

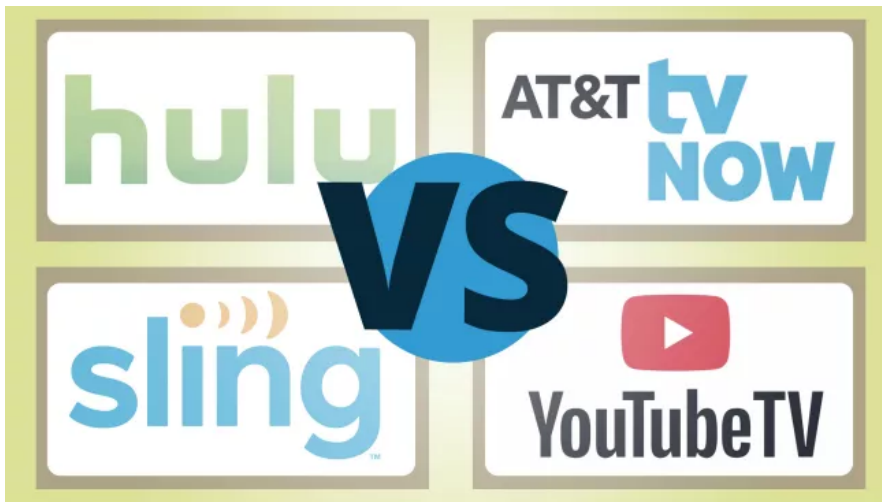
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Hulu Live vs. YouTube TV vs. Sling vs. Vue vs. DirecTV Now: Face-Off!

By Sean Captain May 15, 2020

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(Image credit: Hulu; AT&T; Sling; YouTube)

The big live streaming TV battle pits Hulu Live vs. YouTube TV vs. Sling vs. AT&T TV Now in an ultimate cage match for the successor to cable TV. Picking one of these [cutting the cord](#) services — the right one — will help you thrive as you stream live TV.

Once limited to a couple of services, your options for streaming live TV have grown significantly over the last year, as you can see in our [Hulu with Live TV review](#) and our [YouTube TV review](#). Both of those services have recently landed on the PlayStation 4, filling the void left by the dearly departed PS Vue.

- We've tested the [best streaming devices](#)
- The [53 best Netflix series and TV Shows](#)

The old guard is not surrendering, as our [Sling TV review](#) explains how that service's price and selection makes a compelling case. And while AT&T TV Now (formerly known as [DirecTV Now](#)) isn't exactly beloved, it's still ticking — and its price just dropped (in exchange for making HBO a paid upgrade).

Most of these options are \$30 per month or more, though ISPs offer low-cost alternatives, like the \$14.99 [Spectrum Streaming](#).

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But when it comes time to decide between the [best streaming services](#), cord-cutters probably can't forget about the money they're spending on non-live services. [Apple TV Plus](#) and [Disney Plus](#) are on the cheap end, but they add up over a year.

Hulu Live vs. YouTube TV vs. Sling vs. AT&T TV Now

	Hulu with Live TV	YouTube TV	AT&T TV Now	Sling TV
Starting Price (per month)	\$55	\$50 (\$55 when paid via Apple)	\$55	\$30
Channels (in entry-level package)	More than 60	More than 70 plus YouTube Red Originals	More than 45	More than 30
DVR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
On-Demand	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Device Support	Amazon Fire TV and Fire TV Stick, Amazon Echo Show, Android, Apple TV, Chromecast, Computers, iOS, LG Smart TVs, Nintendo Switch, Roku, Xbox One, Xbox 360, PS4	Android, Apple TV, Chromecast & Chromecast-enabled TVs, Computers, iOS, Roku, Xbox One, Smart TVs, PS4	Amazon Fire, Android, Apple TV, Chromecast, Chromecast-enabled TVs, Computers, iOS, Roku	Amazon Fire, Android, Apple TV, Chromecast, Chromecast-enabled TVs, Computers, iOS, Oculus Go, Roku, select LG and Samsung Smart TVs
Simultaneous Streams	2	3	2	1 (with Orange), 3 (with Blue) 4 (in the \$40 per month Orange/Blue)

Pricing and availability

The majority of these competitors have risen to at least \$50 per month, while one is still affordable, meaning this is going to be one of the key places where you might make your decision in our Hulu Live vs. YouTube TV vs. Sling vs. AT&T TV Now face-off.

