

Objective: To investigate price structures of the various television products and services, including the packages available in the subscription television broadcasting offerings

Table of product packages, cost per month and their features by the following major subscription television broadcasters:

- **DStv,**
- **Netflix,**
- **Showmax,**
- **StarSat,**
- **black and**
- **Amazon Prime Video**

	Packages	Cost per month	Features
DStv¹	Premium	R809	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Huge variety of new series, movies, reality shows, kids shows and live sport ▪ Watch live TV or Catch Up on up to 5 devices with a single DStv Premium account ▪ Watch TV online or on your smartphone or tablet with DStv Now ▪ Watch full seasons of TV series online with Showmax, available at no extra cost ▪ Connect your Explora to the internet and watch Box Sets of your favourite TV series ▪ Link up to 3 DStv decoders with XtraView
	Compact Plus	R509	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local content ▪ Kids TV shows ▪ Watch TV online, on smartphone or tablet with DStv Now app ▪ Connect up to 3 DStv decoders with XtraView ▪ Manage DStv account, pay and fix errors online or with DStv Now app on smartphone or tablet
	Compact	R385	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Latest local TV series, reality shows and movies ▪ International and local football live in HD ▪ Catch Up or replay your favourite TV shows any time ▪ Watch TV online or on your smartphone or tablet with DStv Now ▪ Connect up to 3 DStv decoders with XtraView ▪ Manage your DStv account, pay and fix errors online or with the DStv Now app
	Family	R249	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HD channels including Mzansi Wethu, M-Net Movies All Stars, kykNET&kie and VUZU ▪ Find local content and plan your viewing with our 14-day TV guide

¹ DStv, <https://www.dstv.com/packages>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Link up to 3 DStv decoders with XtraView ▪ Check your DStv account balance, reconnect your package and fix errors via SMS or on Twitter or Facebook
	Access	R99	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 24-hour sports news and highlights channel ▪ Plan viewing and find favourite local content with 14-day TV guide ▪ Watch 7 HD channels including Mzansi Wethu and Channel O ▪ Link up to 3 DStv decoders with XtraView ▪ View your DStv account balance, reconnect your package or fix errors via SMS
	EasyView	R29	
	Indian	R375	
	Portuguesa	R375	
Netflix²	Basic	R99	Access to all Netflix content in SD (standard definition) and you can only stream to a single device at a time. It also allows you to download shows to a single phone or tablet.
	Standard	R139	All Netflix content in SD and HD and allows streaming to two devices simultaneously. You can also download programmes to two phones or tablets.
	Premium	R169	Lets you stream all Netflix content on up to four devices simultaneously and download shows to up to four mobile devices. It also provides HD and UHD (4K) video.
Showmax³		R99	Offers a single subscription option that gives you unlimited access to the Showmax library. Subscription allows you to watch on two devices simultaneously on up to five registered devices. As a DStv Premium customer, a Showmax subscription is included in your DStv monthly subscription at no additional cost. Up to four additional paid Showmax subscriptions can be added to a DStv subscription.
StarSat⁴	Super	R209	80 TV channels and 25 audio
	Special	R109	25 TV channels and 25 audio
	Chinese	R209	17 TV channels
	Indian	R109	9 TV channels and 25 audio
	French	R129	9 TV channels and 25 audio
	Sports+	R99	2 TV channels

² Digital Spy, "Netflix Plans: which subscription is right for you? There's more than one option when it comes to streaming Stranger Things.", <http://www.digitalspy.com/tech/feature/a835927/netflix-plan-prices-contract/> MyBroadband, "New South African rand pricing for Netflix", 27 August 2018, <https://mybroadband.co.za/news/broadcasting/273205-new-south-african-rand-pricing-for-netflix.html>

³ Showmax, <https://www.showmax.com/eng/help/introduction/5>

⁴ StarSat, <http://starsat.co.za/packages/>

black⁵	Binge		Binge are Black's all-inclusive packages, bundling its VOD services with live streaming channels.
	Binge Premium Plus (Flexi Premium. BTV Premium. MUTV, sports)	R389	
	Binge Premium (Flexi Premium + BTV Premium)	R279	
	Binge Access (Flexi Access + BTV Access)	R89	
	Flexi		Flexi gives users access to movies, series, music, and documentaries. Flexi Premium includes local and international content, while Flexi Access has a local focus. It is available in daily, weekender, weekly, and monthly nonrecurring subscriptions.
	Flexi Premium	24 hours (R39); 3 days (R45); 7 days (R60); 30 days (R99)	
	Flexi Access	24 hours (R10); 3 days (R19); 7 days (R25); 30 days (R39)	
	Football Matches Manchester United TV, Chelsea TV, Liverpool TV and Real Madrid TV	Prices for each TV station: 24 hours (R5); 3 days (R10); 7 days (R15); 30 days (R25)	Offers streaming of Premiership football matches from several clubs, with subscriptions available in daily, weekender, weekly, and monthly variants. Live game streaming are delayed a few hours.
	BTV	Prices per month BTV Premium (R189); BTV Sports Plus (R179); BTV Sports (R69); BTV Access (R69); BTV Drama & Reality (R69); BTV Kids (R59); BTV Fanatic (R49); BTV News (R49)	Offers the live streaming of several entertainment channels which it has bundled as "BTV". It also offers "BTV Sport Plus", which bundles its BTV Sports channels with its Premiership football channels.
Amazon Prime Video⁶		The service is set to cost \$2.99 per month in South Africa, but after six months the price goes up to \$5.99 per month. This is still less than a Netflix subscription which has plans that start from \$7.99 per month.	Can stream movies and TV shows unlimited with a membership. The streaming service is compatible with Amazon Fire TV, Fire HDX, Fire HD, iPad, PS3, Xbox, Wii, Wii U, Roku, on hundreds of TVs, set-top boxes, Blu-ray players and on the Web.

