

Apple TV®

PORTABLE GENIUS



Apple TV[®] Portable Genius

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Introduction

Your Apple TV is a great way to enjoy movies, videos, and TV shows — but it also offers far more than that. Its streamlined operating system and minimalist controls belie a full-powered entertainment device.

This book shows you how to get the very most out of your Apple TV. Here's just a taste of the topics that are covered:

- **Connecting your Apple TV, setting it up, and getting started.** The Apple TV is easy to set up — provided you're using the latest technology, such as HDMI (High-Definition Multimedia Interface) connections and speakers with optical inputs. However, if you're using older hardware, such as Component Video connections and analog speakers, you have to get the right equipment. Either way, you must connect your Apple TV to a wired or wireless network so that it can access the Internet.
- **Configuring your Apple TV to work the way that you prefer.** By digging into the Settings app, you can take control of everything from the device's name to the powerful AirPlay and Home Sharing features. You can also apply parental controls to protect young eyes from adult content, set up an attractive screen saver, and customize your audio and video settings.
- **Streaming music via your Apple TV.** You can use the Apple TV to stream music from your iTunes library. You can also use AirPlay to stream music to the Apple TV from your computer, iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch. To make the most of the music features, you should build a full music

library in iTunes by importing your CDs and adding your existing digital audio files.

● **Sharing music and videos with Home Sharing.** By setting up Apple's innovative Home Sharing feature, you can share your music and videos among your computer, iOS devices, and Apple TV.

● **Watching movies, videos, TV shows, and trailers.** Your Apple TV gives you access to a wide range of video options, from pay content, such as the iTunes Store, Netflix, and Hulu Plus, to free videos on Vimeo.

● **Watching your own videos and DVDs on your Apple TV.** The Apple TV is designed primarily for viewing professionally produced content. However, you can also create suitable content from your own videos and DVDs.

● **Listening to Internet radio and podcasts.** With your Apple TV, you can access a huge variety of Internet radio stations, and catch up on the latest news, views, and music. You can also watch video podcasts or tune into audio podcasts.

● **Viewing photos.** Setting up Photo Stream allows you to browse photos from your computers or iOS devices on the big screen connected to your Apple TV. You can also view other people's photos on Flickr, or play photo slide shows.

● **Controlling your Apple TV with a different remote.** The Apple Remote is sleek, slim, and too small for many hands, so you may want to set up a different remote to control your Apple TV. A different remote can also provide you with extra buttons for controlling playback. You can even turn your iPhone, iPod touch, or iPad into a handy remote for your Apple TV.

● **Keeping up with financial news.** Your Apple TV includes the WSJ Live app, which gives you access to

video content from the *Wall Street Journal*. You can catch up with live programming, as well as dig into the archives to research topics.

● **Adding extra capabilities.** To make the most of your Apple TV, you can add extra software to it to do things like play DVDs, stream media from devices Apple doesn't support, or browse the Web.

● **Troubleshooting.** I cover essential troubleshooting moves to resolve the problems your Apple TV is most likely to suffer, as well as specialized techniques for dealing with network issues, and ways to quash Home Sharing and content problems.

Chapter 1: How Do I Connect and Set Up My Apple TV?



If you've just gotten your Apple TV, it's time to get it working. Your first step is to unbox it and get any extra hardware that you need, such as cables, adapters, or video converters. You are then ready to connect the Apple

TV to your hardware — your TV, speakers, and Internet connection — and power it on. After that, you need to set up the Apple TV software for the first time and learn to navigate its user interface with the Apple Remote. Finally, you need to discover how to put your Apple TV to sleep and wake it again.

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Unboxing Your Apple TV

If you haven't already taken your Apple TV out of its box, do so now. You find the following three components:

- **Apple TV.** This is a flat box about the size of the palm of a large hand.
- **Apple Remote.** The sleek remote control, shown in Figure 1.1, is made of brushed aluminum. You use it to set up and control the Apple TV.



1.1 The seven buttons on the Apple Remote give you total control of your Apple TV.

● **AC power cable.** The Apple TV has a standard power cable rather than a wall wart-style power supply.

Getting the Correct Cables and Adapters

The Apple TV doesn't include a cable for connecting it to your TV, so you need to get a cable unless you already have a suitable one. Similarly, you need a cable if you want to connect your Apple TV to speakers or a stereo. If your speakers or stereo are analog instead of digital, you need a digital-to-analog converter, as well. If you want to connect your Apple TV to a wired rather than a wireless network, you need an Ethernet cable. The rest of this section covers what you need to get your Apple TV connected.

