles. For more information on EDTV and HDTV TV technology, please visit our [EDTV vs HDTV TV webpage](#).