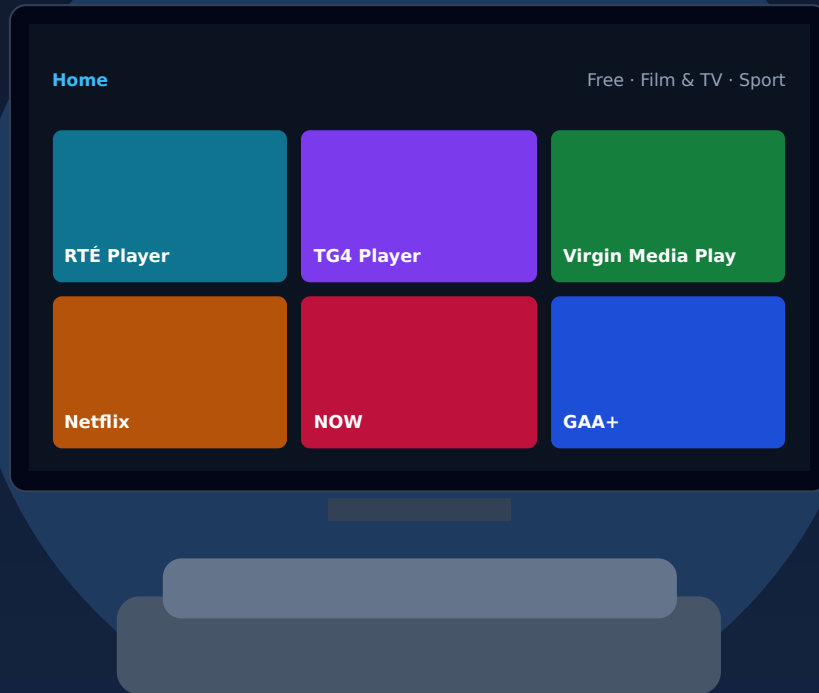




FREE GUIDE · OCTOBER 2026 EDITION

The Irish Streaming Starter Guide

Every legal service, what it costs, where the sport is, and what you need to watch it on your TV

The short version

Most Irish households can cover what they watch with the three free Irish apps plus one or two paid services. Live sport is where the cost climbs, so decide what you follow before you sign up to anything.

€0 RTÉ Player, Virgin Media Play and TG4 Player	€5.99 cheapest paid plans (HBO Max, Paramount+ with ads)	€95 GAA+ 2026 Season Pass	€160 TV licence a year, for any TV set
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Start with the free Irish apps

You can watch every main Irish channel live and on catch-up without paying a cent.

App	What you get	Cost
RTÉ Player	RTÉ One, RTÉ2 and RTÉ's other channels live, plus catch-up and box sets. Every live RTÉ GAA game streams here.	Free (free account needed)
Virgin Media Play	Virgin Media One, Two, Three and Four live, plus catch-up. It replaced the old Virgin Media Player app in 2024.	Free, with ads
TG4 Player	TG4 live, Irish-language drama and documentaries, Allianz League GAA and selected URC rugby.	Free
Saorview	Free-to-air channels through a TV aerial. Not an app.	Free (needs a TV licence)

Why “legal” matters

Unauthorised IPTV resellers and “fully loaded” boxes are illegal in Ireland. They get shut down without warning, often carry malware, and give you no refund when they stop working. Everything in this guide is a licensed service you can pay for, or watch for free, without those risks.

The paid services and what they cost

Standard monthly prices in Ireland, checked 7 October 2026. Several services run introductory offers for new customers, so always confirm on the provider's own site before you pay.

Service	Plans and monthly price	Best for
Netflix	Basic €11.99 · Standard €18.99 · Premium €25.99	The biggest general library. No ad plan in Ireland yet.
Disney+	Standard with Ads €8.99 · Standard €11.99 · Premium €15.99	Families, Marvel, Star Wars, Pixar
Prime Video	€6.99 as part of Amazon Prime (€69.90 a year)	Good value if you already shop on Amazon.ie
Apple TV	€9.99 (7-day free trial)	Apple originals like <i>Slow Horses</i> and <i>Severance</i>
HBO Max	Basic with Ads €5.99 · Standard with Ads €6.99 · Standard €10.99 · Premium €15.99	HBO, Warner Bros. and DC in one app. Also included with Sky Ultimate TV.
Paramount+	Basic with Ads €5.99 · Standard €8.99 · Premium €11.99	US drama and comedy on a budget
Hayu	€6.99	Reality TV
NOW Entertainment	€8.99, or €11.99 with HBO Max Basic with Ads	Sky Originals and HBO series without a Sky contract
NOW Cinema	€11.99	New film releases

NOW's optional Boost add-on (€5 a month) adds Full HD 1080p, ad-free on-demand viewing and a second stream.