⁵ <https://mybroadband.co.za/news/broadcasting/235906-black-by-cell-c-packages-and-pricing.html>

⁶ JustWatch, <https://www.justwatch.com/za/provider/amazon-prime-video>

Comparison by media outlets of major services' top packages ⁷

	What they are	Subscription cost per month	Affordable options available	Number of screens or devices at the same time	Variety	Free trial
DStv	Digital satellite TV service	R809 – Premium	Various cheaper bundles available	Watch live TV or Catch Up on up to 5 devices with a single DSTV Premium account	148 channels	No
Netflix	Video-on-demand streaming device	\$11.99 – Premium	Reduced bundles with lower quality and fewer simultaneous screens	You can watch on 4 screens at the same time with premium	3557 titles	1 month
Showmax	South African subscription video-on-demand service	\$7.99 through PayPal or R99 per month	No cheaper bundles	(On up to 5 registered devices) Only on 2 devices at the same time	683 titles	14 days
Amazon Prime Video	Amazon's live-streaming video-on-demand service	\$5.99 per month \$2.99 per month for first six months	No cheaper bundles	On up to 3 devices at once	3967 titles	1 month
StarSat	Digital television provider in South Africa	R209 per month – Super package	Various cheaper options	?	80 channels	?
black	Streaming service, video-on-demand	R499.00 – Binge Elite	Various cheaper options	?	60 channels + 8 Fox channels	?
DEOD	Online video service that offers live streaming, on demand content, and movie rentals	R159 – DEOD Premium	Various cheaper options	Can use multiple versions of the DEOD applications (iOS and Android) on different devices at the same time. However, you can only use up to a	On Demand (hundreds of hours of TV shows, movies, kids programs, music videos, exclusive to DEOD series, inspirational and educational content),	No

⁷ 1Life, Prices compared: DSTV vs Netflix & Showmax, 7 August 2018, <https://www.1life.co.za/blog/compare-tv-streaming>; black, <https://www.black.co.za/packages>, StarSat, <http://starsat.co.za/packages/>, DEOD, <https://za.deod.tv/en/packages/all-packages>, Deukom, <https://www.deukom.co.za/angebote.php>

				maximum of five different devices per account with two concurrent streams. The device limit is set by content rights holders.	Sport and News	
Deukom	German digital television via satellite for the South African market	R845 - Mini Contract	Cheaper options available	?	?	?

The website Medium also posed the three major streaming services – Netflix, Showmax and Amazon Prime Video – against each other in March 2017 focussing on three categories:

- Quality of stream,
- Availability of programs to watch and
- Pricing.⁸

Netflix was their preferred service. (Note, the information below are summaries of the text on the Medium-website.)

	Quality of Stream: (Services were tested on a 2 MB and a 20 MB line)	Availability of Programs	Pricing and Value
Showmax	Really good, although buffering took a while on the 2 MB line, after a few seconds the stream was smooth.	A lot to watch, including international headliners such as Game of Thrones and Suits as well as Afrikaans series.	R99 a month: value for money.
Netflix	Already Netflix shows itself to be a market leader. Able to run a smooth stream on the 2 MB line with only about a 10 second buffering.	A large library, Netflix may not ever show the local content and the biggest catch on Netflix is that it shows the whole series and does not release shows episode by episode.	You cannot start the adventure into this magical world with the basic package for just US\$7.99 a month for the basic one...
Amazon Prime Video	Finds it lacking in quality as the stream takes long	Area restrictions poses disappointment. Does	Apart from the shows, users get faster shipping

⁸ Medium, “Netflix vs Showmax vs Amazon Prime South African showdown”, 19 March 2017, <https://medium.com/@martinemeyer/netflix-vs-showmax-vs-amazon-prime-south-african-showdown-88d6522d5538> [hereafter Medium, “Netflix vs Showmax vs Amazon Prime South African showdown”].

	to buffer and would start buffering again if any other internet interference happens.	not recommend this service.	and early access to products, but South African services are impractical. Amazon refunded the first month in full after cancellation of the service. For \$2.99 a month, the service is acceptable.
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