At \$50 per month for more than 70 channels, YouTube TV is not as expensive as some competitors, but not the most affordable option.

That title goes to Sling TV, which starts at \$30 per month (formerly \$25) for more than 30 channels. Sling, which currently discounts its first month to \$20, currently offers the most surprising offer to entice people to try its service out. Sling's [Happy Hour Across America](#) deal (which ends on May 15) is giving people free access to one of its major packages (Sling Blue) between 5 p.m. and midnight Eastern, every single night.

Hulu with Live TV costs \$55 for its package of more than 60 channels, giving it both the largest starting price and one of the stronger selections.

AT&T TV Now just lowered its entry-level pricing, which it needed to. Now its charging \$55 per month for 45 channels (still feels like a bad ratio), rather than \$65 for \$65 per month. HBO has been moved up to the more expensive \$80 pricing tier.

And right now through April 20, AT&T's streaming services are getting the following premiums: EPIX through to April 16, and HBO and Cinemax (April 17 - 20).

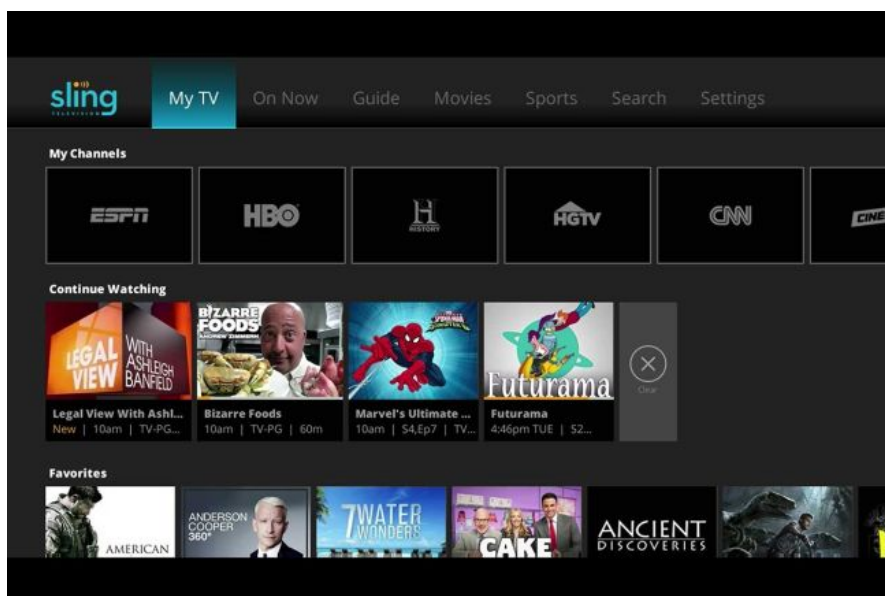
YouTube TV offers six login accounts, but only three concurrent streams so while you can share it with your whole family, you might need to ask who's using it. Hulu with Live TV is slightly below that, starting with six profiles and two concurrent streams.



Hulu is the only one of these options with strong original programming (sorry YouTube TV). [View Deal](#)

AT&T TV Now offers up to 2 simultaneous streams.

Sling TV's entry level Orange package (\$30 per month) offers one stream at a time, while its \$30 Sling Blue includes three streams at once and its \$45 Orange + Blue service allows four streams at once. For more details, check out our [What Is Sling TV?](#) page.



Sling TV starts at a more affordable price.

Verdict: Sling TV is the cheapest, but YouTube TV has the best dollars-to-channels ratio.

