

Buying a new 4K HDR TV this holiday season? Read this first

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Look through early Black Friday ads at Best Buy and Target, and you'll find plenty of eye-catching TV deals.

A 50-inch Philips 4K UHD HDR TV for \$249.99 at Target? A 43-inch Toshiba 4K Fire TV with HDR for \$129.99 at Best Buy? It has plenty of flashy tech terms, most notably the popular TV buzzwords: 4K and HDR.

When buying a new TV in 2018, nearly any set above 40 inches will feature both technologies, even ones normally priced below \$300. But don't let the acronyms fool you. It is important to know what you're buying and where you might actually benefit from this technology.

Here are a few things to keep in mind.

HDR

Also known as [high dynamic range](#), HDR automatically adjusts the colors and contrasts of a picture, making scenes more realistic. For instance, with richer colors and a sharper picture, you'll notice HDR when watching really bright or really dark scenes in [movies](#), with those moments looking more realistic.

Often synonymous with 4K and Ultra HD, which are roughly four times the resolution of HD, or high definition, HDR often will be the more appreciated of the two technologies, especially for movie lovers and

gamers, who appreciate the added sharpness.

But in order to see HDR shine, you'll need the right shows to stream, movies to watch or game systems to play. Not all programming has it. More on this below.

When it comes to HDR, in 2018 there are two main options: industry standard HDR 10 (also listed as HDR) and Dolby Vision. Dolby Vision is the more premium of the two, offering more colors and sometimes better brightness than traditional HDR. Televisions that support Dolby Vision also support HDR 10.

Content

Just like HD, you won't see the true benefits of 4K and HDR without the proper content that capitalizes on the technology. Whether it's in 4K HDR Netflix or Amazon shows, Blu-ray movies or games played on a new Xbox One or PlayStation 4, without the proper video, it doesn't really matter.

The Xbox One S and regular PlayStation 4 can both output video games with HDR, while their more powerful siblings the One X and PS4 Pro can do so in 4K HDR.

Netflix requires that you subscribe to its \$13.99 "Premium" plan to stream in 4K and HDR. Content that is available in 4K HDR or Dolby Vision usually includes a logo by their description, assuming you pay for Premium. The company also recommends an internet connection of at least 25 Mbps for streaming.

Members of Amazon's Prime expedited shipping and entertainment service get HDR video as part of the \$119 yearly fee—you'd just need to watch on a device that supports HDR to take advantage of that. With

Amazon, look for the section in its menu that showcases UHD and HDR content.

A number of popular devices have 4K HDR, including Amazon's Fire TV Stick 4K and Fire TV Cube; Roku's Streaming Stick+, Premiere, Premiere+ and Ultra; Google's Chromecast; and Apple's Apple TV 4K.

One other thing to note: Some TVs will need you to go into the picture settings to enable HDR. This sometimes is referred to as HDMI UHD Color (on Samsung TVs), HDMI Ultra HD Deep Color (on LG TVs) or making sure the TV input is set to HDMI 2.0 (on Roku TVs). When in doubt, a quick search on how to enable HDR on your device and TV of choice should help to get things promptly set up.

Is it worth it?

If what you are mainly doing is watching traditional television through a cable box, antenna or streaming service, you likely won't see the difference as most of those broadcasts are in traditional HD, not even 4K.

Likewise, if you don't pay for Netflix's Premium plan or rent movies in 4K from a service such as Vudu. Things will stream in HD and that is fine. HD videos still look great and will continue to do so on your new TV.

But with more content being made available with 4K and HDR support all the time (all Netflix Originals are now shot in 4K), getting the right TV this Black Friday will not only get you a deal today but grant you the flexibility to take advantage of the technology in the future.

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