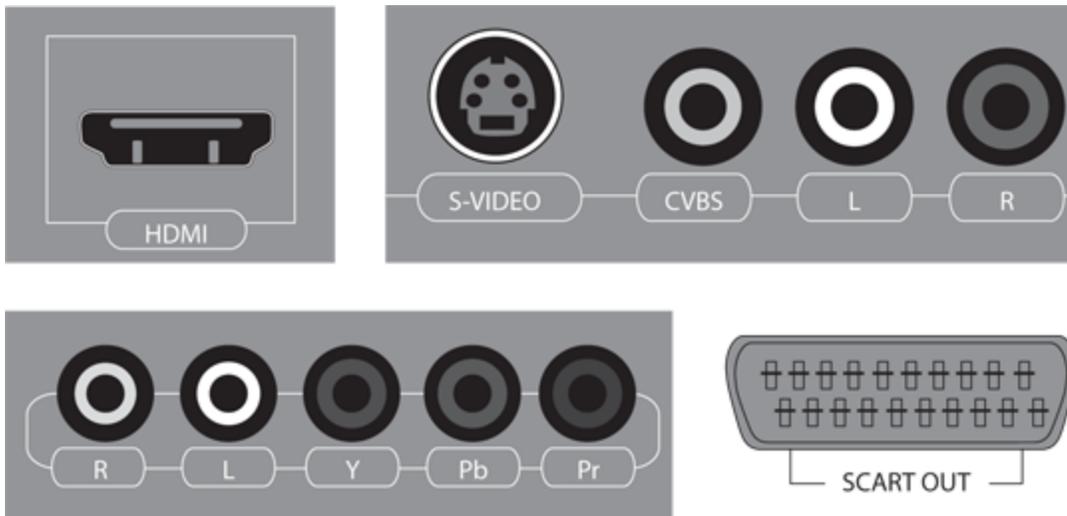


Note

Apple has designed the Apple TV to use the latest widely available audio and video technologies, such as HDTVs and optical audio connections. Nevertheless, you can use the Apple TV with older audio and video technologies as well, as I cover later in this chapter. You just need to use the appropriate cables and converters.

At this writing, the Apple TV comes with only an High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) port for output. This is great for new and newish TVs that have one or more HDMI ports. However, if you have an older TV that doesn't have an HDMI port, you need to get a converter cable or adapter. Take a few minutes to look at your TV's documentation to find out which connections it supports. If you can't find the documentation, look at the TV itself.

Figure 1.2 shows the four main types of connection: HDMI, Component Video, Composite Video, and SCART.



1.2 Most TVs offer one or more of these types of connections (top left to bottom right): HDMI, Component Video, Composite Video, and SCART.



Note

SCART is the acronym for *Syndicat des Constructeurs d'Appareils Radorécepteurs et Téléviseurs*, which translates as Radio and Television Receiver Manufacturers' Association. SCART is an audio-visual standard that describes a 21-pin connector.

Using an HDMI cable for an HDTV

For an HDTV, you normally need only an HDMI cable. If you already have a suitable HDMI cable, you're all set. If not, you can pick one up from most any store that carries electrical goods.

When you're choosing an HDMI cable, consider the following:

● **HDMI logo.** Make sure that the cable carries the HDMI logo, as shown in Figure 1.3. This means that the cable was tested and approved by the HDMI Organization — the body responsible for setting and maintaining the HDMI standard. HDMI-approved cables cost a few dollars more than those that are unapproved, but you can be confident that they are of acceptable quality.



1.3 The HDMI logo indicates that the HDMI Organization has tested and approved the cable.

● **Length.** If you can position your Apple TV near your TV, a three- or six-foot cable may be long enough. If the Apple TV needs to be farther away — for example, so that you can easily connect it to your wired or wireless network — get a longer cable. Extremely long cables can cause signal problems (see the sidebar about HDMI cable length), so don't buy one that is longer than you actually need.

● **Cost.** Expect to pay between \$10 and \$20 for a quality HDMI cable of standard length (3 to 10 feet). Audiovisual specialists make and sell extremely expensive HDMI cables, and some cost thousands of dollars. Current expert opinion, though, is that basic HDMI cables are fine as long as they are properly made and you don't mistreat them.



Caution

Avoid flat HDMI cables. Even though these can both look more stylish and be easier to run under carpets or through obstructions, they are more likely to suffer from interference than round cables. This is because an HDMI cable consists of twisted pairs of wires. A flat cable has less space than a round cable, so the wires in a flat cable need to be thinner. This gives them less resistance to interference.

