BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Cutting the Cord

How to replace cable TV with streaming — and save money — explained in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide to leaving cable behind

Keep what you love, drop the bill you don't

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

Covers streaming devices, apps & live TV · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your cord-cutting manual. Read it in any order and at your own pace. It explains, in plain English, what "streaming" really means, what gear you need, which services carry your favorite shows and local channels, and exactly how to set it all up — so you can drop the cable bill without losing what you love to watch.

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PART 1

The Big Picture

What "cutting the cord" really means, how streaming works in plain English, what it can save you, and an honest look at whether it's the right move for you.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. If your cable bill has crept up year after year until it makes you wince — and you've heard that folks are "cutting the cord" and saving real money, but it all sounds complicated — this book is for **you**. I'm glad you're here, and I promise to make it simple.

I'm Bill. Helping folks feel at home with their technology is what I do every day, and I wrote this book the way I'd talk it through at your kitchen table: slowly, in plain English, with no jargon and no pressure. If I use a term you don't know, I'll stop and explain it right then.

What this book will do for you

By the end, you'll understand exactly what streaming is, what equipment you need (less than you'd think), how to keep the shows and channels you love, and how to put it all together for a good deal less than cable. You'll be able to decide, with clear eyes, whether cutting the cord is right for you — and if it is, how to do it without a headache.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

The promise, in one line

Keep what you love to watch, drop the bloated bill you don't, and stay in control of your television instead of the cable company. For many households that's a saving of $50, $80, even $100 a month — real money, every month, for years.

An honest guide, not a sales pitch

I'll be straight with you throughout. Cutting the cord is a wonderful money-saver for most people, but it isn't for absolutely everyone, and there are a couple of trade-offs worth knowing. I'll lay them out honestly so you can make the right call for *your* household. And if you ever get stuck, you're never stuck alone — call me at **(330) 200-8042** and we'll sort it out together.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

What "Cutting the Cord" Means

Let's start with the phrase itself, since it gets tossed around a lot. "Cutting the cord" simply means **cancelling your traditional cable or satellite TV service** and watching what you want over the **internet** instead. The "cord" is the cable TV line; cutting it means you stop paying the cable company for television.

From one big bill to shows over the internet

With cable, you pay one company a large monthly fee for a bundle of hundreds of channels — most of which you never watch. With streaming, you use your internet connection to watch shows and channels through small apps, and you pick only the ones you actually want. You assemble your own television, like choosing dishes off a menu instead of being handed one giant, expensive set meal.

"Streaming" in plain English

Streaming is just the word for watching video over the internet, as it arrives, rather than from a cable line or a DVD. When you watch a video on your phone, that's streaming. Netflix, YouTube, and the rest all work this way. Your internet carries the picture to your TV, moment by moment, as you watch. That's the whole idea — nothing more mysterious than that.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may already be streaming without realizing

If you've ever watched a video on your phone, seen Netflix at a family member's house, or used YouTube, you've already streamed — so the basic idea is one you know. Cutting the cord just means doing that for *all* your television, on your big TV, instead of paying for cable.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

You choose, instead of the cable company

The heart of cord-cutting is control. Instead of one company deciding what you get and what you pay, *you* choose exactly the services that carry what you love — and nothing else. Less waste, less cost, and television shaped around what you actually watch.

CHAPTER 3

How Much Can You Really Save?

Let's talk money, since it's the main reason most people look into this. The savings are real and often substantial — but they depend on your choices, so let me give you an honest picture rather than a flashy number.

The typical cable bill vs. a streaming setup

A full cable or satellite TV package commonly runs somewhere around **$100 to $150 a month** once all the fees, box rentals, and "regional sports" charges are added up — and it tends to climb every year, especially after a "promotional rate" ends. A thoughtfully built streaming setup commonly lands **under $80 a month**, and can be far less if you're happy with a simpler menu. Many households save $50 to $80 every single month.

Where the savings come from

- **No giant channel bundle** you don't watch — you pay only for what you use.
- **No equipment rental fees** — cable charges monthly for each box; streaming devices you buy once, cheaply.
- **Free options** cover a surprising amount — free apps and a simple antenna can replace a good chunk of viewing at no cost.
- **No sneaky annual increases** locking you into an ever-rising bill.

HEADS UP

A fair word: it can add up if you're not careful

Here's the honest caveat. Streaming services are each inexpensive alone, but if you subscribe to *many* of them, the total can creep back up toward a cable bill. The savings come from choosing a sensible handful, not collecting them all. Don't worry — this book shows you exactly how to keep it lean, and Part 6 is all about not overpaying.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Real money back in your pocket, every month

Done sensibly, cutting the cord puts a meaningful sum back in your budget month after month — money for groceries, a grandchild's birthday, or simply peace of mind. And unlike a one-time saving, it keeps paying you back every month, year after year. That's why so many people are glad they made the switch.

CHAPTER 4

Is Cutting the Cord Right for You?

Before we go further, let's make sure this is a good fit for your household. For most people it's a clear win, but I want you to decide with open eyes. Here's an honest checklist.

Cutting the cord is likely a great fit if…

- You have a **reliable internet connection** at home (we'll check this next).
- You watch a **handful** of channels or shows regularly, not hundreds.
- Your cable bill feels **too high** for what you actually watch.
- You're willing to learn a **little something new** (which this book makes easy).

It may take more thought if…

- You have **poor or no home internet** — streaming needs it, so this would be the first thing to sort out.
- You follow **specific live sports** that can be scattered across services (doable, but worth planning — Part 5 covers it).
- You truly value having **hundreds of channels** to flip through (though most find they don't once they switch).
- The idea of *any* new gadget feels overwhelming — in which case, let's do it together, and it'll be gentler than you fear.

GOOD TO KNOW

You can try before you fully commit

Here's a reassuring fact: you don't have to burn any bridges. You can set up a streaming device, try a service or two for a month (many let you cancel any time), and see how you like it — all *before* you cancel cable. If it's not for you, you've lost very little. That safety net takes the fear out of trying.

FROM BILL

Not sure? Let's talk it through

Deciding whether to cut the cord — and how — is exactly the kind of thing I love helping folks with. Tell me what you watch and what your internet is like, and I'll give you an honest, no-pressure read on whether it's worth it for you and what it'd take. Call me at **(330) 200-8042**. Even if the answer is "stick with cable for now," you'll know where you stand.

CHAPTER 5

What You'll Gain — and What You'll Miss

Before you decide, you deserve an honest, two-sided picture — not a sales pitch. Cutting the cord is a clear win for most people, but it's a *change*, and change always has trade-offs. Here's the straight talk, so you go in with open eyes.

What you'll gain

- **A much smaller bill** — often $50 to $100 a month back in your pocket.
- **No contracts or box rentals** — start and stop services freely, no fees.
- **Only what you watch** — no paying for hundreds of channels you never turn to.
- **Watch anywhere** — on the TV, phone, or tablet, at home or away.
- **On-demand freedom** — shows and movies on your schedule, paused and resumed at will.
- **No more surprise rate hikes** locking you into an ever-climbing bill.

