Soundbars

The five worth knowing

Sonos Beam Gen 2 — the simple all-rounder. A compact bar (mid-range price) with a Speech Enhancement mode that lifts voices out of the background.

Bose TV Speaker — easiest to use. A small, simple bar (budget-friendly) with a Dialogue Mode button right on the remote — one press makes voices clearer. Heads-up: the HDMI cable is sold separately, so grab one with it.

Polk Audio Signa S4 — best dialogue control. Its VoiceAdjust feature turns voices up or down on their own, without changing the music and sound effects (mid-range price). Comes with a wireless subwoofer for fuller, richer sound.

ZVOX AccuVoice AV157 — built for hard-to-hear TV. Twelve levels of voice boost plus a SuperVoice mode that pushes background noise down (mid-range price). Heads-up: it connects with a wire only (optical cable) — no Bluetooth music streaming.

Samsung HW-Q990F — the full home theater. The big one (premium price): soundbar, subwoofer, and wireless rear speakers for true surround sound.

Hooking one up, in plain words

- **HDMI ARC — the best way.** Plug one end of an HDMI cable into the soundbar and the other into the TV port labeled ARC or eARC. This one cable carries the sound and lets your TV remote control the volume.
- **Optical — the backup.** If your TV has no ARC port, use the optical cable — a thin cable with a little square plug. It carries sound only, so you may need the soundbar remote for volume.
- **Place it centered.** Set the bar right under the TV, centered, with nothing blocking its front. If it came with a subwoofer, set that box on the floor nearby — it connects on its own.
- **Pick the right input — once.** Use the soundbar remote one time to select HDMI (or optical). After that, the TV remote runs everything.

What matters most for seniors

- **A voice or dialogue mode.** The single most important feature — it makes speech clearer without making everything louder.
- **One remote.** With HDMI ARC, your regular TV remote controls the soundbar too. Fewer remotes, fewer headaches.

When to call Sean instead

- Choosing between models before you buy — bring the room and Sean will match the right one.
- Connecting it to your TV — HDMI ARC versus optical, and getting the sound working.
- Getting your TV remote to control the soundbar's volume.
- Fixing lip-sync, where voices do not match lips on screen.