Supported devices

YouTube TV started off on a scant few devices but that's changing. It's now available for [Apple TV](#), Roku TVs and most of Roku's other devices, such as the Ultra box, Streaming Stick and Express. This fills in another gap left by its initial launch, which was limited to TVs via [Google Chromecast](#) (either attached or built-in), Android devices and TVs running Android TV, iOS devices, Xbox One, Apple TVs via AirPlay and smart TVs from LG and Samsung.

Just don't confuse it with the company's other paid subscription service: our [YouTube Premium vs YouTube TV](#) guide can help explain the difference.

AT&T TV Now is available on Chromecast, 4th Gen [Apple TVs](#), [Amazon Fire TV](#) devices, [Roku](#), Android

and iOS. Sling TV runs on all of those devices as well as select LG Smart TVs and the Oculus Go, compatible Samsung Smart TVs (including 2016 and 2017 models) and the [Xbox One](#). DirecTV's parent

company AT&T is talking to users about testing [a new streaming box](#), one that will run Android TV apps, but boot directly into AT&T TV Now by default.

Hulu with Live TV is available on Amazon Fire TVs and Fire TV sticks, Android devices, Apple TV, Chromecast, iOS devices, LG Smart TVs, Macs, PCs, Rokus and the Xbox One. Hulu is also the only of these competitors to be available on the portable Nintendo Switch console. Hulu's now giving [1080p at 60fps streaming](#) for select live channels, which is currently only on Xbox One and Apple TV HD and Apple TV 4K. And it just landed on the PlayStation 4, making it one of the two live TV services on the console.

A bit of breaking news: Hulu with Live TV is not working on the new T-Mobile wireless home internet. [Ars Technica](#) found that Hulu's technology may see this service as more of a hotspot than a traditional ISP.

Verdict: Device availability is pretty even, and Hulu and YouTube have done a lot to catch up.

Broadcast TV

One of YouTube TV's biggest features is live streams of the major broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, FOX, NBC and The CW). Hulu with Live TV is the competitor that stacks up the best here, offering all of those except for The CW.

Sling TV's \$30 per month package includes live streams of Fox and NBC, while AT&T TV Now only guarantees video on demand content for ABC, FOX and NBC, with access to live streams differing by region.

YouTube TV includes Telemundo for Spanish-speaking audiences. Sling TV no longer offers Univision, though that channel is available on AT&T TV Now, which provides Video On-Demand access to Telemundo with live streams again varying by region.

[CBS All Access](#) — available starting at \$6 per month — provides live streams of your local CBS station, along with access to a trove of on-demand movies and TV shows. Its current big show is [Star Trek: Picard](#).

It should be noted that you can get local stations by simply buying an HD antenna for your TV, though that won't provide DVR or on-demand options (more on those later) to save shows for later.

Verdict: YouTube TV looks great for cord cutters worried about losing network TV channels, as does Hulu with Live TV (if you don't need The CW).

Live sports

Hulu with Live TV and YouTube TV offer many of the same live sports channels you can find on its competitors, including ESPN, ESPN2, ESPN 3, ESPN News, ESPN U, SEC ESPN, Fox Sports, FS1, FS2, the Big Ten Network and the NBC Golf. YouTube TV just added March Madness, MLB Postseason games, nationally televised NBA games, the NBA All-Star weekend events, NBA Playoff games, the PGA Championship and UEFA soccer.

You can pay an additional, to be announced, amount of money for FOX Soccer Plus. The one sports channel that Hulu with Live TV and YouTube TV offer that nobody else does is CBS Sports.



YouTube TV offers plenty of live sports but not NFL Network.

As for what you're missing, NFL fans will probably want to check out Sling TV's \$25 per month Blue package, which has NFL RedZone from the NFL network as well as many Fox Sports channels.

Sling TV also offers NBA League Pass as a \$29 per month upgrade, allowing basketball fans to watch out-of-market games they'd normally miss. If you just need to follow one team, Sling TV subscribers can pay an extra \$18 per month for Team Pass, which includes live regular season games, full game replays and audio broadcasts for one out-of-market team.