What you might miss (and how it's handled)

What you might miss	How it's handled
Flipping through a channel guide	Live TV services bring this back, and you'll likely flip less once you have on-demand. A small adjustment.
Everything in one place	Shows live in different apps now. Voice search bridges this — say a show's name and it finds it anywhere.
A single simple bill	You may have a few small charges instead of one big one. A simple list (Part 6) keeps it tidy.
Some specific sports	A little planning needed, as games spread across services. Very doable (Part 5).
Learning something new	There's a modest learning curve — but this book, and a call to me, flatten it quickly.

GOOD TO KNOW

Most "misses" fade within a week or two

Here's what I hear again and again: the things people worry about missing — the channel guide, the single bill — stop mattering within a couple of weeks, once the new way becomes second nature. And the gains — the lower bill, the freedom — keep feeling good month after month. The trade is almost always worth it.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Eyes open, and almost always glad

An honest look at both sides is the best way to decide — and when folks weigh it fairly, the great majority cut the cord and are delighted they did. Knowing the few trade-offs in advance means no surprises, just the steady satisfaction of keeping what you love and dropping what you don't.

PART 2

What You Need to Get Started

The three simple ingredients — internet, something to stream on, and apps — with a plain-English look at internet speed so you know you're ready.

CHAPTER 6

The Three Simple Ingredients

People imagine cord-cutting requires a pile of complicated equipment. It doesn't. You need just three things, and you may already have two of them. Let's lay them out so the whole picture is clear before we dig into details.

Everything you need

Ingredient	What it is
1. Home internet	A reliable internet connection — the same one you use for email and the web. This carries your shows. You likely already have it.
2. Something to stream on	A way to get streaming onto your TV: either a small "streaming device" (a little box or stick you plug in) or a "smart TV" that has streaming built in.
3. The apps (services)	The individual apps for what you want to watch — Netflix, your local channels, and so on. You add these to your device and pick which to subscribe to.

That's the whole recipe. Internet you probably have. A streaming device costs a modest one-time sum (often $30 to $50). The apps are where you choose what to pay for monthly — and many are free. We'll walk through each ingredient in turn.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Simpler than it sounds

Three ingredients, one of which you already have — that's all cord-cutting really is. No technician's visit, no drilling, no tangle of wires. Once you see how few pieces are involved, the whole thing stops feeling daunting and starts feeling very doable.

CHAPTER 7

Your Internet: The One Thing That Matters Most

Since streaming comes over your internet, a decent connection is the foundation of everything. The good news: streaming doesn't need a fancy, expensive connection — most ordinary home internet handles it just fine. Let's make sure yours is up to it, in plain English.

How much speed you actually need

Internet speed is measured in "megabits per second," usually shortened to **Mbps**. You don't need to understand the units — just the rough guide:

Internet speed	What it handles
Around 25 Mbps	Comfortably streams one TV at a time in good quality. Fine for many households.
50 Mbps or more	Streams on a couple of TVs or devices at once without trouble.
100 Mbps or more	Plenty for a busy household with several screens going. Most modern plans meet or beat this.

Most home internet plans today are well above these numbers, so you're very likely already fine. If you're not sure of your speed, it's easy to check (next).

Checking your speed

1. On your phone or computer, open a web browser and search for **"speed test."**
2. Tap the big **Go** button on the test that appears (a well-known free one is "speedtest.net").
3. In a few seconds it shows your **download** speed in Mbps — that's the number that matters for streaming.
4. Compare it to the guide above. If it's 25 or higher, you're ready to stream.

GOOD TO KNOW

Wired vs. wireless, and why it rarely matters

Your streaming device connects to your internet either over **Wi-Fi** (through the air, the usual way) or, for some boxes, a cable. Wi-Fi is perfectly fine for streaming in most homes. If your TV is far from the internet box and the picture ever stutters, that's usually a Wi-Fi-reaching-the-room issue, not a speed issue — and it's easily solved. More on that in the troubleshooting chapter.

TIP

Don't let "not enough speed" worry stop you

The fear that "my internet isn't good enough" holds a lot of people back unnecessarily. In truth, the great majority of home connections stream beautifully. Run the quick speed test above, or let me check it for you, and you'll most likely find you've been ready all along. And if your internet genuinely is weak, that's a fixable thing worth sorting out anyway.

CHAPTER 8

Device or Smart TV: Two Ways In

To watch streaming on your television, you need something that brings the apps to the screen. There are two ways to get it, and you only need one. Let's see which you have (or want).

Option 1: A streaming device

A **streaming device** is a small, inexpensive gadget — a little box or a stick the size of a thumb drive — that plugs into your TV and connects to your internet. It puts all the streaming apps on your screen. The common brands are **Roku**, **Amazon Fire TV**, **Apple TV**, and **Google TV / Chromecast** (we compare them next chapter). They work with almost any TV that has an HDMI socket — even an older one.

Option 2: A smart TV

A **smart TV** is a television with the streaming apps *built in* — no extra device needed. If your TV is fairly new and has its own apps and an internet connection, it's a smart TV, and you may be able to cut the cord with no new gadget at all. Many newer TVs are built around Roku, Fire TV, or Google TV, so they work just like the matching device.

Which should you use?

- **If you have a smart TV** that you find easy to use, start there — you may need nothing more.
- **If your TV is older**, or its built-in apps are slow or clunky (a common complaint), a $30–$50 streaming device gives you a faster, nicer experience and is often the better path.
- **Either way**, the apps and services work the same — the device is just the doorway.

GOOD TO KNOW

A streaming stick can rejuvenate an old TV

Here's a happy surprise: you do *not* need a new television to cut the cord. A cheap streaming stick plugged into a ten-year-old TV turns it into a full streaming machine. So don't let "but my TV is old" stop you — as long as it has an HDMI socket (most TVs from the last fifteen years do), you're set.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A small gadget, a world of television

Whether through a smart TV or a little streaming stick, that one doorway opens your television up to thousands of shows, movies, and channels — chosen by you, over the internet you already pay for. The hardware is cheap and simple; the choice it unlocks is enormous.

CHAPTER 9

The Apps: Where You Pick What to Watch

The third ingredient is the **apps** — also called **services** or **channels**. Each one is a doorway to a particular library of shows, and together they replace your cable lineup. This is where you'll make your real choices, so let's understand how they work.

What an app is, here

On your streaming device, each service — Netflix, Disney+, your local news, and so on — appears as a little tile or icon, just like apps on a phone. You open one, and it plays its shows. Some are free; most charge a small monthly fee. You choose which to add and which to pay for, and you can change your mind any time.

