

The Best Video Streaming Services for 2020

Cord cutters have more choices than just Netflix and Hulu. We break down the best video streaming services for your money, whether you're looking to completely replace cable or watch the latest original content on-demand.

Ben Moore



The Best Alternatives to Cable: Video Streaming Services

Streaming services started as an add-on to DVD and digital download offerings with a trickle of second-run movies and TV shows. They were supplements to the programs you watched on their first (and second) runs on cable TV. But speedier internet connections and an abundance of [video streaming devices](#) have accelerated the decline of traditional cable. More and more viewers are [cutting the cord](#) entirely in favor of dedicated streaming alternatives.

Entertainment and tech giants are not blind to the threat, however, and the media landscape is rapidly changing. Consolidation and curation (that is, owning the most media properties and serving the best content) seem to be the overarching goals of the players involved.

The Best Cyber Monday Video Streaming Deals This Week*

- [Disney+ with Hulu and ESPN+](#) streaming bundle for **\$12.99 per month** (*List Price \$17.97 per month; Save \$4.98*)
- [CBS All Access](#): Free 7-day trial
- [SlingTV](#): \$35 for your first month
- [Amazon Prime Video](#): 30-day free trial of ad-free streaming
- [Philo](#): 7-day free trial of live, on-demand TV
- [Hulu](#): \$5.99 for TV streaming with ads

**Deals are selected by our partner, [TechBargains](#)*

New Channels and Consolidation

For instance, AT&T's (which operates live TV service AT&T TV Now) purchase of WarnerMedia and all of its subsidiaries (including CNN, Crunchyroll, The CW (part-owner), DC Comics, and HBO) has led to the [HBO Max](#) streaming service, which is set to launch in 2020 for \$14.99 per month. CBS and Viacom recently announced a merger (again), but it's not yet clear how ViacomCBS's inevitable combined streaming service will take shape. Viacom brings the free, ad-supported Pluto TV service, Paramount Pictures, and Viacom Media Network (Comedy Central, BET, MTV, and Nick) to the deal. Ownership of The CW will be split between ViacomCBS and AT&T. NBC will also launch its own streaming service in 2020, called [Peacock](#), which will include both [ad-supported and live TV plans](#).

The increasing competitive streaming market is not without consequences. On one hand, consumers who may have originally been attracted to the flexibility that streaming services offer over cable, now must pay more to get everything they want. Existing streaming services are also struggling to adjust to rising costs of broadcast rights. For instance, the price of Hulu's Live TV plan has increased considerably. Sling TV has already lost Fox content as a

result of failed contract negotiations, AT&T has hiked its prices considerably, and [Sony has announced that it is shutting down PlayStation Vue](#) entirely effective Jan. 30, 2020, due in part to the cost of content.

The Catalog Is Everything

As mentioned, a video streaming service's success largely depends on what its library offers. That's why so many services are investing heavily in developing high-quality original content. Consider, for example, Netflix's *Stranger Things*, Amazon's *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, and Hulu's *The Handmaid's Tale*, all of which are Emmy-winning shows.

Although these services compete more on their original offerings than their resold broadcast content and post-theater-run movies, several platforms have also [saved popular shows from the grave](#). Without these hooks, standalone video streaming services would likely be unable to compete with existing entertainment behemoths.

Apart from on-demand video streaming services, complete cable-replacement services with live broadcasts are becoming increasingly viable and attractive options. Some of the [best live TV services](#), for example, such as fuboTV, Hulu, Sling TV, and YouTube TV, offer robust channel collections with excellent DVR functionality. Even AT&T TV Now is more practical now, as it no longer requires specific

hardware to use.

Stream Sports Online

Sports fans may worry that they won't be able to watch live sports when they ditch cable. However, that's simply not the case. Many of the video streaming options we reviewed are also among [the best sports streaming services](#). Regardless of whether you want to watch regional, national, or international sports coverage, there is a service that meets your needs. Although blackouts and cancellations may still apply, these streaming options offer distinct advantages over cable, including full-featured apps on many platforms and simultaneous streaming capabilities. Football fans should also check out our roundup of the [best NFL streaming services](#).

Other Video Streaming Options

Smaller and sometimes cheaper options also exist with a more limited focus. For example, Philo primarily offers entertainment content. Crackle, Locast, Mubi, and various [anime-streaming sites](#) attract certain audiences as well. We also have a roundup of [video streaming services for movie fans](#) you should check out.

Although it is not what typically comes to mind, [Vimeo](#) also offers a small selection of indie films and video projects via

its On Demand section. [Plex](#) is yet another option for streaming your local media content as well as a platform for free over-the-air cable (provided you have the right hardware). You could even stream over-the-air (OTA) channels via an antenna. [Kodi](#) offers similar functionality. If you want to watch people play games, [Twitch](#) is your best bet.

You should use a [virtual private network \(VPN\)](#) for all your internet-related tasks, but VPNs are particularly useful for streaming services since they can sometimes grant access to region-locked content. For example, if you connect to a VPN server in the UK from a device in the US, you may be able to watch free content from BBC TV. That said, streaming services are cracking down on VPN usage, so we recommend signing up for a trial to test your network setup before fully committing to a service. Make sure to check out our guide on how to [unblock Netflix with a VPN](#) as a starting point.

If you want to cut the cord, here's our rundown of what you can expect from the most popular services. You shouldn't fall into the trap of paying more for video streaming services than you did for cable, so make sure to only sign up for those that offer the content you actually want to watch. If we missed your favorite option, make sure to let us know in the comments.

Best Video Streaming Services Featured in This Roundup:

Netflix

\$8.99 per month

[Netflix](#) is the standard-bearer of streaming. It hosts an impressive selection of content at all times, with [new titles exchanged for older ones](#) monthly. And then there's Netflix constantly growing library of premier [original programming](#), which still outclasses every other streaming service.

Netflix's impressive catalog includes shows such as *Altered Carbon*, *Black Mirror*, *Bojack Horseman*, *Dead to Me*, *Mindhunters*, *Orange is the New Black*, *Russian Doll*, *Stranger Things*, *The Crown*, *The OA*, *The Umbrella Academy*, and *Unbelievable*. Unfortunately, Netflix is losing some top titles such as *Friends* (to NBC's Peacock) and *The Office* (to HBO Max) in the near future.

Apart from its original movies, such as *El Camino: A Breaking Bad Movie* and *The Irishman*, [Netflix also currently offers the most high-quality movies](#) of any streaming service, eclipsing competitors such as Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, and HBO.

Netflix recently raised the price of each of its subscription plans. For \$8.99 per month (up from \$7.99), you can stream unlimited standard-definition content on a single device. The Standard tier, which now costs \$12.99 per month (up from \$10.99), unlocks HD content and supports streaming on two devices simultaneously. The top-of-the-line Premium plan costs \$15.99 per month (up from \$13.99). This tier gives you four concurrent streams and access to 4K content where available. You can download Netflix on a variety of devices, from your PC and tablet to the Chromecast and game consoles.



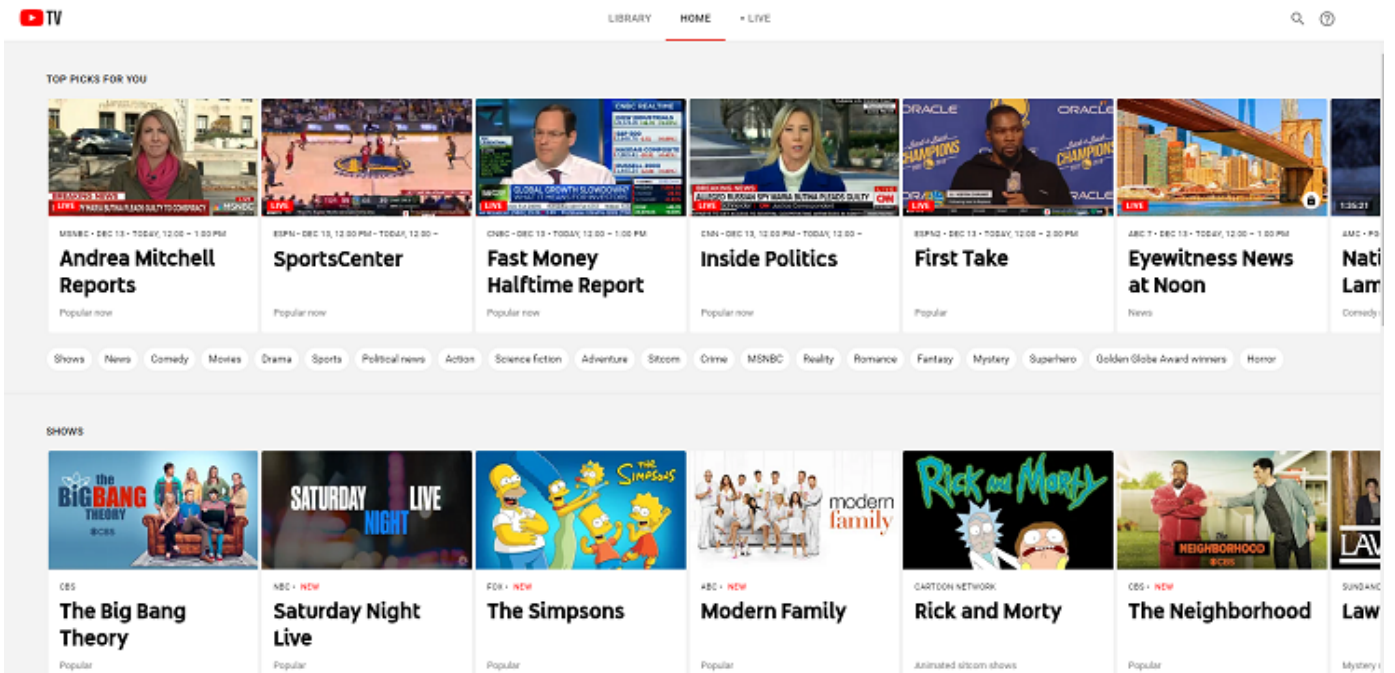
Alongside Amazon Prime Video, Apple TV+, and Disney+, Netflix is one of the few streaming services that supports

both offline downloads and 4K streaming. And yes, Netflix's DVD mailing service still exists if you want newer releases, though streaming is clearly its primary business.