AT&T TV Now places the MLB Network in its \$110 per month Choice deal. You'll need its \$124 monthly package called Xtra, to add NBA TV and the NHL Network.

If you're a sports fan first, above all other media, you'd be smart to consider FuboTV. Its entry-level package costs \$54.99 per month, and while its first month is no longer discounted, the service offers a free 1-week trial period to see if it's right for you. Its value proposition is much stronger, with 85 channels included.

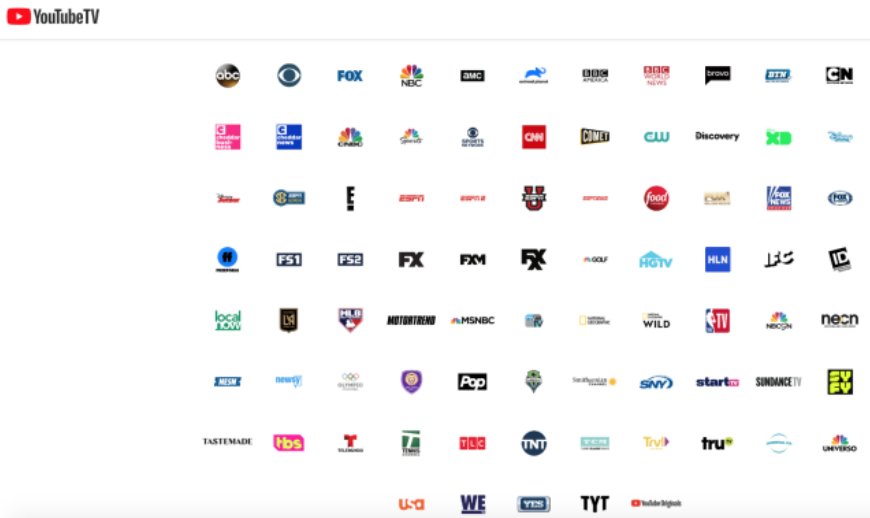
Verdict: Football aficionados will want Sling, but you should consider Fubo, though it doesn't include ESPN.

Cable channels

The \$55 per month you'd spend on Hulu with Live TV gets you a decent selection of cable TV channels, such as Bravo, Cartoon Network, Food Network and the History Channel. Unfortunately, it doesn't offer Viacom channels such as Comedy Central, BET, MTV and VH1. Oh, and Hulu just got a ton of the FX library available as video on demand content, including the hidden gem show *Terriers*.

Similarly, YouTube TV (\$50) gives you a particular portion of the cable TV landscape, and leaves out quite a bit, including TBS, Comedy Central and Food Network. But if USA, FX, FXX, FXM, TBS, TNT, E!, Bravo, Syfy, National Geographic, Oxygen and the Disney channels sound like enough for you, then you should be fine. To try and make its recent price-jump more palatable, YouTube TV added Discovery Channel, HGTV, Food Network, TLC, Investigation Discovery, Animal Planet, Travel Channel, and MotorTrend.

Sling TV's \$30 per month packages gives you other channels such as Comedy Central, History, Food Network, IFC, the Travel Channel and A&E, as well as upstarts such as *Viceland*, *El Rey* and *El Rey*. AT&T TV Now's \$65 per month deal includes many of those, as well as MTV, Nickelodeon, Nick Jr. and VH1.



In terms of cable news, YouTube TV includes CNBC, CNN, Newsy, Fox News and MSNBC. AT&T TV Now's entry-level packages offers all of those channels, save for Newsy, and Sling TV's \$30 Orange package gives you CNN, BBC World News, Newsy and Bloomberg, and its \$30 Blue package has those, plus Fox News, MSNBC and HLN.




If you'd rather just buy one channel and not a whole package, consider [Amazon Channels](#), an ala carte alternative to subscription services.