● **HDMI standards.** Some manufacturers advertise their cables as being compliant with different standards, such as HDMI 1.2 and HDMI 1.3. HDMI 1.3 supports Deep Color, a feature that uses extra colors to give a richer display, automatic lip-synching, and high-resolution soundtracks, including Dolby TrueHD. At this writing, the Apple TV doesn't use these features, so you don't need HDMI 1.3 cables. If you can choose between an HDMI 1.2 or 1.3 cable, go for the 1.3 for future compatibility.

Using a component or composite video converter

If you have a standard TV rather than an HDTV, you most likely need to use a Component Video input or Composite Video input instead of an HDMI input. If your TV provides both types of connections, use Component Video, because it gives higher quality. If your TV has only one type of connection, you're stuck with that type.

How Long Can an HDMI Cable Be?

Unlike many other audio-visual specifications, the HDMI specification doesn't give a maximum length for an HDMI cable. In practice, however, the maximum effective length for an HDMI cable is about 50 feet. Beyond this length, the signal tends to lose strength, which means that your TV doesn't get a strong enough signal to produce a good picture.

If the HDMI cable is too long or damaged, you may notice the following symptoms:

- Distortion in the picture.
- Single pixels failing to appear in the correct color.
- No video at all, even though the audio plays correctly.

If you need to run the HDMI cable a long distance and find these symptoms appearing, get an HDMI signal restorer to strengthen the signal.

If your TV has a Component Video input, get an HDMI-to-Component Video converter like the one shown in Figure 1.4. This converter is a small box with an HDMI input at one end, as shown on the left in Figure 1.4, and a Component Video output at the other, as shown on the right in Figure 1.4. You also need a Component Video cable if you don't already have one.



1.4 Use an HDMI-to-Component Video converter (left) to connect your Apple TV to a standard TV via a Component Video input (right).

If your TV has a Composite Video input, you can get an HDMI-to-Composite Video converter. Similar to the Component Video converter, this is a small box with an HDMI input at one end, as shown on the left in Figure 1.5, and a Composite Video output at the other, as shown on the right in Figure 1.5. You also need a Composite Video cable to connect the converter to your TV's input.



1.5 Use an HDMI-to-Composite Video converter (left) to connect your Apple TV to a standard TV via a Composite Video input (right).

Choosing Which TV Connection to Use

If your TV has several types of connection, make sure you use the most suitable one. The following list explains the connection types in descending order of preference:

- **HDMI.** If your TV has HDMI, use it. HDMI can carry both video and audio, so you don't need a separate audio connection.
- **Component Video.** Component Video uses five cables for transferring audio and video. Two cables carry the audio: one carries the left audio channel and the other carries the right audio channel. Three cables carry the video: The first carries the red signal, the second the green signal, and the third the blue signal. Component Video provides better quality than Composite Video, so use it as your second choice if HDMI isn't available.
- **Composite Video.** Composite Video uses three cables for transferring audio and video: The first carries the left audio channel, the second carries the right audio channel, and the third carries the combined video signal. Putting all of the video on a single cable provides a lower-quality picture than using three separate cables, as Component Video does.
- **SCART.** (Also known as Péritel, EuroSCART, EuroAV, or Euroconnector.) If your TV has only SCART connections, you can buy a Component Video to SCART converter box to connect your Apple TV.

Connecting Your Apple TV

In this section, I cover how to make the physical connections to your Apple TV. First, identify the ports on the back of the Apple TV, and then connect it to your TV or monitor, speakers, and wired network (if you use one). Finally, connect the power supply.

Identifying the ports on your Apple TV

On the back of your Apple TV are the following five ports, as shown in Figure 1.6:

- **Ethernet.** Plug an Ethernet cable into this port to connect your Apple TV to a wired network.



1.6 The back of the Apple TV features an Ethernet port, an optical digital audio port, an HDMI port, a micro USB port, and a power connector.

- **Optical digital audio.** Plug an optical digital audio cable with a TOSLINK connector into this port to connect your Apple TV to digital speakers. The acronym TOSLINK comes from Toshiba Link.
- **HDMI.** Plug an HDMI cable into this port to connect your Apple TV to your TV or monitor.
- **Micro USB.** This port is for diagnosing problems and servicing the device. Normally, you don't need to connect anything to this port.
- **Power.** Plug the AC power cable into this port and connect the other end to a power socket.



Note

See Chapter 12 for instructions on using the Micro USB port to diagnose problems and reinstall older versions of iOS on your Apple TV.