The main kinds of service

Kind	What it gives you
On-demand services	Pick any show or movie from a big library, any time — Netflix, Disney+, Max, Prime Video, and more. (Part 4.)
Live TV services	Watch channels live, like cable — news, sports, local stations — through services like YouTube TV or Sling. (Part 5.)
Free services	No cost at all — Tubi, Pluto TV, Peacock's free tier, and others, with movies and live channels. (Part 4.)
An antenna	Free local broadcast channels (ABC, NBC, CBS, FOX, PBS) straight out of the air, with a cheap antenna. (Part 5.)

TIP

You don't need many — that's the secret to saving

The art of cord-cutting is choosing a *small* handful of services that cover what you actually watch, rather than collecting a dozen. Most happy cord-cutters land on two to four services plus maybe a free antenna. We'll build your personal lineup in Part 6 — for now, just know that less is more, both for your wallet and your sanity.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Your own custom channel lineup

The apps let you build a television package that fits you like a glove — your shows, your news, your sports, your movies, and not a cent spent on the hundreds of channels you'd never watch. It's television the way it always should have been: chosen by you, for you.

PART 3

Choosing & Setting Up Your Device

An honest comparison of Roku, Fire TV, Apple TV and Google TV, which suits you, how to plug one in, and getting comfortable with the remote.

CHAPTER 10

The Four Streaming Devices Compared

If you're buying a streaming device, four families cover nearly everyone. The happy truth is they all do the same core job well — so you can't really go wrong — but each has a personality. Here's an honest comparison to help you choose.

The four, side by side

Device	The honest rundown
Roku	The simplest and most popular, with a plain, easy home screen and a straightforward remote. A favorite for folks who want "no fuss." Works with every service. My usual first suggestion for beginners.
Amazon Fire TV	Inexpensive and tightly tied to Amazon. Great if you have Amazon Prime and like Alexa voice control. The screen pushes Amazon's own content a bit more.
Apple TV	The fastest and most polished — and the priciest (often $$). The natural pick if your phone is an iPhone and you're already in the Apple world.
Google TV / Chromecast	Google's option, strong on recommendations and Google Assistant voice. A good fit if you use Android and Google services.

My plain recommendation

For most people — especially anyone who wants simple and affordable — I usually suggest starting with a **Roku**. Its screen is the clearest, its remote the least cluttered, and it plays everything. If you're already deep in Apple's world and don't mind paying more, an **Apple TV** is lovely. If you have Amazon Prime, a **Fire TV** stick is a bargain. Any of them will serve you well; don't agonize.

HEADS UP

A note on prices — and on the remote

Streaming-device prices shift and go on sale often, so I've kept to rough levels rather than exact dollars; check the current price before buying, or ask me what's a good deal right now. One small, real-world tip: whichever you pick, a remote with few buttons and a voice search button is kinder to use — and Roku's is often praised for simplicity (though watch for an easy-to-hit mute button).

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Any of them opens the whole door

Here's the reassuring bottom line: all four devices give you access to essentially the same thousands of shows and services. The choice is about which remote and screen *you* find friendliest, not about missing out. Pick the one that suits your household, and you've got the whole streaming world in hand.

CHAPTER 11

Plugging In Your New Device

Setting up a streaming device is genuinely one of the easier gadget jobs there is — it walks you through most of it on screen. Let's go step by step so you know exactly what to expect. Take your time; nothing here can go wrong in any lasting way.

What's in the box

A streaming device comes with the little box or stick itself, a **remote**, a power cable, and sometimes batteries. That's all. You'll plug it into your TV and into power.

The setup, step by step

1. **Plug it into the TV.** Insert the device into an **HDMI** socket on your TV (a flat, wide slot, usually on the back or side). Note which number it's in — "HDMI 1," "HDMI 2" — you'll need it in a moment.
2. **Plug in the power.** Connect the device's power cable to the wall (or a USB socket on the TV, if it reaches). A light comes on.
3. **Turn on the TV and choose the right input.** Press the **Input** or **Source** button on your TV remote and select the HDMI you used. You should see the device's welcome screen.
4. **Follow the on-screen setup.** It guides you: pick your language, connect to your **Wi-Fi** (choose your network, type the password), and sign in to (or create) a free account for the device.
5. **Let it update.** It may download an update and restart — that's normal. Then you're at the home screen, ready to add apps.

TIP

The "Input" button is the usual sticking point

If you plug everything in but see a blank or "No Signal" screen, don't worry — you almost certainly just need to switch your TV to the right input. Press **Input** or **Source** on your *TV's* remote and cycle through until you see the streaming device. This one step trips up nearly everyone, and it's a two-second fix once you know it.

FROM BILL

Happy to set it up for you

If plugging in a new device and wrangling the Wi-Fi password feels like a lot, this is a perfect quick job for me. I'll have your streaming device plugged in, connected, signed in, and your first apps loaded in no time — and I'll show you how to use it before I go. Call me at **(330) 200-8042**.

CHAPTER 12

Getting Comfortable with the Remote

The remote is how you'll drive your new streaming world, and it's simpler than a cable remote — usually just a handful of buttons. Let's get familiar, because once the remote feels natural, the whole thing clicks into place.

The buttons that matter

Button	What it does
The direction pad (arrows)	A ring or set of arrows to move up/down/left/right through the on-screen menus. The heart of the remote.
OK / Select (center)	Press to choose whatever you've highlighted — open an app, play a show.
Back	Steps back to the previous screen. Your "undo" and escape button.
Home	Jumps straight back to the main home screen from anywhere. Your safe harbor.
Play / Pause	Pauses and resumes what you're watching — grand for a bathroom break.
Voice button	Hold it and SPEAK — "find Jeopardy," "open Netflix" — instead of typing. A real time-saver.

Typing without a keyboard

Now and then you'll need to type — a password, a show's name — using an on-screen keyboard and the arrow buttons to pick letters one at a time. It's a bit slow, but you rarely do it. The far easier way is the **voice button**: just hold it and say what you want. Let your voice do the typing.

TIP

The voice button is your best friend

If your remote has a microphone button, use it generously. Searching for a show by pecking out letters with arrow keys is tedious; holding the button and saying "find Matlock" is instant. It's also the easiest way to open an app or jump to the news. Of all the buttons, this is the one worth the habit.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A friendlier remote than cable ever had

No more sixty-button cable remote with half the buttons a mystery. A streaming remote is a few clear buttons plus your voice — point, press OK, and you're watching. Once it's in your hand a few times, it feels more natural than the old clicker ever did.

CHAPTER 13

Adding & Arranging Your Apps

With your device set up, the last bit is adding the apps for what you want to watch and tidying them so your favorites are easy to reach. This is quick and satisfying — like arranging your favorite channels, but you're in charge.

Adding an app

1. From the home screen, find the **app store** or **search** (the device has a place to find new apps — often called "Channels," "Apps," or just the search).
2. Search for the service you want — "Netflix," "Pluto TV," your local station's app.
3. Choose **Add** or **Install / Get**. It appears on your home screen in a moment.
4. Open it and **sign in** (if it's a paid service you've subscribed to) or just start watching (if it's free).

