

Upgrade Your TV's IQ

Why drop \$400 or more on a "smart" TV? These affordable devices will stream content to the set you already own. —DOUG AAMOTH

BEST IF YOU
USE ITUNES

\$69

Apple TV

HOW IT WORKS: For easy TV access to your videos, music, and other iTunes content, you can't beat this set-top box and remote. Plus, families can pool content, using Apple TV to share up to six iTunes libraries. The system allows you to mirror your Apple device's screen on the TV—great for viewing photos. Like all the devices in this story, Apple TV also lets you access third-party services such as Hulu and Netflix (some require a subscription).

BEST FOR AMAZON
PRIME MEMBERS

\$39

Amazon Fire TV Stick

HOW IT WORKS: The Fire TV Stick, which plugs into your TV's HDMI port, promises to stream content instantly, without buffering. Use the device and remote to mainline your free Amazon shows, as well as video from the other big providers (no HBO Go yet; Amazon says it's coming this spring). The Fire TV Stick is compatible with 300-plus videogames, though you'll need a \$40 controller for some.

BEST FOR
MEDIA FIENDS

\$50

Roku Streaming Stick

HOW IT WORKS: This plug-in device and accompanying remote work with all the usual channels, but the real appeal of the Streaming Stick is its wide range of niche selections. Users can access more than 1,800 channels, with categories from sports to news to kids' programming. Roku also gets points for an outstanding remote, complete with "quick launch" buttons that take you straight to Amazon or Netflix.

BEST NO-FRILLS
OPTION

\$35

Google Chromecast

HOW IT WORKS: The Chromecast has no remote; instead, you use apps on your smartphone or tablet to sling video to your TV. The device supports content providers, such as YouTube, HBO Go, and Netflix. To watch, pull up the app and tap the Chromecast icon to transfer the video to your set. Your phone controls volume and playback, and, using the Chrome browser, you can cast websites from your computer to the TV.