YouTube TV

\$49.99 per month

[YouTube TV](#) offers an excellent selection of live sports and news channels, as well as many popular entertainment options. A few of the top networks available include ABC, AMC, CBS, CNN, ESPN, Fox, FX, and NBC. It recently added content from the Discovery network too, with channels such as Animal Planet, Food Network, HGTV, and Travel Channel. YouTube TV is also the first major live TV service to add local PBS channels to its lineup. If YouTube TV's library of over 70 channels still doesn't meet your needs, you can also add other packages, such as NBA League Pass, Showtime, and Starz to your subscription.



With YouTube TV, you get unlimited cloud DVR storage. The service will keep your recordings for nine months and you can stream your content from anywhere in the US. One YouTube TV membership supports up to six accounts, so you can share with family or roommates, though note that you can only stream from three accounts simultaneously.

YouTube TV's apps look and work great across a variety of platforms. Recently, [YouTube TV announced support for most Amazon Fire TV devices](#), too. Its capable search tools and solid streaming performance in our testing establish it as one of the best cable replacement services for general audiences. Make sure that the service is available in your location before you consider it as an option.

Hulu

\$5.99 per month; \$54.99 for Hulu + Live TV

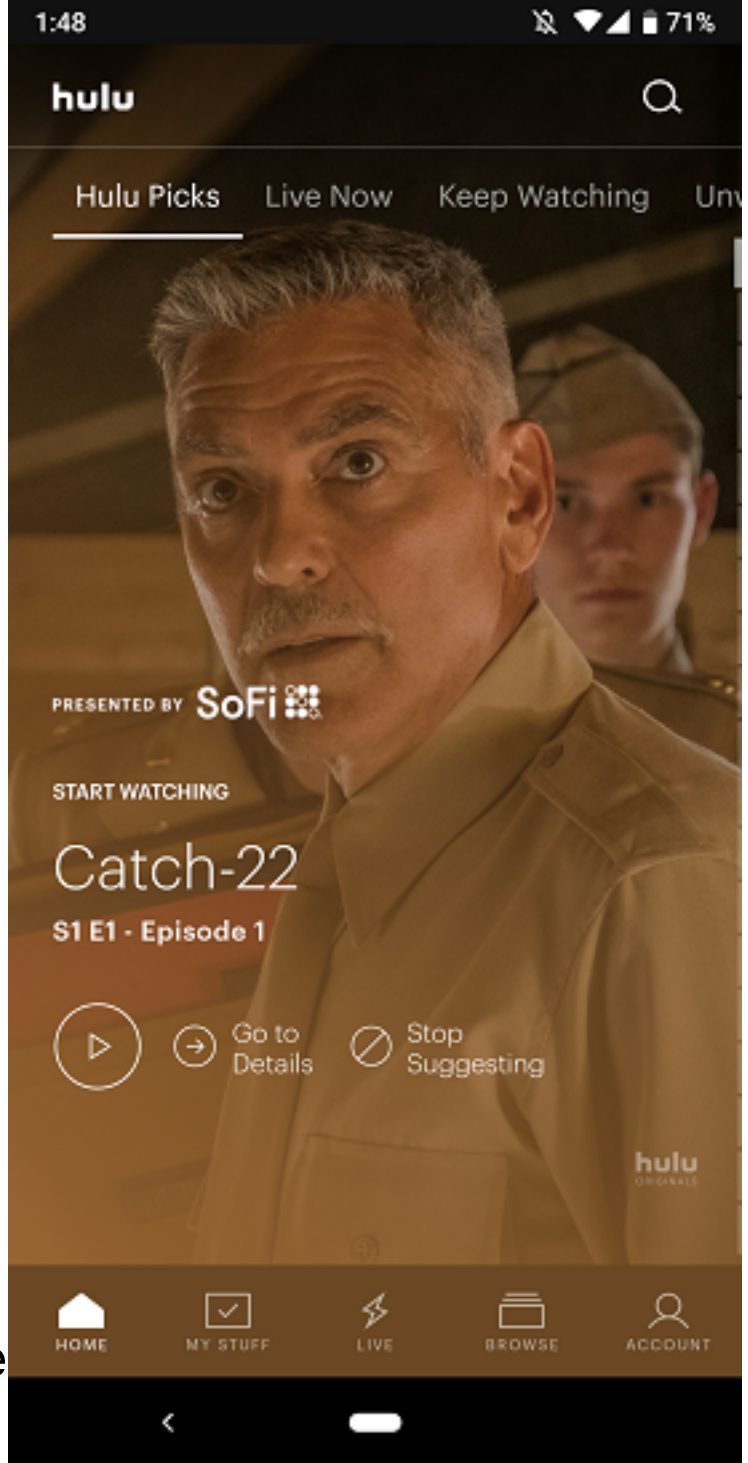
[Hulu](#) impresses as one of the best all-in-one options for cord cutters, given its diverse set of streaming options. In addition to a strong library of classic shows, and a good selection of movies, Hulu offers a robust live TV option (more than 60 channels of news, sports, and entertainment programming). Still, Hulu trails some top competitors, given its lackluster original content and limited selection of 4K content.

Hulu's basic on-demand streaming plan only costs \$5.99 per month, but the ad-free version will run you \$11.99 per month. The Hulu + Live TV plan costs \$54.99 per month and combines Hulu's live TV service with the ad-supported streaming plan. You can add Enhanced Cloud DVR (increases the available DVR storage to 200 hours from 50) or the Unlimited Screens package (allows an unlimited number of concurrent device streams in your home and up to three outside of it) to your plan for \$14.99 per month each or \$19.99 for both. If you want even more options, you can add HBO or Showtime for \$14.99 and \$8.99 per month, respectively. Hulu supports [an impressive range of gadgets](#) and you stream on up to two devices simultaneously. Note, however, that you cannot currently stream Live TV on the PlayStation 3 or 4. Hulu's support for 4K content is limited;

only some of its originals can be streamed at that resolution and only on the Apple TV (5th gen or later) and Chromecast Ultra.

Hulu's latest redesign brings the service into the modern age. Interfaces are now consistent across platforms and feature elegant navigation menus and a media-first aesthetic. None of the apps we tried suffered from performance issues. Recently, Hulu added the ability for premium subscribers to download content for offline viewing. Although it

launched on iOS, this feature is now also rolling out to Android users. Eligible subscribers can download up to 25 titles across five devices; downloads are available for up to 30 days or two days after you begin playback. Not all Hulu shows support this feature, but Hulu's originals are among those that do.



Note that Disney controls Hulu, so we can't predict Hulu's long-term future, especially with the successful Disney+ launch. Maybe Disney will eventually absorb Hulu's on-demand library and maintain the existing cable-replacement service. Or things could stay as they are.

Amazon Prime Video

\$8.99 per month

Amazon offers access to its video content in one of two ways: a standalone Amazon Video subscription or an Amazon Prime subscription. An Amazon Video subscription costs \$8.99 per month and only includes access to Amazon's streaming video library. An Amazon Prime account, which includes Prime Video content and a ton of other shipping and shopping perks, costs \$12.99 per month (or \$119 per year). Amazon refers to its video streaming service as [Amazon Prime Video](#) in most of its support documentation.

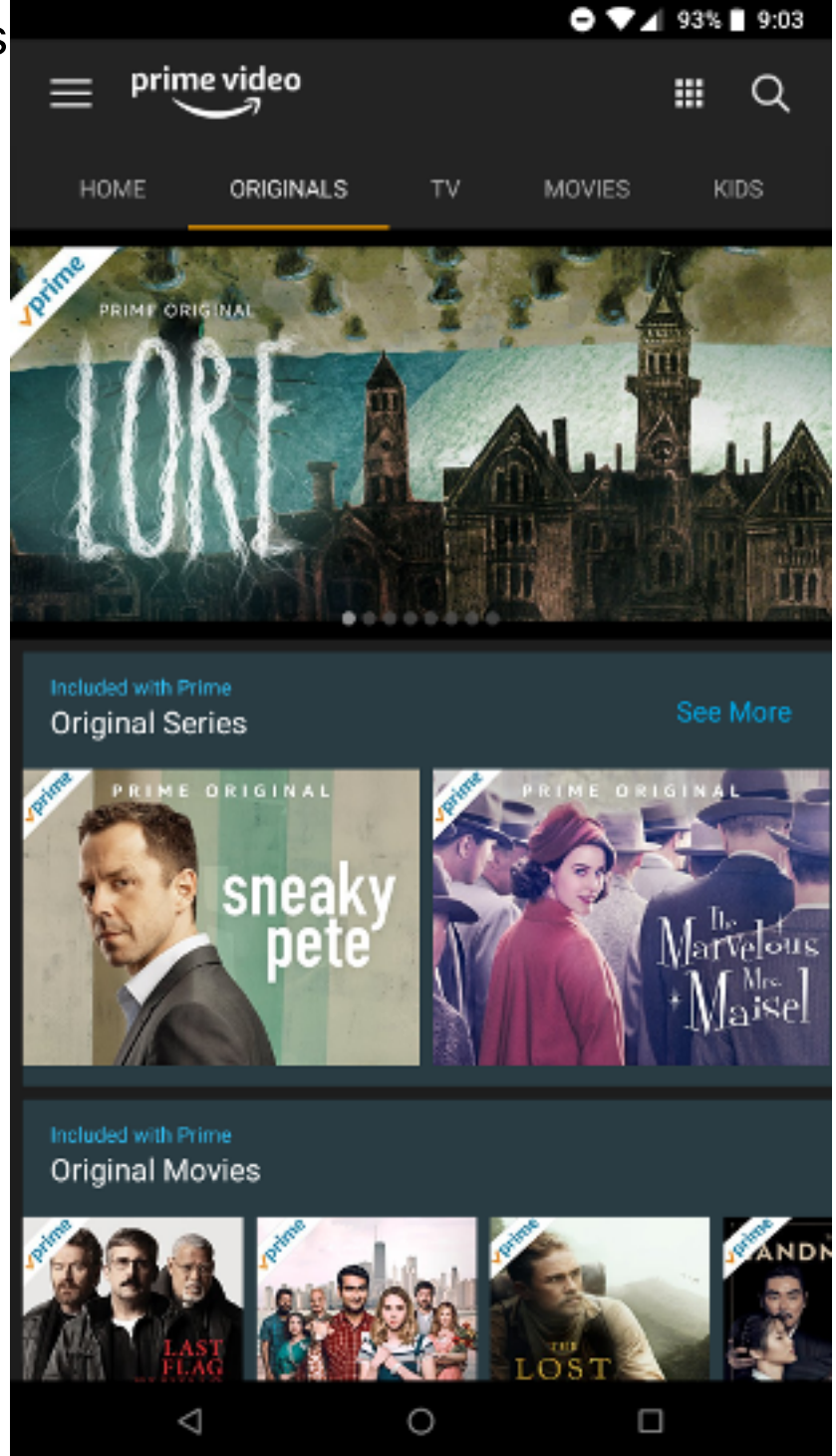
In recent years, Amazon has focused on curating [high-quality original shows](#), such as *Bosch*, *Catastrophe*, *Fleabag*, *The Man in the High Castle*, *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, *One Mississippi*, *Patriot*, *Red Oaks*, *The Boys*, *The Grand Tour*, and *Undone*. Many of these shows are excellent

and on par with Netflix's offerings, though the latter has a much deeper content library. Prime Video also hosts top shows from other networks, including HBO, at no additional cost, though you can add a Prime Channel subscription to your account for full access to the libraries of HBO, Starz, Showtime, CBS All Access, and Cinemax.

