

What is the difference between Chromecast and Miracast?

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Over the past few years, Google's Chromecast has become a must-have TV accessory. Whether or not you have a smart TV doesn't matter because the Chromecast is really great. But you might not know that a smart TV has a Chromecast replacement device built into it. It is Miracast.

Miracast has nothing new. In fact, it appeared earlier than Chromecast. These two technologies are similar, but not the same. Miracast is like a wireless HDMI connection, reflecting everything from one screen to another. It works in both directions, not just a "receiver" like Chromecast.

What is the difference between Chromecast and Miracast?

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Overview of Miracast

Unlike Chromecast, as a device, Miracast is part of the Wi-Fi feature on new gadgets. Wi-Fi Alliance, a global corporation, accepted Miracast as a standard protocol. This protocol means that any Miracast device will work with other Miracast-supported utilities.



Miracast uses Wi-Fi Direct, Wi-Fi technology you already have but is not known. Wi-Fi Direct allows two devices to connect to each other wirelessly, without a Wi-Fi router, making data transfer faster.

When talking about a presentation with a laptop and TV, you immediately think of connecting both devices with an HDMI cable. But Miracast is gradually changing. It removes cables and wireless connections between two monitors.

Screen projection is all Miracast can do. If you are playing a video on your phone and want to display it to others on TV, you can project your screen using Miracast. The video will be played on the phone screen and the TV screen at the same time.

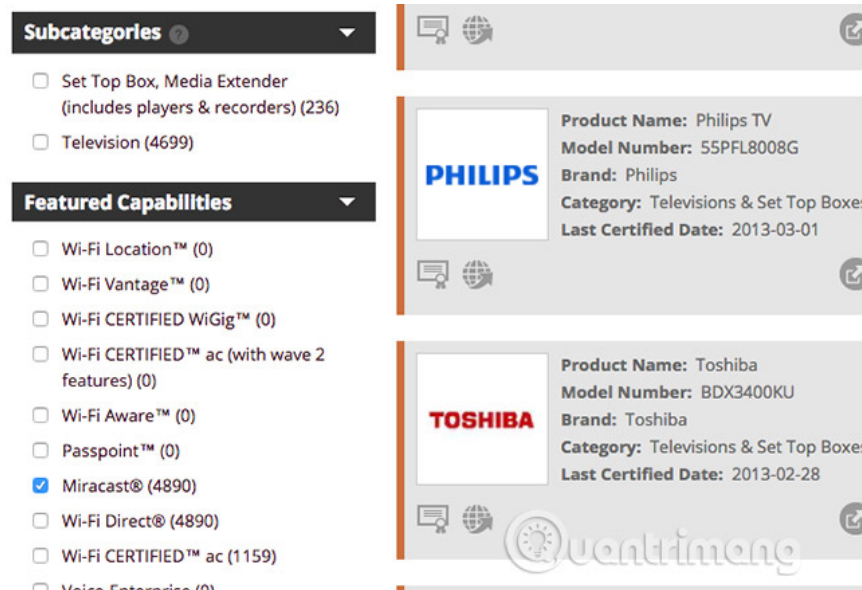
Does your phone or TV support Miracast?

The first question you may want to ask is whether your devices support Miracast. There is an easy way to learn.

Chances are, if you buy a gadget after 2014, it will support Miracast. This includes most TVs and devices that use the Miracast feature under names like 'SmartShare', 'AllShare', etc.

Every Wi-Fi device undergoes the Wi-Fi Alliance tests for different standards and protocols. So if you want to learn about your device, check out this site.

Advanced Product Finder has the Miracast option among the filters on the left. Check and then use categories or search boxes to locate your gadget.



Is Miracast better than Chromecast?

We often compare two similar technologies as competitors. But Miracast and Chromecast are not exactly competitors. It doesn't matter which one is better. The problem is what functions you really need.

For example, in an office environment, Miracast might be a better solution because it works with Windows computers. In Windows 8.1 and Windows 10, Microsoft includes a simple guide to connect to a wireless screen. You will not need any HDMI cable or Chromecast-enabled device for this.

Miracast's integrated nature also makes it easy to turn any device into a 'receiver'. For example, you can transfer your Android screen to a Windows PC. With Chromecast, only the TV with the dongle is the receiver.