Arranging your favorites

Once you have a few apps, put the ones you use most near the front. On most devices you highlight an app, press and hold the **OK** button (or press the **star/options** button), and choose **Move** — then slide it where you like. A minute of tidying means your nightly shows are always the first thing you see.

GOOD TO KNOW

Adding an app isn't the same as paying for it

A gentle but important point: *adding* an app to your device is free and commits you to nothing. Many apps then need a paid subscription to actually watch (you sign in with an account you've subscribed to), while others are completely free. So feel free to add apps to explore — you only pay when you deliberately subscribe to a service. Browsing costs nothing.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Your home screen, your favorites front and center

A few minutes arranging your apps turns the device into *your* television — the news you watch each morning, the shows you follow, your movies, all a click away in the order you like. It's the finishing touch that makes streaming feel comfortable and your own.

CHAPTER 14

Casting: Sending from Your Phone to the TV

Here's a handy trick that surprises people: you can start a video on your phone and send it up to the big TV with a tap. It's called **casting**, and it's a lovely way to share a video with the room, or to watch something that's easier to find on your phone.

What casting is

Casting means telling a video playing on your phone (or tablet) to play on your TV instead, using your streaming device. The phone becomes a remote control; the TV does the showing. The video streams from the internet to the TV directly — your phone just points the way, so you can even keep using it for other things.

How to cast

1. Make sure your phone and your streaming device are on the **same Wi-Fi**.
2. Open a video in an app on your phone (YouTube, Netflix, and most others support casting).
3. Look for the little **cast icon** — a small rectangle with curved lines in its corner, like a tiny screen with Wi-Fi waves.
4. Tap it, then choose your TV or streaming device from the list.
5. The video jumps to the TV. Use your phone to pause, skip, or adjust — or pick something else to cast.

GOOD TO KNOW

Casting vs. the app on the TV

You don't *have* to cast — most services also have their own app right on your streaming device, which is usually the easier way for everyday watching. Casting shines for the odd video you found on your phone (a family clip, a how-to, something a friend sent) that you'd like everyone to see on the big screen. Think of it as a handy extra, not the main way.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Share what's on your phone with the whole room

A grandchild's recital video, a funny clip, a recipe demonstration — casting throws it up onto the big TV so everyone can enjoy it together, without crowding around a little phone screen. It's a small, delightful trick that makes your phone and TV work as a team.

PART 4

The Streaming Services

The on-demand services that hold your movies and shows, how subscriptions work, the genuinely free options, and how to try and cancel without getting stung.

CHAPTER 15

The Main On-Demand Services

On-demand services are the heart of streaming — big libraries where you pick any show or movie and it plays at once, any time, no schedule. You've heard of most of them. Here's a plain guide to the major ones, so you know what each is for.

The big libraries

Service	What it's known for
Netflix	The famous one — a huge library of movies, series, and its own popular shows. A common first choice.
Amazon Prime Video	Movies and shows, included if you already pay for Amazon Prime (many people do, for the shipping).
Disney+	Disney, Pixar, Marvel, Star Wars, and National Geographic — wonderful for grandchildren.
Max (HBO)	HBO's prestige series and a deep movie library.
Peacock	NBC shows, movies, and some live sports; has a free tier too.
Paramount+	CBS shows, movies, and sports.
Apple TV	Apple's own award-winning original shows and movies.

Each typically costs a modest monthly fee (often somewhere around $8 to $18, varying by service and whether you accept ads). You don't need them all — most people pick one or two whose shows they love.

GOOD TO KNOW

"With ads" vs. "without ads"

Most services now offer two prices: a cheaper tier that shows some commercials, and a pricier one with few or none. For many people, the cheaper with-ads tier is perfectly pleasant and saves real money — the ads are usually fewer than on regular TV. Start with the cheaper option; you can always upgrade if the ads bother you.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A bottomless library, on your schedule

On-demand means never again waiting for a show to air or fiddling with a recording. The whole library sits there, ready — watch an episode now, the next tomorrow, a classic film on a rainy afternoon. Television entirely on your own timetable, which is a quiet luxury once you're used to it.

CHAPTER 16

How Subscriptions Really Work

Understanding how streaming subscriptions work — the billing, the cancelling, the fine print — is what keeps you in control and saves you money. It's simpler than cable contracts, with one big advantage: you're never locked in.

The key things to know

- **Monthly, and cancel any time.** Nearly all streaming services bill month to month with *no contract*. You can cancel whenever you like, and you keep access until the end of the month you've paid for.
- **It renews automatically** each month until you cancel — so an unused service keeps charging you. This is the main thing to stay on top of (Part 6).
- **You pay the service, usually.** You sign up on the service's own website or app with a card. Some you can add through your device's store instead.
- **Free trials** are common — a week or month free to try, though you usually give a card and must cancel before it bills if you don't want to continue.

The freedom this gives you

Because there are no contracts, you can be clever: subscribe to a service for a month to watch a particular series, then cancel; pick up another when its new season drops. This "rotating" approach — only paying for what you're actively watching — is one of the biggest money-savers in all of cord-cutting, and it's entirely allowed.

TIP

Set a reminder when you start a free trial

Free trials are great, but they count on you forgetting to cancel. The moment you start one, set a reminder on your phone a day or two before it ends ("cancel the Max trial"). Then you enjoy the free time and decide deliberately whether to keep it — rather than being surprised by a charge. A thirty-second habit that saves real money.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

You hold the reins, not the cable company

No contracts, no early-termination fees, no waiting on hold to "retain" you — just month-to-month services you start and stop as you please. That freedom is the quiet superpower of cord-cutting: you only ever pay for what you're actually watching, and you can change your mind any time.

CHAPTER 17

The Genuinely Free Services

Here's a delightful part that surprises people: a great deal of good television is completely **free** — no subscription, just some commercials. For many households, free services plus a free antenna cover a big share of their viewing at zero cost. Let's meet them.

The main free services

Free service	What you get
Tubi	A large free library of movies and shows (owned by FOX). Surprisingly good selection.
Pluto TV	Free live channels arranged like old cable, plus on-demand — news, classic TV, movies, by category.
The Roku Channel	Free movies, shows, and live channels (on Roku devices, and others).
Peacock (free tier)	A free slice of NBC's service — some shows, news, and clips.
YouTube	Endless free video — how-tos, old performances, church services, news, hobbies.
PBS & local apps	Many local stations and PBS offer free apps with their programming.

How free services pay their way

These are free because they show **commercials**, the same way broadcast TV always has. You trade a few ads for no monthly fee — a fair deal that many people are perfectly happy with, especially for background viewing or old favorites.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A surprising amount of TV for nothing

Before you subscribe to anything, it's worth exploring the free services — you may find they cover more of your viewing than you'd expect, especially classic shows, movies, and news. Every hour you enjoy free is an hour you're not paying for. For a careful budget, the free tier of streaming is a genuine gift.

