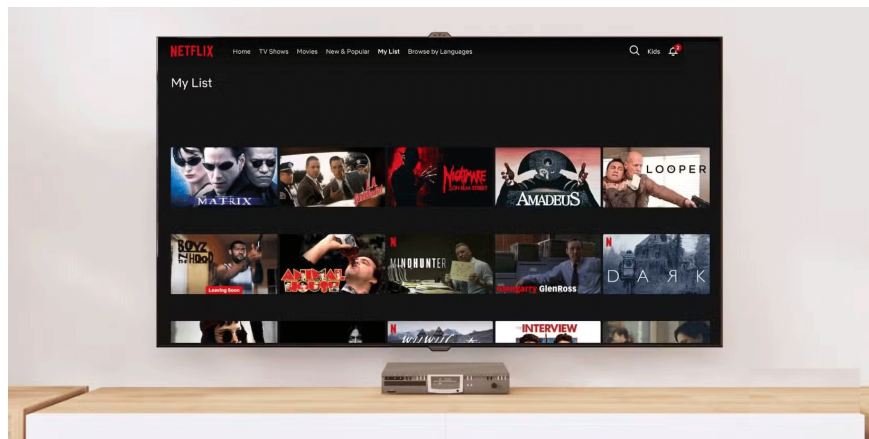


4 Reasons Why You Shouldn't Buy a Smart TV

For all their convenience, smart TVs have turned something simple into something overly complicated, which is why regular TVs deserve a comeback.

When was the last time you turned on your TV and it felt like... well, a TV? No boot screens, no sluggish apps, no constant reminders to update firmware or sign into dozens of streaming accounts. For all their convenience, smart TVs have made something simple into something overly complicated, which is why regular TVs deserve a comeback.

Smart TVs are designed to be obsolete



On the surface, smart TVs seem like the ultimate in convenience. They combine your favorite apps, streaming services, and internet connection into one device. But there's a catch: They're designed to become obsolete much sooner than regular TVs.

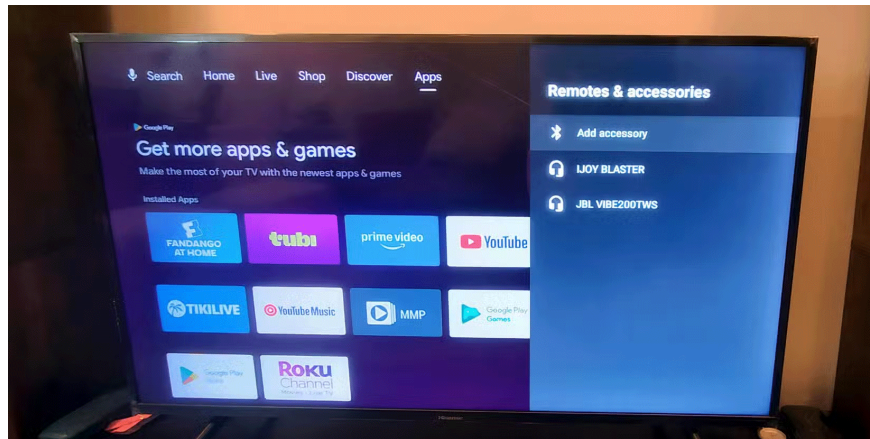
The problem lies in the software. Smart TVs rely on operating systems that manufacturers often stop updating a few years after they're released. This leaves users stuck with outdated apps, slower performance, and an overall clunky experience. Features you've paid for—like built-in Netflix or YouTube—may become unusable as platforms evolve, but your TV doesn't.

Compare that to a regular TV. A basic model focuses on display quality and durability, often lasting more than a decade if well cared for. When paired with a separate streaming device like a Roku or Chromecast, you can keep up with the latest streaming technology by swapping out the device, not the entire TV.

Unfortunately, smart TVs are like smartphones: They're designed to be replaced often. And given the high price tag of smart TVs, that can be expensive. This inherent obsolescence makes simple replacements all the more

powerful.

Smart TVs have a bloatware problem



Have you ever scrolled through your smart TV's home screen and wondered, "Why are there so many apps I never use?" That's bloatware - pre-installed software that takes up space, slows down performance, and often serves no purpose for the average user.

Bloatware isn't just annoying; it's a symptom of smart TVs prioritizing profits over user experience. Manufacturers often partner with app developers or advertisers to put specific apps on your TV, even if you never open them. Worse yet, some of these apps can't be removed, cluttering your screen with icons that do nothing but remind you of things you didn't ask for.

This extra software can slow down your TV's performance over time. Smart TVs already struggle with limited processing power compared to dedicated streaming devices, and the more apps they have, the slower they become.

Smart TVs, on the other hand, don't have these issues because they're focused solely on delivering a high-quality viewing experience. Pair a smart TV with a streaming stick or compact box and you can customize your setup to include only the apps you actually use.

Privacy risks



Every time you turn on your smart TV, chances are it's tracking you. Many smart TVs collect data about your viewing habits, your interests, and even the apps you use. This data is often sold to advertisers or used to deliver targeted ads directly to your TV screen. A common security risk associated with smart TVs is Automatic Content Recognition (ACR), which tracks what's on your screen and sends that data to advertisers.

The Center for Digital Democracy (CDD) released an in-depth report in October 2024, exposing how smart TVs track what users watch. Privacy concerns don't stop at what you watch. Some smart TVs have voice controls or cameras that can be vulnerable to hacking if not properly secured (but there are steps you can take to protect your TV from cyberattacks).

Even when these features are used as intended, they still raise questions about how much personal information is being stored or shared. Pairing a regular TV with a trusted streaming device gives you more control over your privacy, as you can choose a device with strong privacy settings or opt out of certain features altogether.

Streaming devices are a really smart choice



If you're wondering how a regular TV can keep up with today's streaming-centric entertainment world, the answer is simple: Streaming devices. Roku, Fire TV, Apple TV, and Chromecast have become the real brains behind modern content consumption. Built specifically to handle apps and updates, streaming devices often outperform smart TVs in performance and durability.

Streaming devices are built specifically for performance; if one becomes outdated, replacing it is much cheaper and less wasteful than buying a whole new TV. Likewise, smart TVs lock you into a specific operating system, while streaming devices let you choose your preferred ecosystem. Do you like Apple's seamless integration across devices? Go for Apple TV! Want an affordable option with compatibility with a wide range of apps? Roku has you covered.

Streaming devices are also less intrusive when it comes to data collection. While they aren't completely untraceable, they're generally more transparent and give users more control over their privacy settings. Streaming devices can be protected from malware with the right steps, making them a safer alternative to smart TVs.

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