But perhaps most importantly, Miracast works completely offline, something that Chromecast can't do. And that is a great advantage of Miracast.

Miracast works completely offline

As explained earlier, Miracast creates a closed Wi-Fi connection between devices. Since this is a closed connection, it does not require an Internet connection. And that is Miracast's greatest strength.

The most annoying part of using Chromecast is being interrupted by an Internet connection. From weather conditions to undersea cables, our Internet connection is not completely reliable.

And if you don't have Internet, your Chromecast won't work. This makes it impossible for you to understand why Chromecast requires an Internet connection even if you only display images from your hard drive or project your screen.

On the other hand, Miracast works great without Internet. Play a movie saved on your hard drive, project your computer screen on a TV and you will be able to watch movies on the big screen, even when there is an outside storm.

Miracast is not a Media Player

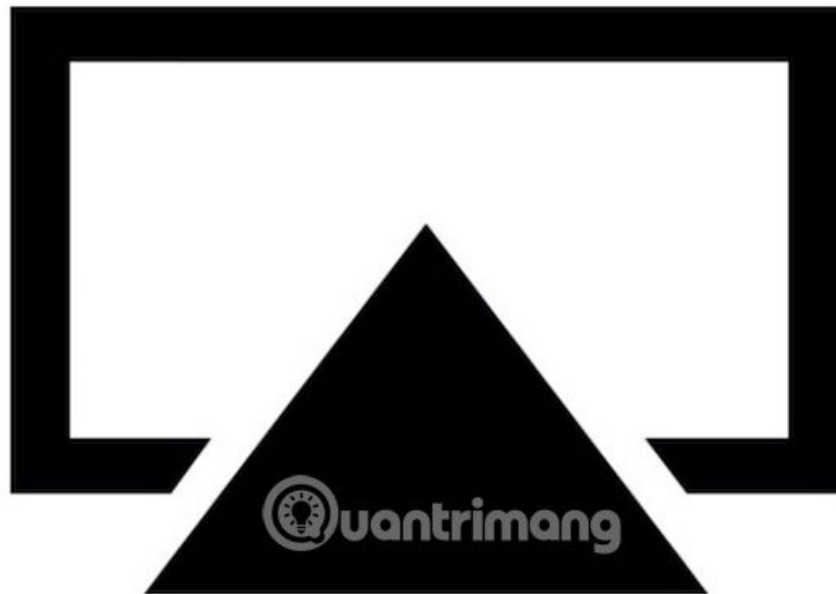
Although Miracast is very good, you can't use it as often as a 'companion' for smart TVs. The simple reason for this is that it only reflects the screen. Your phone or tablet will not work while you transfer videos that are running on the screen to your TV.

This also leads to a very fast battery drain on utilities. You may plug the phone charger while streaming and this will reduce the battery life.

1. 9 tips to extend battery life for Android phones you should apply today

However, Chromecast is a media player and a second screen projection device. If you want to use Netflix or Plex on your phone to stream videos on TV, Chromecast is a better option.

Miracast does not work with Apple devices



Another thing is that Apple decided not to use the Wi-Fi Alliance recommended protocol. Instead, it uses the exclusive AirPlay standard, which is more or less the same as Miracast.

So if you use your iPhone, iPad or Mac, you can't project your screen to a smart TV via Miracast. That's when Chromecast can help you. Or you can use a modified Miracast dongle like AnyCast, which supports AirPlay.

Which Miracast should I choose?

If your TV does not yet have Miracast, you can buy a Miracast dongle like a Chromecast. Costs will be significantly reduced and you can operate offline.

The suggestion you might consider is that AnyCast M2 (priced at \$ 19 / £ 10), works with Apple's AirPlay standard, enabling you to project your iPhone or iPad screen.

If you can spend a little more money, you may want to try Microsoft's Wireless Display Adapter (\$ 50 / £ 40), a popular choice for Windows desktop users.

We want to hear about your experience with Miracast and, if possible, your comparison between it and Chromecast. Which of the two technologies do you like? Leave comments in the comment section below!

See more:

1. How to use Chromecast with iPad, iPhone and Android
2. How to project Android screen on Windows 10 with Miracast and Connect
3. How to transfer Android games to TV using Chromecast

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