TIP

Start free, add paid only as needed

A smart way to begin: set up your device with the free services first, live with them a couple of weeks, and see what's *missing*. Then add one paid service to fill the gap. That way you never pay for more than you need, and you build your lineup around what you actually watch rather than guessing up front.

CHAPTER 18

Trying & Cancelling Without Getting Stung

The flip side of "cancel any time" is that services make *signing up* delightfully easy and *cancelling* a touch less obvious — on purpose. Knowing how to cancel cleanly keeps you from paying for things you've stopped watching. It's a skill worth having.

How to cancel a service

1. **Know where you signed up.** You cancel wherever you subscribed — usually the service's own website or app, or (if you signed up through it) your device's or phone's account.
2. Sign in to that account and find **Account** or **Subscription** settings.
3. Look for **Cancel subscription** (sometimes tucked under "Manage plan"). Follow the prompts — it may try to talk you out of it or offer a discount.
4. Confirm. You'll usually keep access until the end of the period you've paid for, then it stops billing.

Keeping track of what you're paying for

The real risk isn't any single service — it's *forgetting* you're paying for one you no longer watch. A few dollars here and there, month after month, quietly adds up. The cure is a simple habit of reviewing your subscriptions now and then, which we'll set up properly in Part 6.

HEADS UP

Watch for sign-up spots that make cancelling harder

If you subscribe to a service *through* another company (say, added to your Amazon or through your phone's app store), you cancel it *there*, not on the service's own site — which can be confusing. When you sign up for something, make a quick note of *where* you did it, so future-you knows where to go to cancel. It saves a real headache.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Pay only for what you're watching

Mastering the easy art of cancelling means a streaming service never overstays its welcome in your budget. Watch a season, cancel, come back when there's more — you stay in control and your bill stays lean. This one skill is what turns cord-cutting from a nice idea into real, lasting savings.

CHAPTER 19

Watching Beyond the TV

One of the quiet joys of streaming that cable never offered: your shows aren't trapped on the living-room television. The very same services work on your phone, tablet, and computer too — so your television travels with you.

The same service, everywhere

When you subscribe to a streaming service, that one subscription usually works on all your devices at once. Install the app (or just visit the website) and sign in with the same account, and there's your show — on the TV in the den, the tablet in bed, the phone at the doctor's office. No extra charge, no separate sign-up.

Where this comes in handy

- **In the waiting room or on a trip** — catch up on a show on your phone or tablet to pass the time.
- **In bed or another room** — a tablet is a cozy personal screen without claiming the main TV.
- **Keeping someone company** — watch the same show as a far-off family member and chat about it.
- **On the go** — many services let you *download* shows to watch later without internet, grand for a flight or a car trip (as a passenger!).

TIP

Download before a trip, watch without internet

Travelling somewhere with spotty or no internet? Before you go, open your streaming app on your phone or tablet *at home on Wi-Fi* and look for a **download** button on the shows or movies you want. They save right onto the device, so you can watch them later with no connection at all — a wonderful trick for long journeys or waiting rooms.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Your television goes wherever you do

Your shows on every screen you own means entertainment is never tied to one chair in one room. The tablet in the kitchen, the phone in the car (as passenger), the laptop at the cabin — your favorites come along, for no extra cost. It's a freedom cable never came close to offering.

PART 5

Live TV, Local Channels & Sports

The trickier part of cord-cutting, made simple: watching live channels, getting your local stations free with an antenna, keeping up with the news, and following your teams.

CHAPTER 20

Live TV Streaming Services

On-demand is grand, but some folks still want **live TV** — channels playing in real time, like cable: live news, the big networks, sports as they happen. Good news: you can have that too, through a **live TV streaming service**. These are the closest thing to cable, without the cable.

What they are

A live TV streaming service gives you a bundle of live channels — often including your local stations, cable news, sports, and entertainment channels — delivered over the internet. It looks and feels much like cable, with a channel guide you scroll through, but it's an app on your streaming device, with no equipment to rent and no contract.

The main services

Service	Best for
YouTube TV	A popular, full lineup including local channels and lots of sports. Priced like a slimmer cable package. Often the top all-round pick.
Hulu + Live TV	Live channels bundled with Hulu's on-demand library (and often Disney+); good value if you want both.
Sling TV	The budget choice — smaller channel bundles you pick from, at a lower price. Fewer locals, but easy on the wallet.
Fubo	Strong on sports, with lots of live sports channels.
DirecTV / others	Several more exist with various lineups; all work the same basic way.

These cost more than a single on-demand app — often somewhere from around $40 up past $80 a month depending on the lineup — because you're getting many live channels at once. Even so, they usually come in well under a full cable bill, with no box fees or contract.

TIP

You may not need live TV at all

Before paying for a live TV service, ask what you truly watch live. Many people find that on-demand services plus a free antenna for local channels cover everything they care about — and skip the pricier live bundle entirely. Live TV streaming is wonderful if you want it, but it's the most expensive piece, so make sure you'll use it before adding it.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Cable's best part, without cable's worst

A live TV service gives you the familiar comfort of live channels and a guide to flip through — the part of cable people miss — while dropping the box rentals, the contracts, and much of the cost. If you're a "turn on the news and leave it" household, it's the bridge that makes cutting the cord feel like no loss at all.

CHAPTER 21

Free Local Channels with an Antenna

Here's one of the best-kept secrets in television, and a favorite of mine: your local broadcast channels — ABC, NBC, CBS, FOX, PBS, and more — are available **free, over the air**, in beautiful high definition, with nothing but a simple antenna. No subscription, no monthly fee, ever.

How it works

Those local stations broadcast their signal through the air, as they always have. A modern **TV antenna** — a small, flat panel you can often tuck behind the TV or stick in a window — catches that signal and feeds it straight to your TV. The picture is crystal-clear digital, often *better* than cable's version, and it costs you nothing after the one-time price of the antenna (commonly around $20 to $40).

Setting one up

1. Buy a modern **indoor HDTV antenna** (a flat one is fine for most). Ask me for a recommendation if you like.
2. Plug its cable into the **antenna socket** on the back of your TV (round, threaded connector).
3. Place the antenna high and near a window if you can — position affects reception.
4. On your TV, go to its settings and run **Channel Scan** (sometimes "Auto Program"). It finds all the free channels in range.
5. That's it — your local channels now appear, free forever, on your TV's own tuner.

GOOD TO KNOW

What an antenna gets you — and what it doesn't

An antenna gives you the *local broadcast* channels — your network affiliates (ABC, NBC, CBS, FOX), PBS, and a scattering of extra local and classic-TV channels — all free. It does *not* get cable-only channels (like CNN, ESPN, or HGTV); those come from streaming services. For local news, network shows, and much live sports on the big networks, though, an antenna is unbeatable value.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Your local news and network shows, free for life

For the price of a couple of restaurant meals, once, an antenna hands you your local news, weather, network dramas, and a surprising amount of live sports — free, forever, in sparkling picture. It's the first thing I set up for many cord-cutters, because it covers so much at no ongoing cost. A genuine bargain.

