



Sound Bar Buying Guide Quick Reference Handout

If you've ever thought your TV isn't loud enough or you want to experience movies and sports like you would in the theatre or stadium, a sound bar is the fastest and easiest way to upgrade your TV's audio.

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What is a sound bar?

A sound bar is a thin, long all-in-one speaker system that plugs into power and connects via an HDMI, optical out cable, or USB. It sits under your TV on your entertainment stand or can be mounted on a bracket directly under a TV that's mounted on the wall.

Reasons to add a sound bar to your TV

People add sound bars because they are easy to install and will instantly improve audio quality for movies, sports, TV programs, gaming, and more.

1. TVs are thinner and have smaller speakers

As TVs have become thinner the size of TV speakers has become smaller. With thin-panel TVs, speakers are placed under the TV or on the back of the panel. That placement doesn't always produce loud audio.

2. Sound bars create an instant home theatre

Sound bars are to install, pair easily with most TV, and pair with your TV's remote control so you can control your TV and your sound bar together.

Questions to ask before choosing a sound bar

There are quite a few different kinds of sound bars. You can narrow down your selection by asking yourself these questions.

1. How many channels would you like your sound bar to have?



Sound bars contain two, three, or more speakers within the speaker cabinet. These speakers are called channels, and the channels inside of a sound bar produce treble, bass, and height. Some sound bars are also packaged with a subwoofer or extra wired or wireless speakers. The subwoofer will be noted by the addition of the number 1 after the number indicating how many channels the sound bar has. Any additional speakers included will be indicated by a third number.

For example, a 7.1.4 channel sound bar has 7 speakers in the sound bar, 1 external subwoofer, and 4 extra speakers you can place near your TV.

2. Do you want extra speakers to connect to your sound bar?

If you want a sound bar that functions like home theatre speakers would, you can choose a sound bar with extra speakers that connect via a wire or wirelessly to the sound bar and subwoofer. For example, a 5.1.2 channel sound bar has 5 speakers in the speaker cabinet, 1 subwoofer, and 2 height speakers you can place away from your TV.

3. Do you want a passive vs active sound bar?

One of the choices when selecting a sound bar is whether you'd like a passive soundbar or an active sound bar. A passive sound bar does not have a built-in amplifier, and if you choose a passive model you'll need to own a receiver or purchase a receiver or amplifier to use it. An active sound bar has a built-in amplifier, so it's a stand-alone speaker system that doesn't require any other components to work.

4. Where will you place your sound bar?

There are two main sound bar styles – bar sound bars and pedestal sound bars. A bar sound bar is the most common style. It's long, thin, and sits directly under your TV or can be mounted on the wall below a wall-mounted TV

A pedestal-style sound bar is a pedestal your TV sits directly on top of. It's usually square in shape

Both types can have similar sound quality, so you may choose one or the other based on what style you prefer.

Technology and features you'll find on sound bars

Sound bars have a lot of unique features and technology. Here are a few features



you'll want to look for when choosing the best sound bar for your TV.

1. Dolby Atmos and DTS :X sound bars

Some sound bars have support for Dolby Atmos and DTS:X. Dolby Atmos and DTS:X are both types of object-based surround sound technology. The main difference between the two is that Dolby Atmos requires a sound bar to use height channels while DTS:X does not.

2. Virtual surround sound technology

A sound bar with virtual surround sound, also known as beam technology, can make you feel as though you are surrounded by audio. A sound bar with this technology amplifies audio so it feels as though it's beside you and above you.

3. Room tuning technology

A sound bar with room tuning technology can calibrate your audio specifically for the room it's placed in. This type of sound bar will walk you through a setup process to determine the acoustics in your room.

4. Sound bar modes

Some sound bars offer different sound mode like 'surround sound,' 'adaptive,' 'sports' or 'game mode.'

5. Bluetooth and Wi-Fi on sound bars

Many models of sound bar have integrated Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, or Google Cast connections so you can stream audio from your phone or tablet.

6. Night sound

Some sound bars offer a mode called Night sound. This mode will let you keep your volume low but enhances dialogue so you can hear clearly without waking anyone up due to loud sound effects or loud dialogue.

7. Remote control

Most types of sound bar include a remote control. Some also let you pair your sound bar with your TV's remote control or will pair easily with a universal remote.

8. Voice control

Some sound bars are compatible with your favourite voice assistant. You can connect it to Google Assistant or Alexa and control it with voice commands.