

4 Reasons You Won't Really Cut the Cable Cord (Yet)

By [Beth Braverman](#),
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With both [HBO](#) and [CBS](#) announcing this week that they'll make their content available to consumers through digital subscriptions without the need to buy cable packages, you may be wondering if it's finally time to cut that cable cord. A survey [last year by Coupon Cabin](#) found that 45 percent of adults think that paying for cable is a waste of money.

Tech-savvy viewers and budget-conscious millennials have been cancelling their cable subscriptions for years. Nearly a quarter of those people ages 18 to 34 don't subscribe to cable television, [according to comScore](#), but those numbers are far lower when it comes to the overall population.

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"People are definitely getting more curious about how to cut the cord," says Dennis Restauero, a tech expert who runs the website [GroundedReason.com](#), which helps consumers figure out the best way to give up cable.

Even as the ranks of cord cutters grow, for the vast majority of us, cutting ties with [insert Evil Cable-Provider Name here] remains a compelling fantasy but a complicated reality. For anyone who regularly consumes live content (ahem, sports fans) or who want an easy-to-use system that will replace their cable box, the current solutions may be inadequate.

There truth is, ditching cable is a hassle. Here are four reasons why:

1. You'll need a device (or two).

There's a ton of content available for free online via the YouTube and the networks' websites themselves, but if you prefer watching your shows on TV you'll probably need at least one external gadget to get you started. You no longer need cable to access high-[definition](#) shows from the big broadcast networks, but you do need an [HD antenna](#). If you want to record and watch live shows later, you may need a tuner like [Simple TV](#) and an external hard drive.

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Although web-connected televisions are becoming mainstream, most consumers will need to hook up a device like [Apple TV](#), [Google Chromecast](#), or [Roku](#) in order to access streaming content. Most modern gaming systems such as the PlayStation and Xbox also offer streaming capabilities.

2. You'll need a paid subscription (or two).

HBO joins a crowded field of streaming content providers, including Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hulu. They're all relatively cheap, but unfortunately for consumers none of them offers unlimited access to all the new movies and current shows you want to watch.

The CBS All Access service, at \$6 a month, debuted on Thursday. HBO has yet to announce pricing for its service, but some analysts have predicted it could cost roughly \$10-\$15 per month. Rivals Netflix, Amazon Prime, and Hulu currently charge about \$8 per month (although the Amazon subscription includes free two-day shipping from the retail behemoth).

For new release movies and just-run television shows, you may also have to pony up to buy or rent them through Amazon, Apple TV or Google Play. The average basic cable subscription costs about \$65. Your cable-free content bills will be less than that, but probably not by as much as you think.

3. There are still things you can't watch.

You won't find the current season of cable hits like "Mad Men" or "Sons of Anarchy" available anywhere besides your cable television package. That can mean a year of missing out on post-show discussions and trying to avoid spoilers.

For sports fans, the availability of programming is pretty scarce, especially if you want to watch a live game on your ginormous-screen TV. Many of the sports leagues will let you watch a streaming game online for a fee, but only if that show is not being broadcast nationally or locally. (ESPN does have an app for digital viewing, but you need a cable log in to access it.)

4. You may still have to deal with your cable provider.

As much as you'd like to say goodbye forever to your cable provider, you're still going to need a reliable high-speed internet connection to stream to your heart's content. In many markets, that means you're still going to be cutting a (slightly smaller) check every month to your cable provider.

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