Amazon's video library also includes tons of popular movies

available for streaming at no additional cost. Users have the option to purchase or rent movies and TV shows as well, similar to Apple's iTunes, Google's Play Movies and TV Shows, and Microsoft Store's Movies and TV section.

Prime Video is notable in that it supports 4K and HDR streaming as well as downloads for offline viewing.



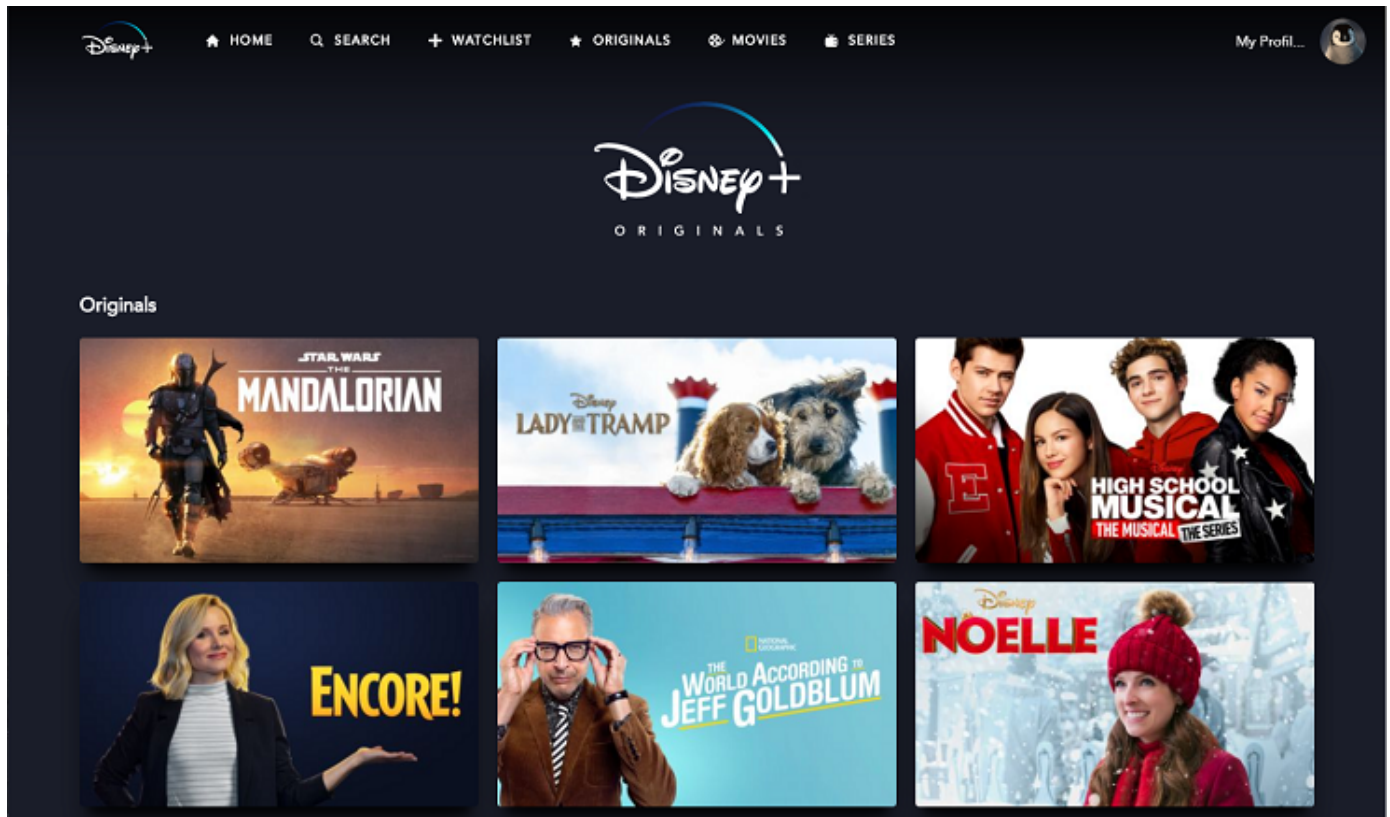
Amazon's video service works on a web browser, as well as Android and iOS devices, Fire devices (TV, TV Cube, TV Stick, phones, and tablets), game consoles (PlayStation, Xbox, and Wii), Smart TVs, and set-top boxes (Apple TV 4K, Roku, Google TV, TiVo, and Nvidia Shield), though it does not natively support Chromecast devices. With Prime Video, you can stream up to three titles at the same time from the same account, but it limits you to streaming the same title to two devices simultaneously.

Disney+

\$6.99 per month

[Disney+](#) packages a ton of Disney's media properties, including from Pixar, Marvel, Star Wars, and National Geographic, into a full-featured streaming service. In addition to classic Disney content, you can also watch originals such as *Encore!*, *High School Musical: The Musical: The Series*, *Marvel's Hero Project*, *The Mandalorian*, and *The World According to Jeff Goldblum*. Upcoming original productions include *Loki* (and several other Marvel titles), *Monsters at Work*, and *Timmy Failure*. Note that some entries from Disney franchises as well as most content it acquired from its 21st Century Fox takeover are currently missing from the service, likely due to existing licensing

agreements. However, expect Disney+'s library to grow over time as it reclaims titles.



Disney+'s monthly price is reasonable relative to the rewatch value of its content, but you can save money by opting for an annual plan. Disney also offers a \$12.99-per-month plan that bundles Disney+, ESPN+, and Hulu's ad-supported tier (it owns ESPN and effectively maintains full operational control of Hulu). Select Verizon customers can [get a free year of Disney+](#) as well.

Early technical issues defined out first impressions of Disney+, but we haven't encountered any since launch day. The sleek and well-organized mobile and web apps performed fine in our follow-up testing and we streamed shows and movies without problems. Disney+ supports top

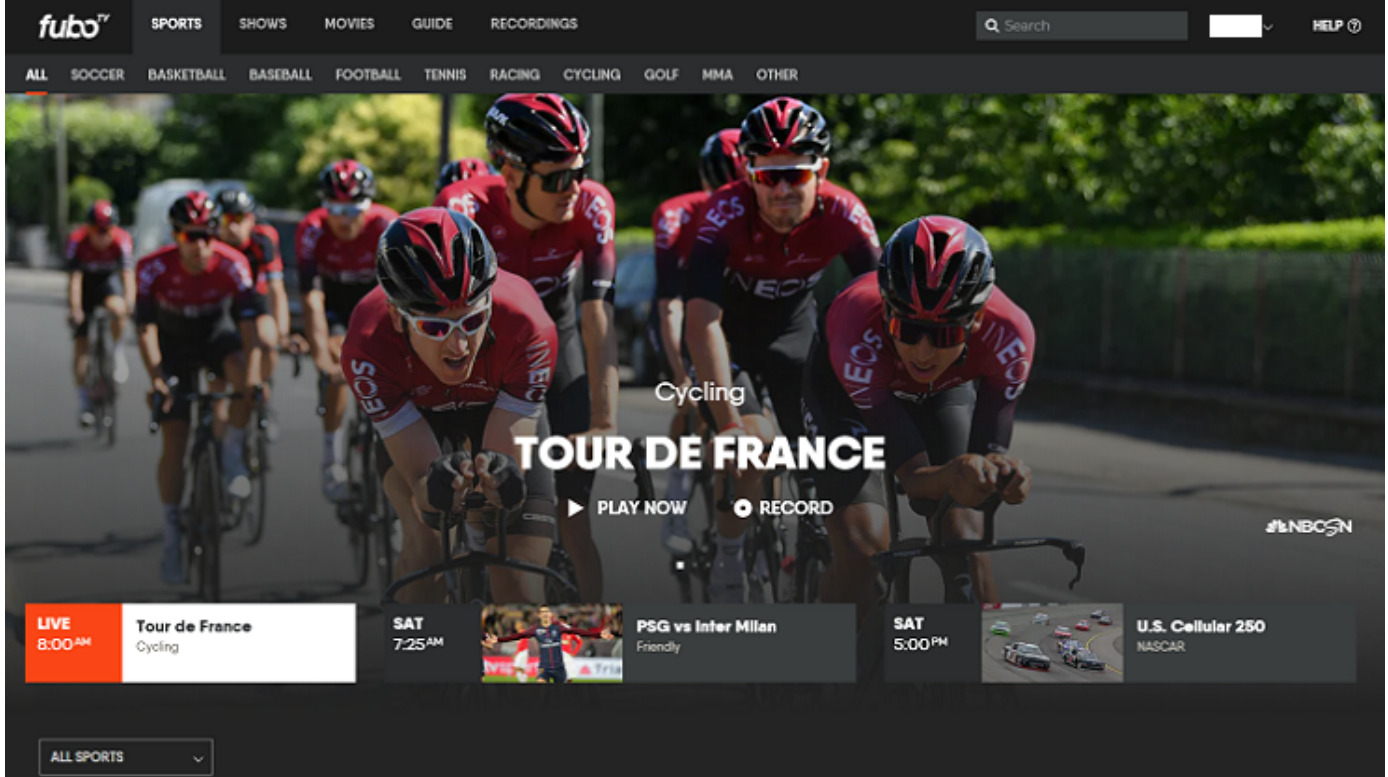
capabilities such as 4K streaming, offline downloads (on mobile), plus it doesn't show any ads. The service's support for four simultaneous streams and seven customizable profiles features makes it a compelling option for families, though we wish its parental control options allowed for more flexibility.

Disney+ is available on the web; Android and iOS devices; media streaming platforms such as the Apple TV, Chromecast, Fire TV, and Roku; as well as gaming consoles such as Xbox One and PlayStation 4.

fuboTV

\$54.99 per month

[FuboTV](#) is a great option for any cord-cutting sports fans. This "sports-first, but not sports-only" service offers extensive live sports and entertainment content for all your devices. Whether you want to watch NFL games on Sunday, catch up on an MLB game that aired during the day, or even stream a movie on-demand, fuboTV has you covered.