Pay-TV with streaming built in

If you want live channels, sport and on-demand on one bill, the pay-TV providers now deliver most of it over broadband:

- **Sky:** Sky Stream works over Wi-Fi with no satellite dish.
- **Virgin Media TV:** sold with Virgin broadband, now on the Streaming TV box.
- **eir TV:** bundled with eir broadband, from €14.99 a month with broadband.

Pay-TV prices depend on your broadband bundle and current offers, so compare the total monthly bill rather than the TV part alone.

Where to watch live sport

Sport is split across several services, so the cheapest route depends on what you follow. Plenty of it is free.

Sport	Free to watch	Paid
GAA	RTÉ (35 live championship games in 2026) and TG4 (45+ live Allianz League games)	GAA+ for 40 exclusive championship games. 2026 Season Pass €95, or €15 a match
Premier League	—	Sky Sports (most games), TNT Sports, and Premier Sports, which has an exclusive Saturday 3pm game every round in Ireland
Champions League	RTÉ (first pick of Wednesday games) and Virgin Media, until 2027	Premier Sports has first pick of Tuesday games
Rugby	Six Nations on RTÉ and Virgin Media. Selected URC games on TG4	Every Irish province URC match on Premier Sports
Golf and other events	Some coverage on RTÉ	Mostly Sky Sports

Getting the paid sport without a Sky contract

NOW membership	What's in it	Per month
NOW Sports	12 Sky Sports channels plus Sky Sports+	€38.99
NOW Sports Extra	Premier Sports 1-2 and TNT Sports 1-4 (Ireland only)	€33.99
Both, on the Sports Saver	12-month offer	€27.00
Day pass	One-off big match	€14.99 a day

Check the round, not the county

GAA coverage is decided competition by competition and round by round. RTÉ and GAA+ announce their picks early in the week, so confirm a match on Monday or Tuesday. Our **Sport on TV this week** page at onairireland.ie/sport-on-tv/ is updated every Thursday.

Sources: GAA broadcast statement 2023-2027; RTÉ and TG4 2026 coverage announcements; GAA+ 2026 Season Pass; NOW memberships (Ireland). For the full detail see our [free GAA guide](#).

What will it cost you?

Three example set-ups using October 2026 prices. Yours will differ, but they show where the money goes.

Free Irish TV, news and the soaps	Budget Free apps plus two paid services	Sport fan Football, rugby and GAA
RTÉ Player €0	Free apps €0	Netflix Basic €11.99
Virgin Media Play €0	Netflix Basic €11.99	NOW Sports + Extra (Saver) €27.00
TG4 Player €0	Prime Video €6.99	GAA+ pass (€95 ÷ 12) €7.92
a month €0	a month €18.98	a month €46.91

Add the TV licence (€160 a year, about €13.33 a month) if you have a TV set. The Sports Saver price needs a 12-month commitment.

Five ways to pay less

Tip	Example	Saving
Pay yearly for services you keep	Disney+ Standard: €119.90 a year instead of 12 × €11.99	€23.98 a year
Pay yearly on Paramount+	Standard: €79.99 a year instead of 12 × €8.99	€27.89 a year
Rotate instead of stacking	Keep one paid service at a time and switch when you finish a series	varies
Buy a day pass for one big match	NOW Sports day pass instead of a month	€24.00
Check what you already have	HBO Max Basic with Ads is included with Sky Ultimate TV, so don't pay for it twice	€5.99 a month

Try the calculator

Pick your services and see the monthly and yearly total at onairireland.ie/streaming-cost-calculator/. Prices are kept current at onairireland.ie/streaming-prices/.