CHAPTER 22

Keeping Up with News & Weather

A common worry: "If I drop cable, how do I keep up with the news?" Rest easy — news is one of the easiest things to keep, and you have more ways to get it than ever, many of them free.

Your options for news

- **Local news** — free with an antenna (your local stations' broadcasts), or through their free apps.
- **National network news** — also free over the antenna (ABC, NBC, CBS evening news).
- **Cable news channels** (CNN, FOX News, MSNBC) — available through live TV streaming services, or some offer their own apps.
- **Free news channels** — services like Pluto TV and others carry live news channels at no cost.
- **Weather** — a free weather app on your phone or TV, or your local station's forecast.

TIP

For most people, free covers the news entirely

Between a free antenna for local and network news and the free news channels on services like Pluto TV, the great majority of folks find their news needs fully met at no cost. Unless you're devoted to a *particular* cable news channel, you likely won't miss a beat — or pay a cent — for staying informed.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Stay informed, your way, often for free

Dropping cable doesn't mean dropping the news — far from it. You keep your trusted local station, the network broadcasts, the weather, and plenty of live news, much of it free. You might even find you have *more* choice than before, and pay less for it.

CHAPTER 23

Following Your Sports

Sports is the one area where cord-cutting takes a little more thought, because the games get spread across different services. But with a bit of planning, you can absolutely follow your teams — let me give you an honest map of how.

Where the games are

- **Big-network games** (many NFL, college football, and others on ABC, NBC, CBS, FOX) — *free with an antenna*, or through a live TV service.
- **Cable-sports channels** (ESPN and such) — through live TV streaming services like YouTube TV or Fubo.
- **League packages** — most leagues (NFL, MLB, NBA, NHL) sell their own streaming pass to follow a sport or team closely.
- **Your regional teams** — local baseball, basketball, and hockey can be the trickiest; where they live varies by region and changes year to year.

The honest advice for sports fans

If live sports is important to you, plan around *your* specific teams before you cut the cord. Figure out which service carries them this season (it does shift), and build your lineup around that. A live TV service like YouTube TV or Fubo, plus an antenna, covers most fans — but the details are worth checking for your teams.

FROM BILL

Sports fan? Let's map out your teams together

Following specific teams is the one area where a little expert help really pays off, because where games live can be a moving target. Tell me which teams you follow, and I'll help you figure out exactly which services you need this season to see them — and which you can skip. It's the surest way to cut the cord without missing a game. Call me at **(330) 200-8042**.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Keep your teams, lose the bloated bill

Sports takes a little planning, but it's very doable — most fans end up watching their teams for less than cable charged, with the bonus of free network games over the antenna. With a clear map of where your games live, you can cheer them on without the cable company along for the ride.

PART 6

Building Your Setup & Keeping It Cheap

Designing your own personal lineup, a few worked examples, the tricks to avoid overpaying, and a simple way to keep your subscriptions from quietly piling up.

CHAPTER 24

Designing Your Personal Lineup

Now we put it all together into *your* setup. The goal is simple: cover everything you actually watch, for as little as possible. Let's build it the smart way, starting from what you love rather than from a list of services.

Start with what you watch

Before choosing any service, jot down what you and your household actually watch in a typical week. Be honest — not what you *might* watch, but what you really do:

1. **Local news and network shows?** → A free antenna covers these.
2. **Specific streaming shows** (a Netflix series, Disney for the grandkids)? → One or two on-demand services.
3. **Live cable channels** (news channels, HGTV, ESPN)? → A live TV service — the priciest piece, so only if you truly watch them.
4. **Particular sports teams?** → Check where their games live, and plan around that.
5. **Just something on in the background?** → Free services (Tubi, Pluto) handle this nicely.

Then match services to the list — and stop

Now pick the *fewest* services that cover your list, and resist adding more "just in case." The whole saving lives in restraint. A typical happy setup is an antenna plus one or two on-demand services, maybe a live TV service if you watch live channels — and that's it.

> TIP
> **The one-page plan**
> On a single sheet, write your "watch list" on the left and the service that covers each on the right. When every item on the left has a cover, you're done — don't add anything the list didn't ask for. This simple exercise is the difference between saving $80 a month and accidentally rebuilding a cable bill.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A lineup that fits like a glove

Building from what you actually watch means you end up paying only for television you truly enjoy — nothing wasted, nothing missed. It's the opposite of the old cable bundle, where you paid for hundreds of channels to watch a dozen. Your lineup, your way, at your price.

CHAPTER 25

A Few Example Setups

Sometimes the easiest way to picture your own setup is to see a few others. Here are some common household types and a sensible lineup for each. Yours might be a blend — these are just starting points to adapt.

Example lineups

If you're…	A sensible lineup
The thrifty minimalist	A free antenna (local + network news and shows) + one free service like Tubi or Pluto. Monthly cost: about zero. Covers news, network TV, and plenty of movies.
The casual watcher	Antenna + Netflix (or Prime Video) for shows and movies. A modest monthly fee, and most evenings covered.
The grandparents' house	Antenna + Disney+ (for visiting grandchildren) + one on-demand service you enjoy. Family-friendly and affordable.
The news-and-live-TV household	Antenna + a live TV service (YouTube TV or Sling) for live news channels. Pricier, but still under cable, with the live feel you're used to.
The sports fan	Antenna (free network games) + a live TV service strong on sports (YouTube TV or Fubo) + maybe a league pass for your team.

GOOD TO KNOW

Mix, match, and change your mind

None of these is fixed. Start with whichever is closest to you, live with it a month, and adjust — drop what you don't use, add what you miss. Because everything is month-to-month, your setup can evolve as your watching does. There's no wrong starting point, only a starting point you refine.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A clear picture to start from

Seeing a few real examples takes the guesswork out of "where do I even begin?" Pick the one that looks most like your household, use it as a template, and you've got a sensible, affordable setup on day one — which you can then fine-tune into something perfectly yours.

CHAPTER 26

The Tricks to Avoid Overpaying

Cord-cutting saves money — *if* you avoid a few easy traps. Streaming companies are as keen to grow your bill as cable ever was, just more quietly. Here are the habits that keep your savings real.

The money-saving habits

- **Keep the number of paid services small.** Each is cheap; a pile of them isn't. Two or three paid services is a sweet spot for most.
- **Rotate, don't hoard.** Subscribe to watch a series, then cancel and move on. Come back when there's new to watch. No contracts means this is easy and allowed.
- **Choose the with-ads tier** unless the ads genuinely bother you — it's often noticeably cheaper.
- **Use the free services and antenna** for as much as they'll cover before paying for more.
- **Watch for bundles.** Some services come together cheaper (Disney+, Hulu, and ESPN, for instance), or come free with something you already pay for (like Amazon Prime).
- **Review your subscriptions regularly** (next chapter) so nothing you've stopped watching keeps charging you.