Its base subscription plan, called fubo Standard, costs \$54.99 per and grants you access to over 90 channels, with the exact number depending on your location. For the national sports events, there's NBC, CBS, FOX, NFL Network and NBA.TV. For international sports, you get channels from the beIN network and Univision. If you're ever not in the mood for sports, fuboTV offers a wide variety of entertainment channels such as AMC, The Food Network, FX, National Geographic, SYFY, and USA, to name just a few. After adding Viacom channels a few months back to the Standard plan, fubo now bundles Discovery channels, such as Animal Planet, Discovery Channel, and TLC, too. You not only get to watch live events and programs from the included channels, but also a ton of on-demand shows and movies.

You can supplement the base fubo Standard plan with add-ons, including the Sports Plus (\$8.99 per month) and Adventure Plus (\$4.99 per month) options. fubo Extra, which offers an additional 35 channels of content, adds \$4.99 more to your monthly bill.

To top it all off, fuboTV offers excellent DVR capabilities and Lookback, a feature that lets you watch anything you may have missed up to 72 hours after it first aired. fuboTV also recently introduced Startover, which enables viewers to watch currently airing events from the beginning no matter when they tune in. Enjoy solid streaming performance via its web interface or dedicated apps for Android, iOS, Apple TV, Fire TV, Chromecast, and Roku devices.

PlayStation Vue

\$49.99 per month

Editors' Note: Sony has announced that it is shutting down PlayStation Vue effective Jan. 30, 2020. You can still sign up for and use the service until then, but you should start looking for other options now.

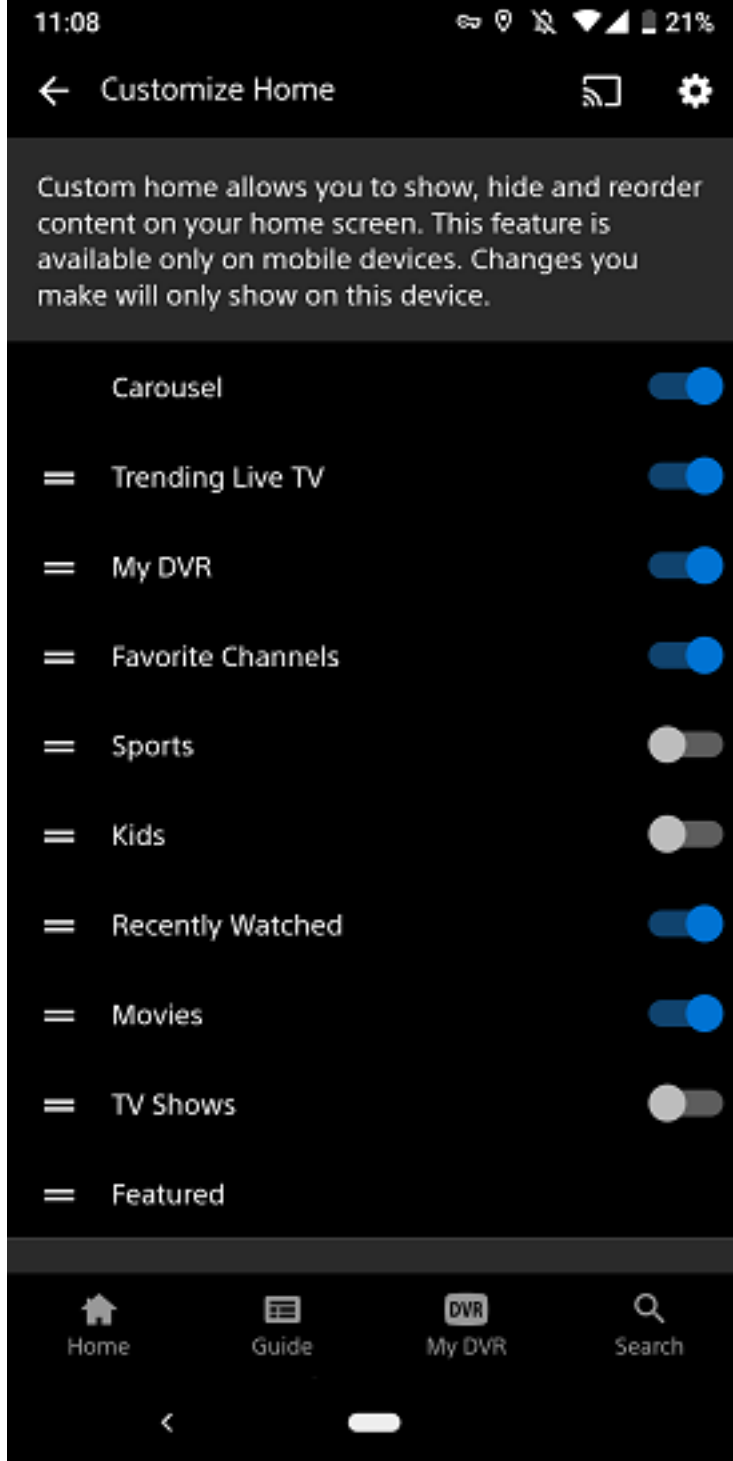
Sony's [PlayStation Vue](#) live-streaming service is an excellent option for anyone who wants to get rid of their cable bill, not

just PlayStation owners. Recently, Sony raised the price of PlayStation Vue's plans by \$5 across the board, a change that will affect both new and existing subscribers. The basic Core plan, which now starts at \$49.99 per month, offers a good range of news and entertainment channels, but it is a little light on sports coverage. More expensive packages expand on this coverage and are worth a look for fans of movies, sports, and other premium content providers, such as HBO and Showtime. You can augment any tier with add-ons, such as the Sports Pack or Español Pack. PlayStation Plus subscribers get discounts on some of these packages.

PlayStation Vue's DVR functionality is top-notch. For channels that allow recording, users can record an unlimited number of episodes of up to 500 shows for up to 28 days. Since the service supports up to five simultaneous streams at once, we also like that you can set up profiles for each user. This helps PlayStation Vue better tune its recommendations. We do wish it offered parental control options though.

In addition to the PlayStation 3 and 4, you can use the service on a variety of devices, such as your web browser, Apple TV, Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Roku, Chromecast, and iOS or Android devices—provided you have internet access. PS Vue's mobile apps are notable in that they are highly customizable. PlayStation Vue's streaming

performance was excellent across all the platforms we tested.

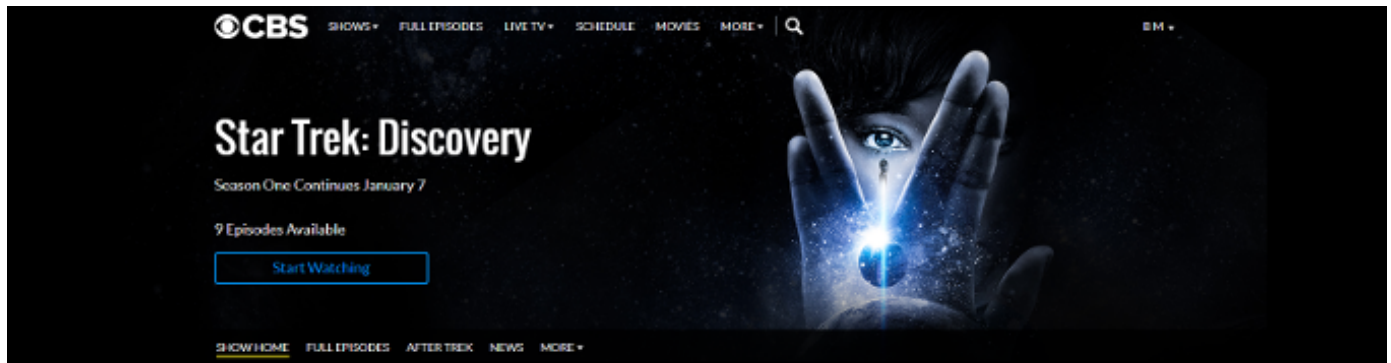


CBS All Access

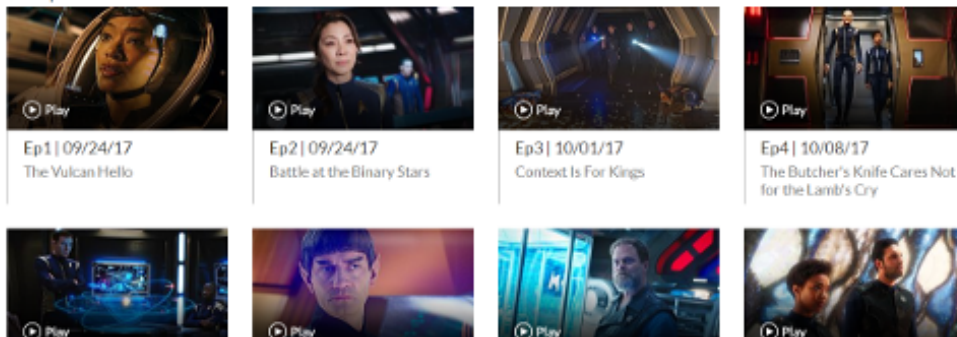
\$5.99 per month

While it might seem limiting to pay for a video streaming service from a single broadcast TV channel, CBS All Access

does offer an expansive lineup of TV shows on-demand. Furthermore, [CBS All Access](#) is the only place you can watch the service's original content as it airs, including *The Good Fight*, *Star Trek: Discovery*, and *The Twilight Zone* reboot.



Full Episodes



CBS All Access's \$5.99 tier includes commercials, but you can ditch the ads with the Commercial Free plan for \$9.99 per month (with the exception of live TV and select shows). Either plan lets you enjoy CBS's library of on-demand episodes, stay up to date with shows currently on the air, or catch up with old favorites such as *Cheers*, *Twin Peaks*, and several *Star Trek* series of years past. New episodes of current broadcast shows are often available the next day, too.

The service notably supports live TV streams of local CBS

channels in over 200 markets, so you can stay up to date with the news. Sports fans can also watch live NFL games in their local market, the NCAA March Madness tournament, and select PGA Tour events.

CBS All Access offers apps for your smartphone (iOS and Android), streaming devices (Android TV, Amazon Fire TV, Apple TV, Chromecast, and Roku), and game consoles (PS4 and Xbox One). It also allows you to download shows for offline viewing on mobile devices, but only if you subscribe to the Commercial Free tier.