Verdict: YouTube TV offers an ever-increasing array of programming, but it's still missing some channels (Comedy Central, Food Network) that are likely essentials for some. Our [YouTube TV channels](#) guide packs all the full details about that service.

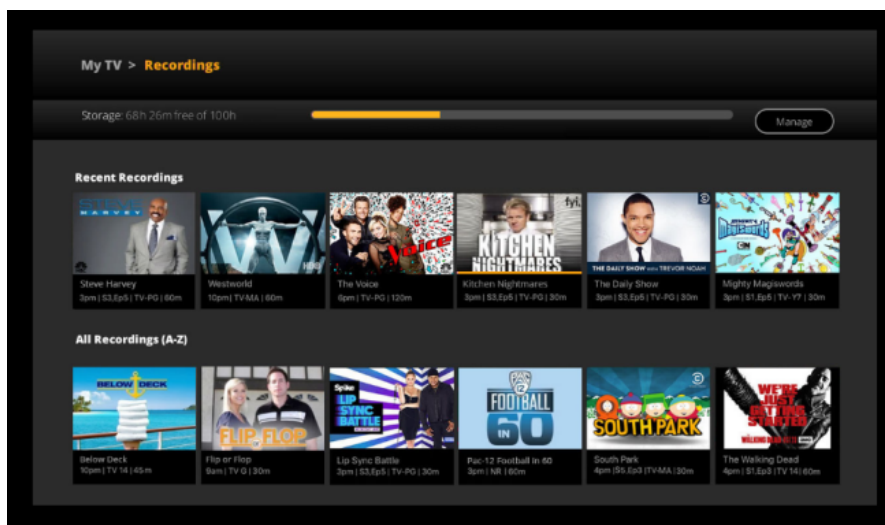
DVR and on-demand

YouTube TV includes a cloud-based DVR service with an unlimited amount of storage, a perk none of its competitors can touch. We found that the services "makes it trivially easy to record shows you want," and that the competition "could stand to learn a thing or two from YouTube TV in this regard." YouTube TV also offers On Demand content, though not for all shows. YouTube TV just improved its DVR, allowing you to skip ads in programming recorded on CBS, Smithsonian and Pop TV.

Sling TV finally added its cloud DVR to its standard package, so you no longer need to spend \$5 extra for saving shows. This tier is called Cloud DVR Free, and includes 10 hours of storage. Cloud DVR Plus is the next step up, and includes 50 hours of storage for \$5 per month.

What's sweeter than unlimited DVR space? Full control of your recorded shows! Starting today, you can , , &  through your @CBS, Smithsonian Channel, & POP TV favorites to your heart's content. [December 2, 2019](#)

Hulu with Live TV, though, beats Sling with 50 hours of Cloud DVR for free. Its paid DVR tier costs \$15 more per month to bump you up to 200 hours.



Sling TV's DVR feature is in beta.

AT&T TV Now offers On Demand content available "within hours after a program airs" for "up to 20,000 shows and titles based on your subscription package." AT&T TV Now recently announced that the Beta version of its cloud DVR service will soon exit beta testing, ending the free 100-hour tier, and switching those users to 20 hours, specifically the most recently recorded 20 hours in an account. Once we see this DVR move out of beta, we'll update this section of our Hulu Live vs. YouTube TV vs. Sling vs. AT&T TV Now face-off.

Verdict: YouTube TV is the best for those who can plan ahead and record, and even offers content for catching up. Hulu's DVR is close, but capped at 50 hours of content.

Bottom line

Hulu with Live TV and YouTube TV are contenders, but not the champ by any stretch. Incomplete channel selection means they're not for everyone, but YouTube TV's increasing number of supported devices is improving its credibility. But if you need broadcast TV and live sports and want a super-simple Cloud DVR, it will certainly suffice. Otherwise, you're better off with the rich selection of Sling TV.

- [How to Watch Live TV Online](#)
- [The best streaming device is ...](#)
- [Your Guide to Cable TV Cord-Cutting](#)