



## Video Description

Video description is audio-narrated descriptions of a television program's key visual elements. These descriptions are inserted into natural pauses in the program's dialogue. Video description makes TV programming more accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired.

### Availability of video description

FCC rules require local TV station affiliates of ABC, CBS, Fox and NBC located in the top 25 TV markets (see list below) to provide 50 hours per calendar quarter (about 4 hours per week) of video-described prime time and/or children's programming.

- Local TV stations in markets smaller than the top 25 also may provide video description. Check with your local TV stations.
- Many Public Broadcasting System stations also provide video description on a number of programs. Check with your local PBS station.
- The requirement to provide video description is extended to local TV station affiliates of ABC, CBS, Fox and NBC located in the top 60 television markets beginning July 1, 2015.

The top five non-broadcast networks - Disney Channel, Nickelodeon, TBS, TNT and USA - must provide 50 hours per calendar quarter (about 4 hours per week) of video-described prime time and/or children's programming.

- Subscription TV systems (offered over cable, satellite or the telephone network) with 50,000 or more subscribers must carry video description.
- Subscription TV systems with fewer than 50,000 subscribers also may provide video description. Check with your subscription TV provider.

### How to access video description

Video description is provided through the TV or set top box "secondary audio"; feature, which some TV controls identify as "SAP"; or "secondary audio program."; The secondary audio may also be identified as a language feature, such as "Spanish"; or "SPA, "; because it is also used to provide Spanish or other language translations of English language TV programs. Depending upon the program being viewed, when listening to the secondary audio, you may hear the primary audio with video description, Spanish or other language translation, a duplicate of the primary audio, or silence.

Your TV user manual may provide information about activating the secondary audio feature, or you may contact the customer service department where you bought the TV or the customer service department of the TV manufacturer for assistance. If you have a set top box for subscription TV service, you may contact your subscription TV provider for assistance in activating the secondary audio.



## Learn more

Networks, broadcasters and subscription TV systems may provide information about the availability of programs with video description through their websites and in program guides. Some program guides may use the symbol (D) to indicate that the program is video described.

## Top 25 TV Markets

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|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1 New York, NY                       | 14 Tampa-St. Petersburg, FL              |
| 2 Los Angeles, CA                    | 15 Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN              |
| 3 Chicago, IL                        | 16 Miami-Ft. Lauderdale, FL              |
| 4 Philadelphia, PA                   | 17 Denver, CO                            |
| 5 Dallas-Ft. Worth, TX               | 18 Cleveland-Akron, OH (Canton, OH)      |
| 6 San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, CA | 19 Orlando-Daytona Beach-Melbourne, FL   |
| 7 Boston, MA (Manchester, NH)        | 20 Sacramento-Stockton-Modesto, CA       |
| 8 Atlanta, GA                        | 21 St. Louis, MO                         |
| 9 Washington, DC (Hagerstown, MD)    | 22 Portland, OR                          |
| 10 Houston, TX                       | 23 Charlotte, NC                         |
| 11 Detroit, MI                       | 24 Pittsburgh, PA                        |
| 12 Phoenix, AZ (Prescott, AZ)        | 25 Raleigh-Durham, NC (Fayetteville, NC) |
| 13 Seattle-Tacoma, WA                |  |

## For more information

For more information about FCC programs to promote access for people with disabilities, visit the FCC's Disability Rights Office website at [www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/disability-rights-office](http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/disability-rights-office).

## Contact the FCC

- By phone: 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322); TTY: 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322)
- By mail:

Federal Communications Commission  
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau  
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division  
445 12th Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20554

## Accessible formats

To request this article in an accessible format - braille, large print, Word or text document or audio - write or call us at the address or phone number above, or send an email to [fcc504@fcc.gov](mailto:fcc504@fcc.gov).

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