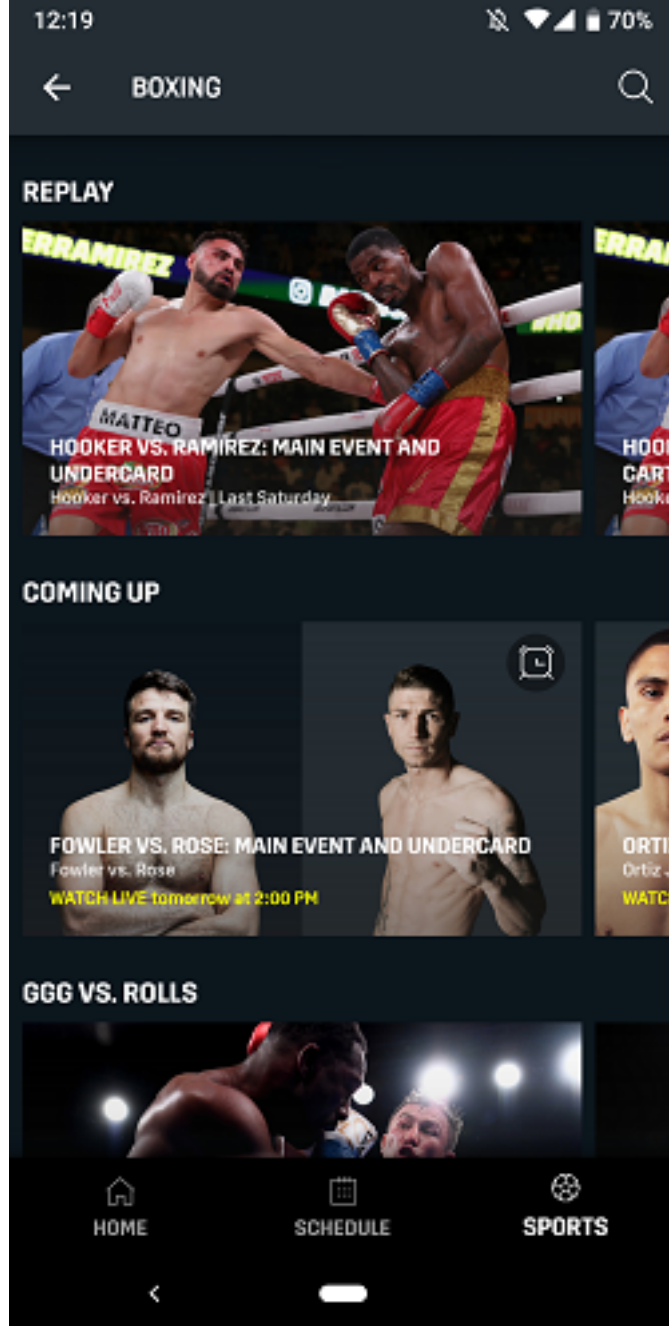
Dazn

\$19.99 per month

[Dazn](#) is the best video streaming service for fans of boxing and MMA. It's a relatively good value too, since subscribers do not need to spend on pay-per-view (PPV) fees to watch exclusive fights. With Dazn, you get boxing matches from Golden Boy Promotions, Matchroom Boxing, GGG Promotions, and World Boxing Super Series. MMA content is available from Bellator, Combate Americas, and KSW. Note that Top Rank Boxing and UFC fights are not part of Dazn's regular offerings.

Rounding out the list of sports on Dazn are cricket, darts, fishing, gymnastics, and J1 (Japan's top soccer division) soccer. Dazn also offers some original shows, such as the live, daily MLB commentary show, *Change Up*, and the weekly, fighter-focused show, *Sweet Scientists: Ak & Barak*.

All of the fights Dazn streams are available on-demand as soon as they air. Dazn lets subscribers stream from two devices at the same time, which is about average for the category. Although live streams are limited to 720p, the frame rate is a smooth 60 FPS.

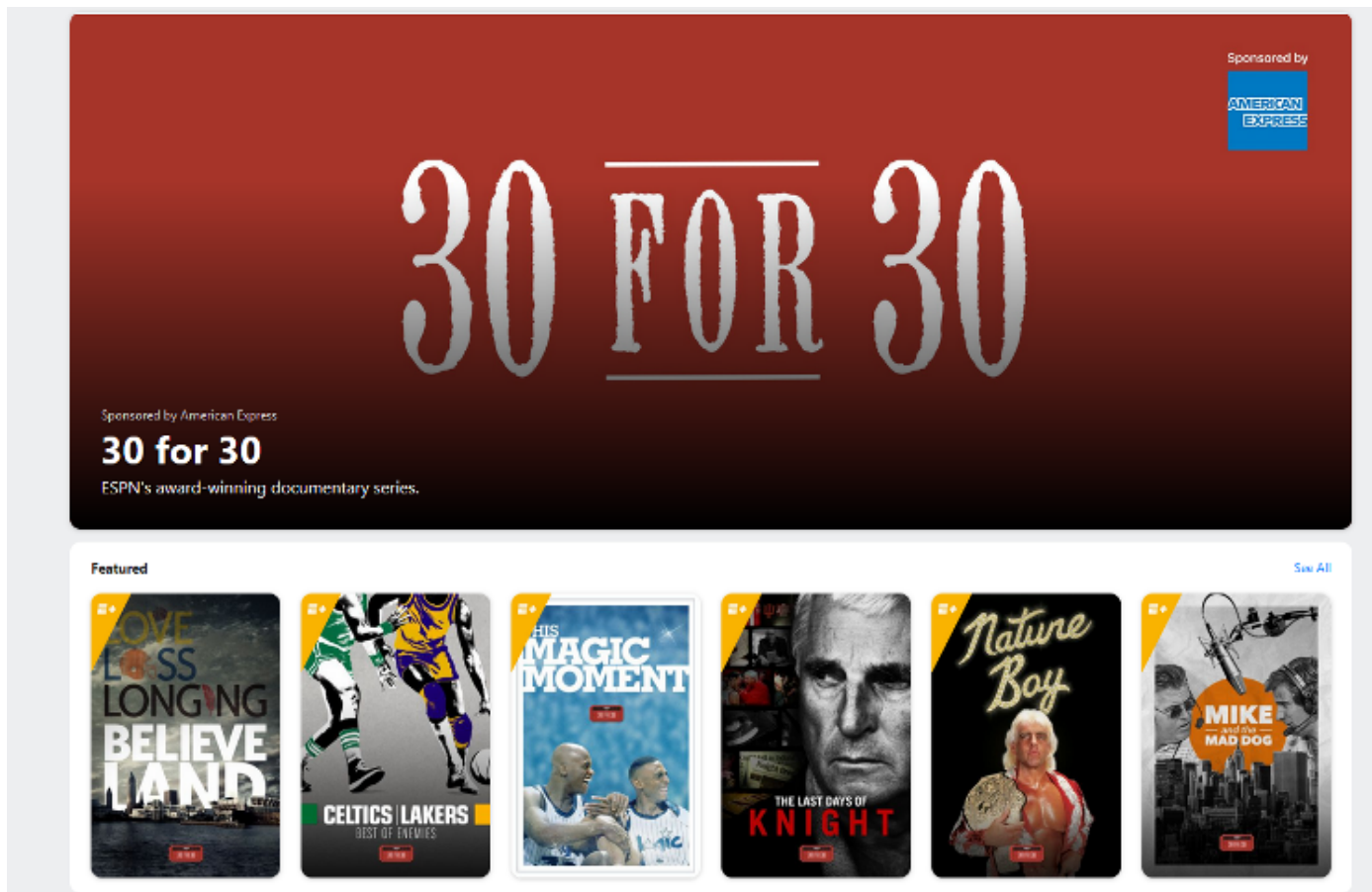


ESPN+

\$4.99 per month

[ESPN+](#) offers a respectable lineup of live and on-demand

sports programming for only \$4.99 per month (or \$49.99 per year). It's not a replacement for ESPN's regular channels, but it might be just enough for cord-cutting sports fans. With the service, you can watch a selection of live sports events on a daily basis, including many from the MLB, NHL, MLS, PGA Tour, and various college sports leagues. Unfortunately, neither ESPN's *Monday Night Football* nor its live NBA coverage are part of this subscription.



You can also dive into ESPN's on-demand archive of premier shows such as *30 for 30*, *E:60*, and *SC Featured*. It doesn't, however, include flagship ESPN shows, such as *Around the Horn*, *First Take*, *NFL Live*, *Outside the Lines*,

Pardon the Interruption, SportsCenter, and SportsNation.

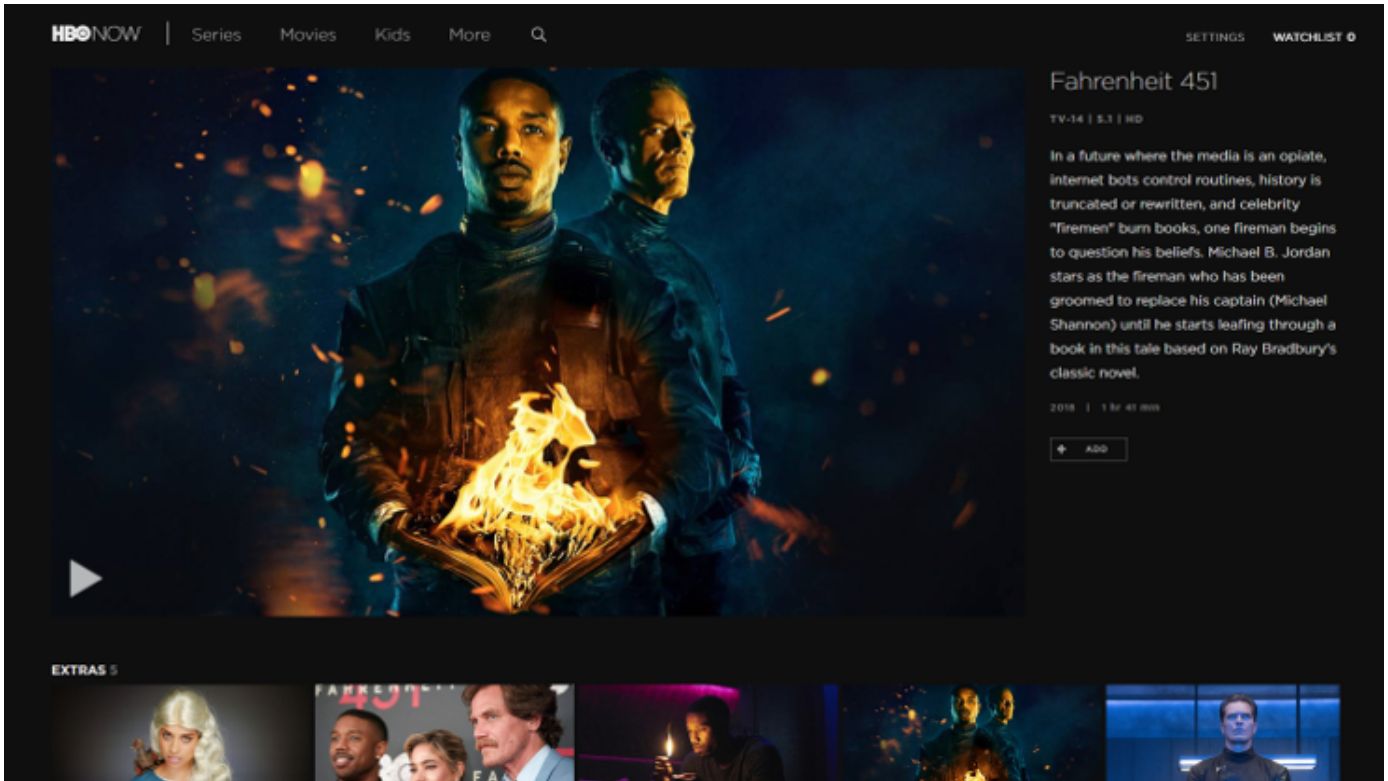
ESPN+ is available via the web or via the ESPN app on Android and iOS. App performance is solid, and you won't have any trouble streaming from your mobile devices. Chromecast, FireTV, tvOS, and Roku users can also join in on the fun and take advantage of ESPN+'s generous support for up to five concurrent streams.