HEADS UP

The slow creep is the real enemy

No single streaming service will blow your budget — the danger is the *slow creep*: a service added here, a forgotten free trial there, until one day your streaming bill quietly rivals the cable bill you left. The fix isn't hard, just a little ongoing attention. Stay a touch vigilant and the savings stay yours.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Keep the savings you came for

A handful of sensible habits — stay lean, rotate, use free options, review now and then — are what turn cord-cutting from a brief novelty into years of real savings. It's not about depriving yourself; it's about paying only for what you watch. Do that, and the cable company's old bill becomes a distant memory.

CHAPTER 27

Keeping Track of Your Subscriptions

The single most valuable money habit in streaming is simply *knowing what you're paying for*. It sounds obvious, but forgotten subscriptions are where people quietly lose money. Let's set up an easy way to stay on top of it.

Make a simple list

Keep a running list — on paper, in a note on your phone, wherever suits you — of every streaming service you pay for, with its monthly cost and where you signed up. Something as simple as:

Service	Cost / month	Where I signed up
Netflix	(your amount)	netflix.com
YouTube TV	(your amount)	its website
Disney+	(your amount)	through Amazon

Review it every few months

1. Every few months, pull out your list and add up the total. Seeing the real monthly sum is eye-opening and keeps you honest.
2. For each service, ask: **"Have I actually watched this lately?"**
3. If not, cancel it (you know how, from Part 4). You can always come back — there's no contract.
4. Check your bank or card statement now and then too, to catch any charge you don't recognize.

> **TIP**
>
> **A ten-minute review, a real yearly saving**
>
> Sitting down four times a year to glance at your list and cancel what you've stopped watching might save you a few hundred dollars across a year — for ten minutes' work. It's one of the highest-value little habits in this whole book. Put a recurring reminder on your phone or calendar so it actually happens.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

No more paying for what you don't watch

A simple list and an occasional review mean you're always in command of your streaming budget — no forgotten services, no surprise charges, no quiet creep. You see exactly what you pay and exactly what you get, and you trim anything that's no longer earning its keep. That's how the savings last.

PART 7

Everyday Use & Fixing Hiccups

Finding something to watch, making the picture and text easier, the common little problems and their simple fixes, and how to make the leap from cable cleanly.

CHAPTER 28

Finding Something to Watch

With so much on tap, a new worry appears: "How do I *find* anything?" It's a happy problem, and easily solved. A few simple habits turn the ocean of choice into an easy evening of watching what you love.

The easy ways to find a show

- **Search by voice.** Hold the microphone button on the remote and say a show, movie, or actor's name. The device finds it across your apps and tells you where to watch.
- **Use the search at the top** of your device's home screen — type (or speak) a name, and it shows which app has it.
- **Browse inside an app.** Each service groups its shows into tidy categories — "Comedies," "New releases," "Because you watched…"
- **Let it recommend.** The more you watch, the better your device and apps get at suggesting things you'll like, right on the home screen.

A tip for couples and households

Many services let each person have their own **profile** — so your recommendations aren't muddled with your spouse's westerns or the grandkids' cartoons. Setting up a profile each keeps everyone's suggestions sensible. It's optional, but a nice touch in a shared house.

TIP

When overwhelmed, search for one specific thing

If the sea of choice ever feels paralyzing (it happens to everyone), don't browse endlessly — think of *one* show, movie, or actor you like and search for it by voice. Starting from something specific beats scrolling, and it usually leads you to three more things you'll enjoy. The voice button is your shortcut past the overwhelm.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Never 'nothing on' again

The old complaint — "500 channels and nothing on" — disappears with streaming. Whatever mood you're in, a quick search or browse surfaces something to suit it, from last night's show to a film you loved decades ago. The hardest part becomes choosing, which is a far nicer problem to have.

CHAPTER 29

Making It Easier to See & Hear

Streaming devices and smart TVs have generous settings to make watching more comfortable — bigger text, captions, clearer sound. There's no reason to squint or strain, so let's set things up kindly.

Helpful comfort settings

- **Captions (subtitles)** — the words shown at the bottom of the screen. A boon if dialogue is hard to catch. Turn them on in a show's playback menu, or in the device's accessibility settings, for all shows.
- **Bigger on-screen text** — most devices have a text-size or "larger text" setting in their accessibility menu.
- **Clearer speech** — some TVs and devices have a "dialogue" or "speech" sound mode that makes voices stand out over music and effects.
- **Audio description** — for those with low vision, a narrator describes what's happening on screen; available on many shows.

Better sound, if you want it

If your TV's built-in speakers are hard to hear, a simple **soundbar** — a slim speaker that sits under the TV — makes a big difference to clarity, especially for dialogue. It's an optional extra, but a popular one for comfortable listening. Ask me if you'd like a recommendation.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Comfortable watching, set up for you

Captions when you want them, text you can read, speech you can hear clearly — a few minutes in the settings makes every evening's watching easier and more enjoyable. Your television should suit your eyes and ears, and these tools make sure it does.

CHAPTER 30

Fixing the Common Hiccups

Streaming is reliable, but like anything, it has the odd off day — a frozen picture, a sign-in that won't take. The wonderful news is that a tiny handful of simple fixes solve almost everything. Keep this chapter handy.

The golden fixes

If this happens…	…try this
Picture freezes or buffers	Usually a Wi-Fi hiccup. Pause a moment and let it catch up; if it persists, restart the device (unplug its power 10 seconds, plug back in) and restart your internet router.
"No signal" / black screen	Wrong TV input. Press Input/Source on the TV remote and select the right HDMI.
An app won't open or play	Close it and reopen; if still stuck, restart the device. Occasionally, sign out and back in to that app.
Remote not responding	Fresh batteries fix most remote troubles. Also try restarting the device.
Poor picture / keeps dropping quality	Your Wi-Fi may be weak in that room. Move the router closer, or ask about a Wi-Fi extender.
Forgotten which service has a show	Use the voice search — it looks across all your apps and tells you.

The universal fix

When in doubt, **restart things**, in this order: the streaming device (unplug its power for ten seconds, plug back in), and your **internet router** (unplug for a full minute, plug back in, wait a couple of minutes). This "turn it off and on again" clears the great majority of streaming troubles, and never harms a thing.

TIP

Weak Wi-Fi in the TV room is the usual culprit

If streaming stutters only on one TV, especially one far from your internet box, the issue is almost always Wi-Fi not reaching that room strongly — not your internet speed. A small gadget called a **Wi-Fi extender** (or a mesh system) fixes this beautifully. It's a common, very solvable problem, and a great thing to call me about if the picture keeps buffering in one spot.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

You can fix most things yourself, in a minute

You don't need a technician for the everyday hiccups. Switch the input, restart the device, swap the remote batteries, restart the router — these few moves clear up nearly everything streaming ever throws at you. That's real confidence: knowing the problem is small and the fix is in your hands.

