Streaming Devices: Roku vs Fire Stick vs Apple TV vs Google TV

A streaming device turns any TV into a smart TV. It plugs into the back of your TV and gives you Netflix, YouTube, Hulu, and hundreds of other apps on one simple home screen — no computer needed. If your TV is older, or its built-in apps are slow, a little stick or box like this is the fix.

There are four names that matter: Roku, Amazon Fire TV Stick, Apple TV, and Google TV Streamer. They all do the same basic job. The differences are price, the remote, and which phone you already own.

The four, compared simply

- Roku — about $30 to $100. The simplest.
- Amazon Fire TV Stick — about $35 to $60. The best value.
- Apple TV 4K — $199 to $249. The premium pick for iPhone owners.
- Google TV Streamer — about $150. The pick for Android and Google Home users.

Note: Prices change Streaming-device prices move around a lot — sales, holidays, and rising parts costs all shift them. The prices above are what these cost in late 2026. Check before you buy.

Which one fits you?

- You have an iPhone or iPad — Apple TV 4K fits your life best.
- You have an Android phone or Google Home gadgets — Google TV Streamer fits best.
- You shop on Amazon or talk to Alexa — a Fire TV Stick is the natural pick.
- You just want the simplest menus and the lowest price — Roku, especially the Express or Streaming Stick 4K.
- Your TV's built-in apps already work fine — you don't need one of these at all. Save your money.

Setting one up: the short version

1. Plug it into an HDMI port on the back or side of your TV. Sticks plug straight in; boxes use the HDMI cable in the box (Apple's cable is sold separately).
2. Plug in the power cord. The TV's USB port sometimes works, but the wall plug it comes with is more reliable.
3. Switch the TV to the right input with your TV remote — the button labeled Input or Source — until you see the setup screen.
4. Connect to your Wi-Fi by picking your network name and typing your Wi-Fi password.
5. Sign in to your apps — Netflix, YouTube, and the rest, one by one. This is the fiddly part, and it is a one-time job.

The step-by-step for each device — with every button press — is in the paid setup guides in the store.

When to call Sean instead

- You want help choosing the right device before you buy.
- Setup has you stuck — Wi-Fi won't connect, or apps won't sign in.
- Your TV remote and the new remote are fighting each other.
- You want the apps arranged simply so the grandkids' shows aren't the first thing on the screen.

Call Sean at (813) 770-6082.

Need a hand? Call Sean at **(813) 770-6082**.