HBO Now

\$14.99 per month

[HBO Now](#) delivers an impressive catalog of new on-air original content, including *Westworld* and *Chernobyl*, in addition to beloved older series such as *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, *Deadwood*, *Girls*, *Game of Thrones*, *The Sopranos*, *Sex and the City*, *Six Feet Under*, and *The Wire*. On top of that, HBO's on-demand streaming service includes a collection of popular movies (including the recent *Deadwood: The Movie*) across a wide range of genres including action, comedy, drama, family, horror/sci-fi, Latino, romance, and suspense. That said, HBO Now works best in conjunction with another streaming service that offers a live TV component or a larger and more diverse content library. In fact, many other streaming services offer

HBO Now as an add-on, which helps streamline the billing and account management process.



In testing, all of HBO Now's apps look modern and streaming performance is excellent across the board. In addition to the web, HBO Now is available on Android, Chromecast, Apple TV, iOS, PS4, Roku, and the Xbox One, just to name a few. Still, HBO's service costs more than many competitors without being as technically advanced. For example, HBO Now does not feature any 4K or HDR content, nor does it let subscribers watch shows offline. These omissions are not deal breakers, though, and HBO Now could still be a valuable addition to your streaming lineup based on the quality of its content alone.

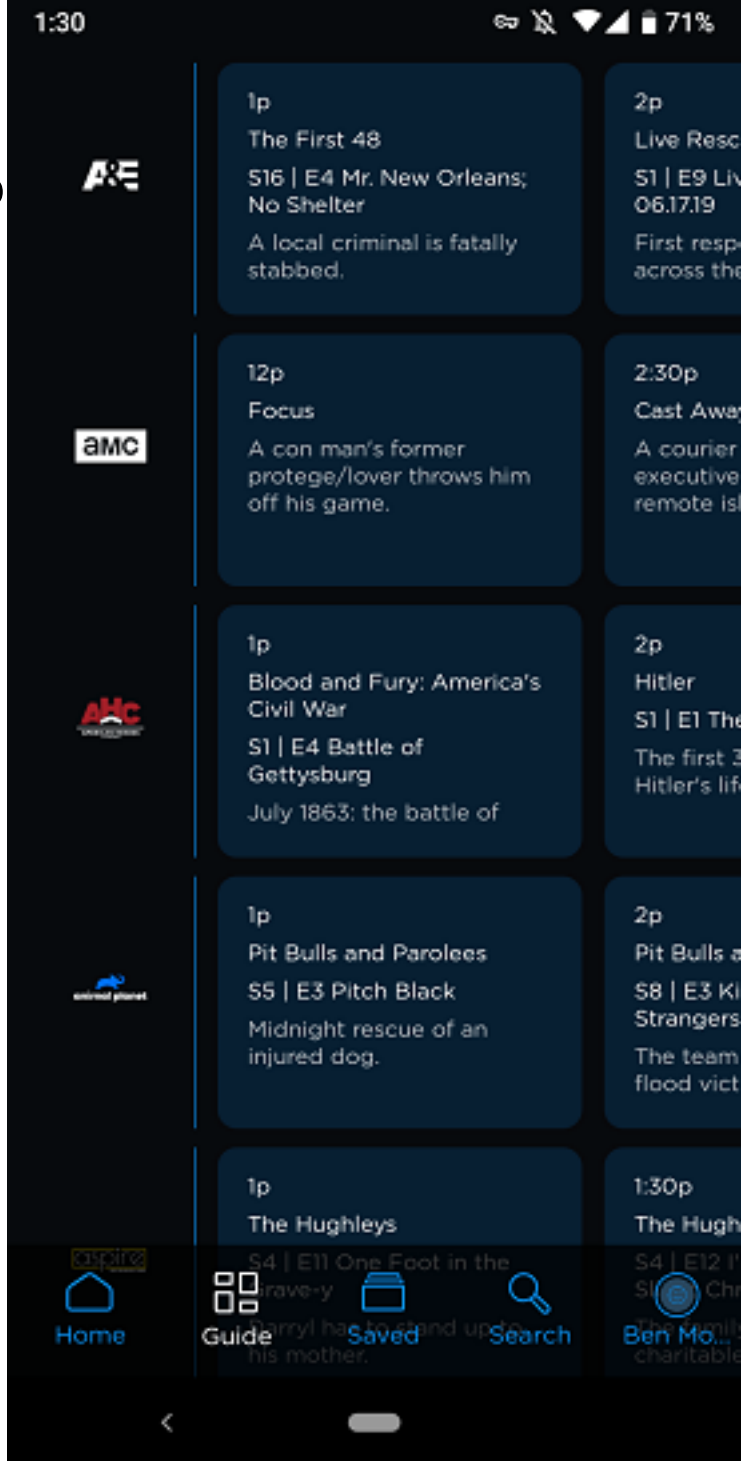
Philo

\$20 per month

[Philo](#) is an affordable video streaming service that offers a good mix of live and on-demand content. For just \$20 per month, you get 58 channels, including AMC, Animal Planet, BBC America, BET, Cooking Chanel, Comedy Central, Discovery Channel, Food Network, HGTV, SCI, and the Travel Channel. Philo focuses on entertainment and lifestyle content, so consumers who primarily want to watch news and sports should look elsewhere.

Philo takes a novel approach in a few different areas. For example, Philo does not require a traditional password to sign in. Instead, after you enter your phone number or email, Philo will send you a six-digit verification code (via SMS or email) that you use to complete the login process. This is a convenient and slightly more secure method than a username and password combination, even if it's not a true implementation of [two-factor authentication](#). Furthermore, Philo allows users to save the entire available catalog of a show for on-demand (but not offline) viewing, instead of just a single episode. Philo keeps saved shows for 30 days but does not impose any storage limits. The service also plans to integrate social features, such as synchronized streaming, in future updates.

In testing, Philo performed well on all the platforms we tested it on; we were able to stream both live and saved content without any lag. The service now offers dedicated apps for Android and iOS, as well as for media streaming platforms such as Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, and Android TV. Philo supports up to three concurrent streams, which is about average for the category.



Shudder

\$5.99 per month

[Shudder](#) is a video streaming service for fans of the horror genre. For a low monthly cost, you get access to a large on-

demand collection of horror movies and shows, including some original productions and exclusives. Original movies and shows include *A Discovery of Witches*, *Creepshow*, *Deadetectives*, *Gwen*, *Missions*, *Primal Screen*, *The Ranger*, and *The Witch Window*. Shudder also organizes some titles into collections to help viewers dive into a new subgenre or rediscover classic genre films. Note that Shudder is missing some prominent movies that belong in the category including *Alien*, *Carrie*, *Jaws*, *Psycho*, *Rosemary's Baby*, *The Exorcist*, *The Mist*, *The Shining*; and *The Witch*.



Shudder struggles on the technical front a bit. For example, you can't download movies and shows for offline viewing. Not all content is available in 1080p either, but that's likely just a function of some of the titles being older. On the plus side, Shudder is completely ad-free; you won't even see the preroll ads other video streaming services use to showcase

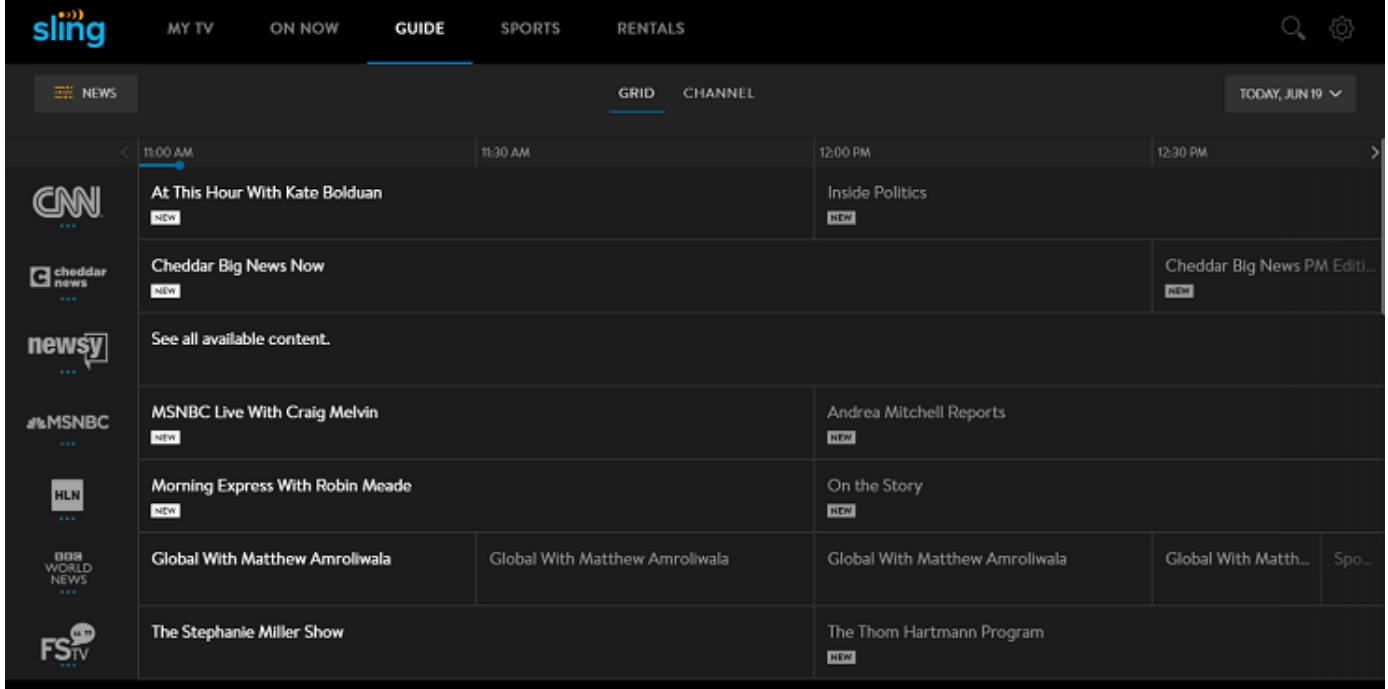
their original content. We also like the interface's subtle hints of horror.