Getting it on your TV

Every service in this guide runs through an app. The only question is whether the app runs on the TV itself or on a small device plugged into it.

The quick test

Open your TV's app store and search for RTÉ Player, Virgin Media Play and any paid service you use. If they're all there and the menus don't lag, you don't need anything else. If an app is missing, or the TV no longer gets updates, a streaming stick is the cheapest fix.

Which one to buy

If you...	Our suggestion
Want the easiest all-rounder	Amazon Fire TV Stick 4K (Fire OS)
Have an older TV in a bedroom or kitchen	A basic HD Fire TV stick
Use an Android phone and cast a lot	Google TV Streamer (€119 from the Google Store)
Live in the Apple world	Apple TV 4K
Already pay for Sky, Virgin Media or eir TV	Check your provider box first. It may already run the apps you need.

Check before buying the Fire TV Stick 4K Select

It runs Amazon's new Vega OS instead of Android, with a different app store. Make sure RTÉ Player, Virgin Media Play, TG4 Player and GAA+ are listed for it, or choose a Fire OS model.

How much broadband you need

SD	<div><div></div></div>	3 Mbps
HD (1080p)	<div><div></div></div>	5 Mbps
4K Ultra HD	<div><div></div></div>	15 Mbps
4K + two HD streams	<div><div></div></div>	25 Mbps

Per-stream figures are Netflix's recommendations; the family figure adds them together. Source: Netflix Help Centre. Our [free device guide](#) covers set-up and Wi-Fi fixes in full.

The TV licence, and five things to avoid

Do you need a TV licence to stream?

The TV licence costs **€160 a year**. According to Citizens Information, you don't need one to watch on a phone, laptop, tablet or other device that can't receive a TV signal by aerial, satellite or cable. But any TV set needs a licence, even a smart TV you only use for streaming apps. A household is only exempt if it has no TV set at all.

Five things to avoid

-  **“Fully loaded” boxes and sticks**
Android boxes or sticks sold with every channel for a one-off fee are selling pirated streams. They're illegal in Ireland and stop working without warning.
-  **Unlicensed “IPTV subscriptions”**
IPTV just means TV over the internet, and NOW, Sky Stream and Virgin Media TV use it legally. What's illegal is buying resold channels from someone without the rights.
-  **Free match-stream websites**
They're full of pop-ups and malware, and they cut out at the worst moment. RTÉ Player and TG4 Player are free and reliable.
-  **Paying for sport before checking who has it**
Rights change from season to season and competition to competition. Check the table on page 4 or our [Sport on TV page](#) first.
-  **Stacking subscriptions you don't use**
Look at your bank statement once a quarter. Cancel what you haven't opened in a month; you can always rejoin.

Spotted a mistake?

Prices and rights change often. We re-check this guide every quarter against Irish sources. If something has changed, tell us at hello@onairireland.ie.

More free help from On Air Ireland

Our other free guides

Watching GAA Legally in Ireland
onairireland.ie/assets/downloads/gaa-legal-streaming-guide.pdf

Choosing the Right Streaming Device
onairireland.ie/assets/downloads/legal-streaming-device-guide.pdf

Tools on the site

Sport on TV this week
onairireland.ie/sport-on-tv/

Streaming prices tracker
onairireland.ie/streaming-prices/

What will my streaming cost?
onairireland.ie/streaming-cost-calculator/

Every legal streaming service, with prices
onairireland.ie/streaming-services/legal-streaming-services-ireland-2026/

Stay in touch

Where	What you get
Newsletter	New guides and price changes once a month. Sign up at onairireland.ie
WhatsApp Channel	Match-day alerts, straight to your phone: whatsapp.com/channel/0029VbDvKAaEawdv3YeHxu2E
YouTube	youtube.com/@onairireland
X	@onairireland on X

Sources

Prices: Irish Times (Netflix, 10 Sept 2026), SmartSaver.ie (Disney+, Prime Video, others), NOW Ireland memberships, GAA+ 2026 Season Pass, all checked 7 October 2026. Sport: GAA broadcast statement 2023–2027; RTÉ and TG4 2026 coverage announcements. TV licence: Citizens Information. Broadband: Netflix Help Centre. Devices: Google Store Ireland; GAA+ Support.

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