CHAPTER 31

Making the Leap from Cable

When you're ready to actually cut the cord, a little care in *how* you make the switch saves money and avoids any gap in your watching. Here's the sensible way to make the move.

The smart order of operations

1. **Set up streaming first, while you still have cable.** Get your device, antenna, and apps going and live with them a couple of weeks. Make sure you're comfortable and nothing's missing.
2. **Confirm your must-haves are covered** — local news, your shows, your teams. Fix any gaps before you cancel.
3. **Then call to cancel cable TV.** Keep your *internet* (you need it!) — you're only cancelling the television part.
4. **Return any rented equipment** (cable boxes) to avoid ongoing fees, and get a receipt.
5. **Double-check your next bill** to confirm the TV charges are gone and your internet price is fair.

A word on your internet bill

When you cancel TV but keep internet, the company may raise your internet price (losing the "bundle discount") — sometimes enough to eat into savings. It's worth a friendly call to ask for their best internet-only rate, or to shop around. Even so, internet-plus-streaming almost always beats the old cable bundle. Just go in knowing to ask.

> **FROM BILL**
>
> **Let me help you make the switch cleanly**
>
> The actual switch — making sure everything's covered, cancelling without a gap, returning the boxes, and getting the best internet-only price — is a perfect thing to do together. I'll make sure you don't lose a show you love or pay a fee you shouldn't. One call to me, and the leap from cable is smooth and worry-free: **(330) 200-8042**.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A clean switch, and the savings begin

Make the leap the careful way — streaming first, confirm, then cancel — and you'll never feel a bump, just a lighter bill. From that month on, the money you were handing the cable company stays in your pocket, while you watch everything you love. That's the whole journey of this book, complete.

PART 8

Your Everyday Cheat-Sheet

The quick reference to keep by the TV: the whole plan on a page, a plain-English glossary, and my standing offer to help.

CHAPTER 32

Your Cord-Cutting Plan on a Page

Here's the whole book, boiled down to a plan and a quick reference. Keep it by the TV. Do these things in order and you'll cut the cord smoothly and save real money.

The plan, step by step

Step	What to do
1. Check your internet	Run a speed test. 25 Mbps or more and you're ready.
2. Get a streaming device	A Roku (or Fire TV, Apple TV, Google TV) — or use your smart TV.
3. Add a free antenna	For free local + network channels and news.
4. List what you watch	Write down your real weekly viewing.
5. Pick a few services	The fewest that cover your list. Lean on free ones first.
6. Try it, keep cable a bit	Live with streaming a couple of weeks before cancelling.
7. Cancel cable TV (keep internet)	Return the boxes; ask for a good internet-only price.
8. Review every few months	Cancel services you've stopped watching.

The everyday reference

To do this	Do this
No picture / black screen	Press Input/Source on the TV remote; pick the right HDMI.
Frozen or buffering	Let it catch up; if it persists, restart the device and router.
Find a show fast	Hold the remote's voice button and say its name.
Captions on	In the show's playback menu, or the device's accessibility settings.
Save money	Keep services few, rotate them, use free options, review often.
Something's wrong	Restart the device (unplug 10 sec) and router (unplug 1 min).

TIP

Keep it simple and you'll keep saving

The whole secret to happy cord-cutting fits in one line: a device, a free antenna, a few chosen services, and an occasional review. Do that, and you get everything you love to watch for far less — month after month, year after year.

CHAPTER 33

A Plain-English Glossary

If a term ever trips you up, look it up here. Every word appears somewhere in the book.

Term	In plain English
Cutting the cord	Cancelling cable/satellite TV and watching over the internet instead.
Streaming	Watching video over the internet as it arrives, rather than from a cable line.
Streaming device	A small box or stick (Roku, Fire TV, Apple TV, Chromecast) that puts streaming apps on your TV.
Smart TV	A television with streaming apps built in, needing no extra device.
App / service / channel	A doorway to a library of shows — Netflix, Disney+, and so on.
On-demand	Pick any show from a library and watch it any time, no schedule.
Live TV streaming	A service of live channels (like cable) delivered over the internet — YouTube TV, Sling.
Antenna	A simple device that catches free local broadcast channels out of the air.
Subscription	A monthly fee for a service; cancel any time, no contract.
Free trial	A free period to try a service; remember to cancel if you don't want to continue.
Streaming / with-ads tier	A cheaper plan that shows some commercials; the pricier tier has few or none.
Mbps	Megabits per second — the measure of internet speed. 25+ streams fine.
HDMI	The flat, wide socket on your TV that a streaming device plugs into.
Input / Source	The TV button that chooses which plugged-in device to show.
Buffering	When the picture pauses to catch up — usually a Wi-Fi hiccup.
Wi-Fi extender	A gadget that spreads your Wi-Fi to a far room for smoother streaming.
Router	The box in your home that broadcasts your Wi-Fi internet.
Profile	A personal space within a service, so recommendations stay yours.
Soundbar	A slim speaker under the TV for clearer, louder sound.

CHAPTER 34

Where to Learn More & When to Call Bill

You've reached the end — and you now know more about cutting the cord than most people who've already done it. Here's where to turn for more, and a few parting words from me.

Good places to learn more

- **Each service's own help pages** — clear guides for signing up, using, and cancelling.
- **Your streaming device's support site** (Roku, Amazon, Apple, Google) — step-by-step help for setup and fixes.
- **A "streaming finder" website** (search "where to watch" plus a show's name) — tells you which service carries any given show.
- **GCFGlobal.org** — free, patient lessons on streaming and technology for beginners.
- **And me, anytime** — when you'd rather have a real person help you plan, set up, or fix things, kindly and without rushing.

A few parting words

Here's the truth to carry away: **cutting the cord is far easier than it looks, and the savings are real.** The folks I help are often amazed that something they'd put off for years took an afternoon and saved them a bundle every month. You can absolutely do this.

Don't feel you must do it all at once. Start small — a streaming device and a free antenna — try it alongside your cable, and build confidence before you cancel anything. Step by step, you'll get there, and wonder why you waited.

And if any of it feels like too much, that's exactly what I'm here for. There's no question too small, and no judgment, ever.

How I can help

I'm Bill, and helping folks feel at home with their technology is what I've done for more than 30 years. I serve **Portage County, Ohio**, in plain English, at a pace that suits you — whether that's recommending the right device, setting up your antenna and apps, planning a lineup around your shows and teams, or helping you cancel cable cleanly and get the best internet price. There's never any rush, and you can book a visit any time at **billshometech.com/book**.

FROM BILL

My standing offer

If cutting the cord — or anything about streaming — ever puzzles you, pick up the phone. I'll help you plan it, set it up, and save real money, as plainly and patiently as it takes. Many folks tell me afterward it was one of the best calls they ever made for their budget. No question too small, no pressure ever.

— Bill · Bill's Home Tech · (330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com/book