Sling TV

\$30 per month

[Sling TV](#) is a reliable and cost-effective streaming video service for replacing cable, but it falters in the local programming department and is not as intuitive as competitors.

Sling TV splits channels between its \$30-per-month Orange plan, which supports one simultaneous stream, and Sling Blue, which supports three simultaneous streams and also costs \$30 per month. Check our feature on [Sling Orange and Sling Blue](#) to find out all their differences. The combined Sling Orange & Blue plan offers the best selection of channels for \$45 per month and allows you to stream on up to four devices simultaneously. [Sling recently increased the price of its plans](#), along with the cost of some channel add-ons.



Sling's channel add-ons start at \$5 per month each. The Kids Extra add-on bundles family and children's networks like Disney XD, Nicktoons, and Boomerang. The Comedy Extra package includes MTV, TruTV, Logo, and CMT. Sports fans will want to add the Sports Extra add-on to get ESPN U, NBA TV, NHL Network, and PAC 12 Network. While we appreciate this flexibility, keep in mind that the price of your subscription can quickly increase as you add additional content.

Note that Sling TV recently lost all its Fox content, including affiliate channels, FS1, and FS2. This is concerning for sports fans, especially since Sling does not stream CBS affiliates either; in order to watch NFL games on Sunday afternoon now, you need to use an antenna. This change also affects Thursday Night Football games, as Sling won't stream any games that are originally broadcast on Fox and

simulcast on NFL Network. It is unclear how many Thursday night games Sling TV will lose, but we will update this section as we learn more.

Sling TV's free cloud DVR capability lets you record up to 10 hours of content. Sling is available on your mobile phone, streaming device, Xbox console (but not PlayStation), and the web (Chrome and Edge).

Apple TV+

\$4.99 per month

[Apple TV+](#) is Apple's first foray into the world of video streaming, but it can't yet compete with the top on-demand services in the category. A subscription to Apple TV+ only gets you access to Apple's original shows and movies, which is problematic for a service starting out, as it means that its initial success depends almost entirely on the success of those shows. Without any content to pad out its library, you are stuck with whatever series Apple decides to greenlight. As of the time of our review, most of the shows, such as *The Morning Show*, a drama about a news program, and *For All Mankind*, which depicts an alternate history of the moon landing, are merely average. See, on the other hand, is difficult to enjoy. Apple promises to release new

shows every month and new episodes every week, so hopefully, the quality of content improves.



We tried Apple TV+ on both an iPhone X and the web and found that both lacked some usability features common in other video streaming services. For instance, there's no skip intro button or a way to launch a stream of the next episode from the playback screen. The web app is further underserved by the lack of a search bar and any tools for organizing content.

Apple TV+ does boast excellent streaming features and capabilities though. For instance, the service does not include any ads and subscribers on iOS can download shows and movies to watch offline. Most of its shows support 4K resolution, audio descriptions, and both the Dolby Atmos and Vision standards too. As a result, the

shows look spectacular. You can get Apple TV+ anywhere you can get the Apple TV app, which is to say any Apple device. We would also like to see apps for Android devices and game consoles, though we appreciate that you can sign up and watch shows directly from the web without needing an existing Apple ID.

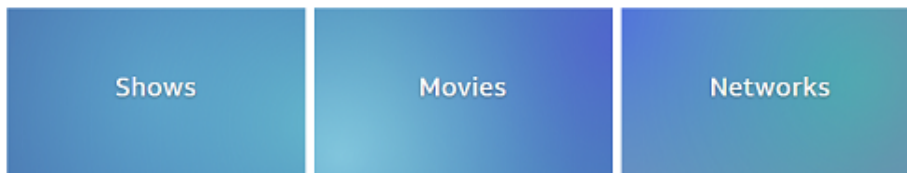
AT&T TV Now

\$65 per month

[AT&T TV Now](#), previously DirecTV Now, offers good streaming performance and lots of channels, but some of its plans are unnecessarily fragmented, and they cost a lot for what you get. AT&T TV Now's Plus plan starts at a costly \$65 per month and includes 45 channels, but the top-end Ultimate plan, which includes 125 channels, is an even more ridiculous \$135 per month. No other video streaming service we tested offers a plan this expensive.

Many add-ons are available for the service, including HBO, Cinemax, Showtime, and Starz, though the first two are included with the two cheapest plans. AT&T TV Now also caters to international audiences with Brazilian, Korean, and Vietnamese channel packages, in addition to its Español and Deportes add-ons.

Browse



Featured

POPULAR TV SHOWS



POPULAR MOVIES



AT&T TV Now offers 20 hours of DVR storage for free and keeps those recordings for up to 30 days, but most other services let users save more hours of programming and for longer. The service supports simultaneous streaming on up to two devices, which is about average, though you can pay an additional \$4.99 per month to increase that limit to three devices. AT&T TV Now is available on a decent range of platforms including media streaming devices, mobile platforms (via the AT&T TV app), and the web, but is not available on either the Xbox One or PlayStation 4 consoles.

Although AT&T TV Now's apps on the web and mobile don't look as sophisticated as competitors', they performed fine in testing for the most part and were able to stream content reliably. We particularly like AT&T TV Now's Lookback and

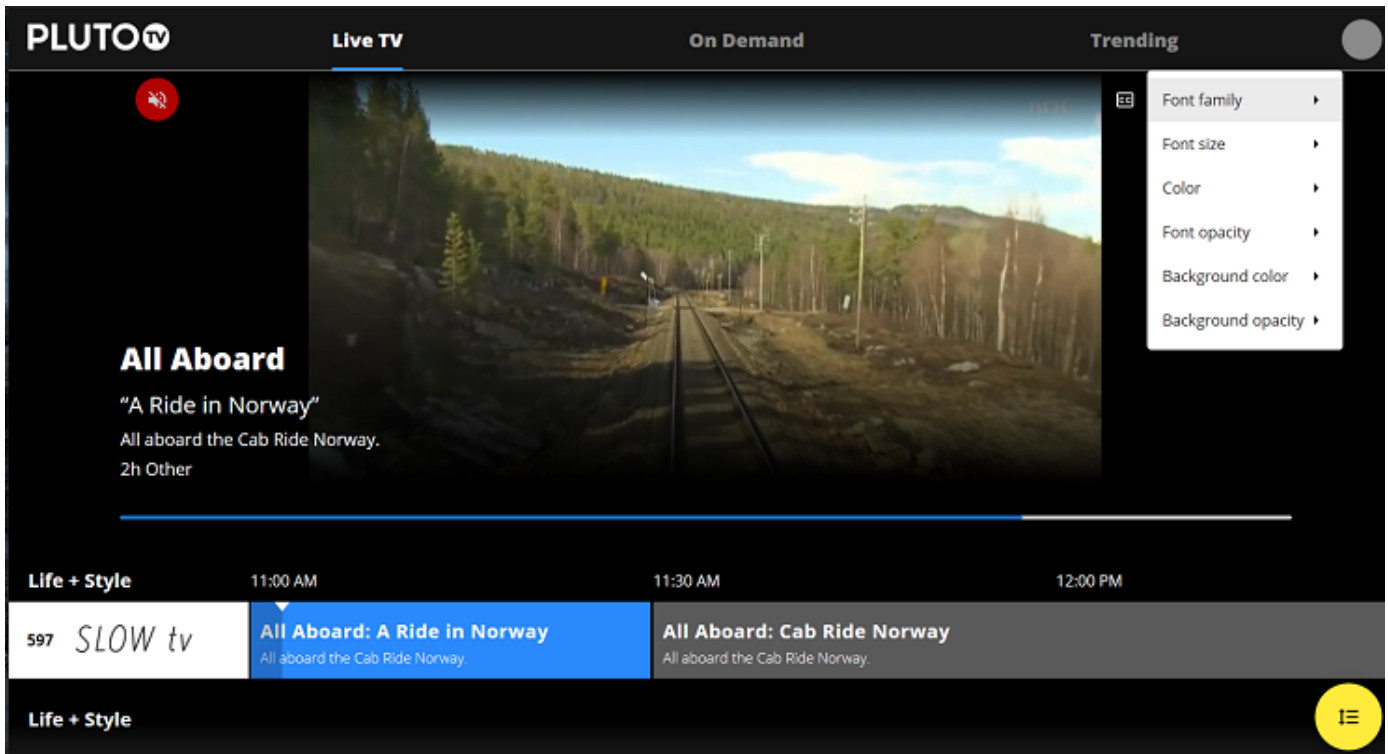
Rewind feature, which respectively let you watch previously aired content (up to 72 hours in the past) and start over live streams from the beginning of the broadcast. Note, however, that these capabilities are only available for select channels and programs. Only a few other services offer similar features.

Pluto TV

Free

If you don't want to leave live TV behind, but are wary of paying the high subscription fees for true cable replacement options, then Pluto TV might be a good bet. The free, ad-supported service offers around 190 different channels, though most are not the standard ones you get with cable. Pluto TV does offer several traditional channels in the news (CBSN, Cheddar News, CNN, NBC News) and entertainment (BET Pluto TV, Comedy Central, MTV Pluto TV, Paramount Movie Channel) areas, but sports fans looking to watch lots of live games need to go elsewhere. Pluto TV fills out the rest of its lineup with several generic channels including Pluto TV News, Pluto TV Sports, and Pluto TV Travel; some odd live options such as Cats 24/7 and Slow TV; and a limited collection of on-demand movies and shows you can stream at your leisure. Unfortunately,

Pluto TV's streams are sub-HD and 30fps.



Pluto TV does not offer any DVR capabilities and its apps need work, but you don't need to sign up for an account to start streaming (unless you want to customize the channels that appear in the guide). Without an account requirement, Pluto TV effectively imposes no limits on simultaneous streams, whereas other live TV services restrict the number of devices you can use at once.

Showtime

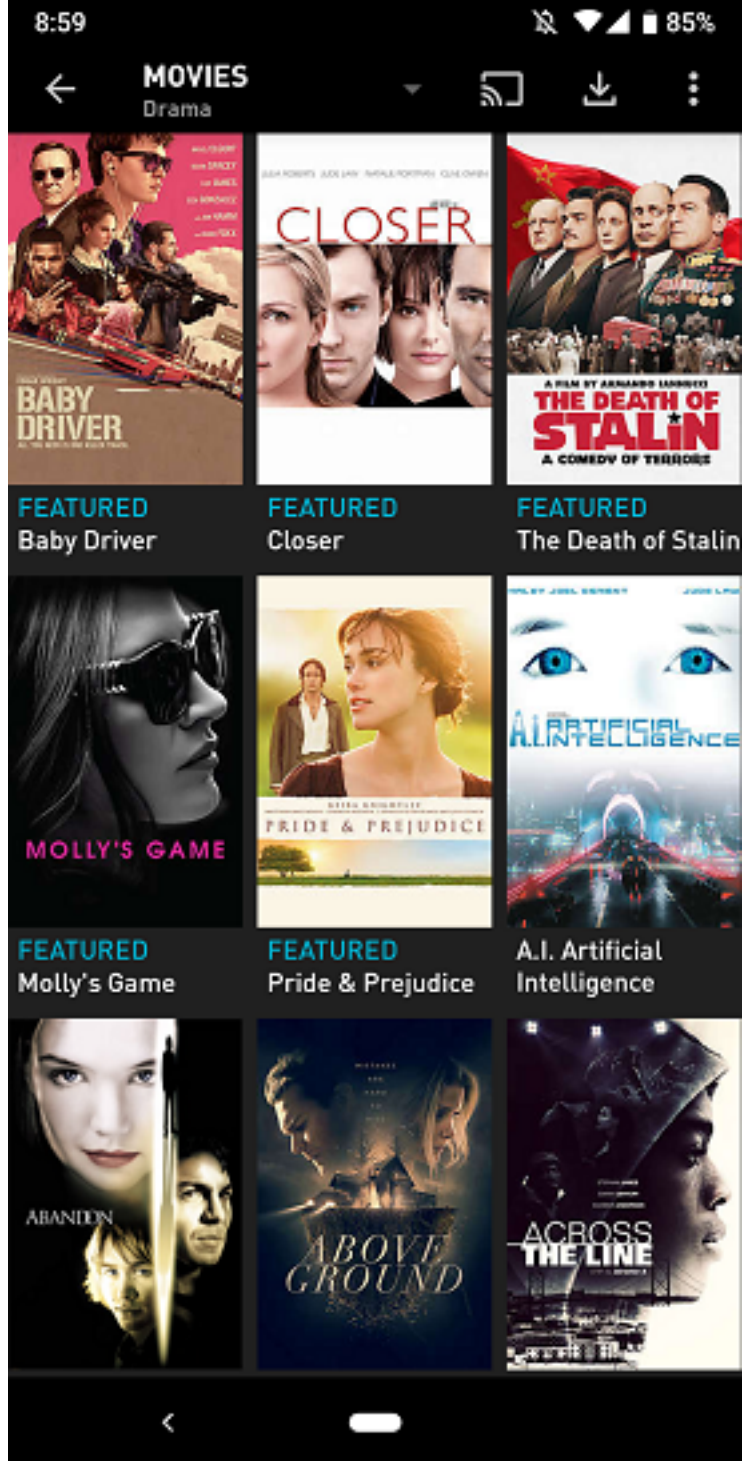
\$10.99 per month

[Showtime's](#) original programming includes current titles

such as *Black Monday*, *Billions*, *Homeland*, *Kidding*, *The Chi*, *Shameless*, and *Ray Donovan*. It also boasts a library of slightly older shows including *Dexter*, *House of Lies*, *Penny Dreadful*, and *Twin Peaks: The Return*. In addition, Showtime offers live streams of Showtime East and Showtime West, as well as a decent selection of movies. Most people will find something worthwhile to watch on Showtime, but whether the subscription is worth it, in the long run, depends on the quality of content it offers going forward.

Showtime is one of the more expensive standalone options we've tested at \$10.99 per month, but know that you can get a deal on pricing if you bundle it with CBS All Access. You can also add in on to other video streaming services, such as Hulu, Prime Video, and YouTube TV. Subscribers can access Showtime on Android and iOS devices; Roku devices; Oculus Go and the Xbox One; and via a web browser.

Showtime's extra capabilities are about average for the category. For example, you can download content for offline viewing with the Android or iOS app, but the service limits the resolution to a disappointing 720p. Showtime also supports ratings-based restrictions for shows and movies, but it doesn't let you create separate profiles, which makes these rules more difficult to manage on a per-user basis.



Starz

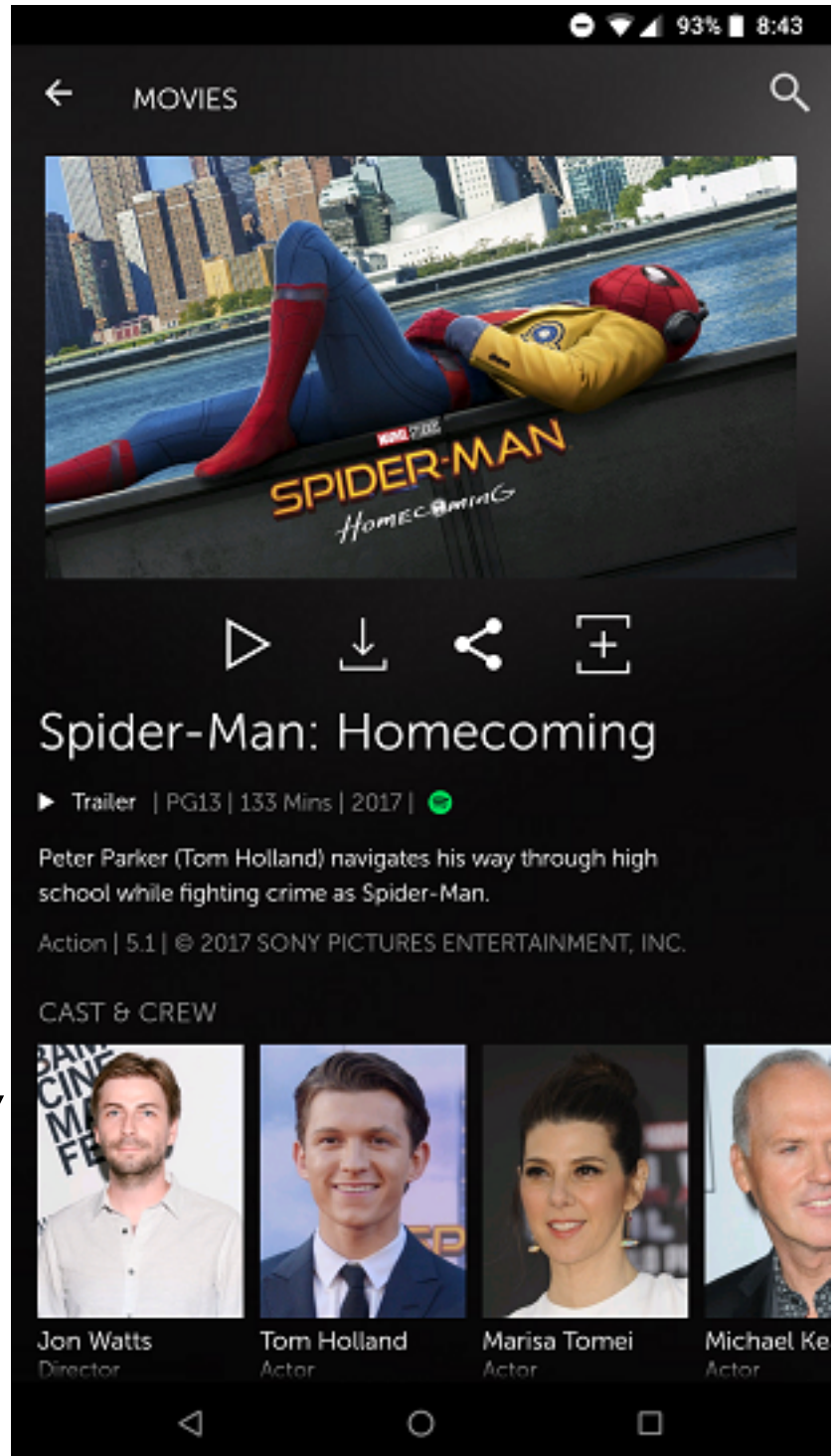
\$8.99 per month

If you are a big fan of [Starz](#) shows, such as *America to Me*, *American Gods*, *Boss*, *Counterpart*, *Liberty City*, *Outlander*,

and *Survivor's Remorse*, you should consider subscribing to its dedicated video streaming service. Note that Starz's original shows are generally not as numerous, popular, or prestigious as those available on Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, or HBO Now.

That said, Starz is a great destination for films. As of the time of our last review, the service hosts over 1,200 streaming-ready titles. These entries are not obscure either; popular movies such as *2012*, *27 Dresses*, *Independence Day*, *Juno*, *Jumanji*, *RV*, *Spiderman: Homecoming*, *Surf's Up*, *The Social Network*, and *Up* are just a few examples.

Starz costs \$8.99 per month, which is reasonable, but only if you don't already subscribe to



several other video streaming services already. For the cost, Starz does allow users to stream on up to four devices simultaneously, which is convenient for households. Parents should take some time to configure parental controls for individual profiles as to prevent kids from stumbling upon inappropriate content.

Starz also lets users download shows and movies on mobile devices for offline viewing, which is a great feature to have for frequent travelers or anyone who doesn't want to rack up exorbitant data costs while roaming. The service does not, however, support 4K or HDR content, which Netflix and Amazon Prime do.