

High Definition Disc Fact Sheet (June 28, 2006)

What is a high definition optical media?

High Definition discs meets the highest demands for optical discs. Disc capacity is at least three times that of a standard DVD. That means that movies and TV shows on high definition discs (played using the appropriate equipment) will offer a more vivid and detailed picture and more sophisticated surround sound than standard DVDs – similar to the high image quality consumers get with HDTV (satellite, cable or over-the-air).

High Definition Discs will also offer enhanced functionality and interactivity. Extra features may be accessed *during* the movie while the movie continues to play. Discs will be more interactive including games and links to the Internet (provided the player is connected to a home computer network).

What are the differences between the two formats of high definition discs?

Two different formats (HD DVD and Blu-ray) of high definition discs are being released in 2006. Discs sold in each format *will only* play in players designed for that format. Some studios are releasing movies on one format, some on the other, and some on both. Packaging is similar, but easily distinguishable.

HD DVD movies are packaged in a clamshell case differentiated with a clear red band around the perimeter of the case. Movies released in this format will only play in HD DVD machines (produced by Toshiba, RCA and others). Microsoft has announced that it will release an add-on device for its X-Box 360 which will allow playback of HD DVDs. Universal, Warner, New Line, and Paramount will release titles on the HD DVD format.

Blu-ray movies are packaged in a case similar to the case used for HD DVD, except there is a clear blue band around the case perimeter. Movies released in the Blu-ray format will only play in Blu-ray machines (produced by Panasonic, Philips, Pioneer, Samsung, LG, and Sony). Blu-ray movies can also be played in Sony's Playstation 3 which will be released in November 2006. Buena Vista (Disney), Lions Gate, Paramount, Sony, MGM, Fox, and Warner will release titles on the Blu-ray format.

What equipment does a consumer need to play a high definition disc?

In order to play a high definition movie at its *best*, it must be viewed on a high definition (1080p) television using a high definition (either Blu-ray or HD DVD, whichever is appropriate) disc player, a surround sound audio system, and digital connection cables.

There are numerous high definition televisions. It doesn't matter if the television has "HD Built-In" or not to receive a high definition signal from a high definition DVD player. But, the maximum resolution capability (signal scan rates) of HDTVs differs. An HDTV with a maximum 720p resolution will offer a better picture than a standard DVD. HDTVs with 1080i will show nearly perfect quality and HDTVs with 1080p playback will offer the best available picture quality.

There are also a variety of ways to connect a hi def DVD player to a HDTV. If component connections (or DV-I connections) are used, the visual performance may be throttled. The best

connection is made using an HDMI cable which carries both audio and video from the DVD player to the HDTV.

Will standard DVDs play on high def players? Will hi def discs play on standard def players?

Today's DVDs will play on high definition disc players (both Blu-ray and HD DVD) – but they'll play in “upconverted” quality (which is better than playing a standard DVD on a standard DVD player, but less than playing a high definition disc). Generally, high definition discs will not play on standard DVD players, nor will Blu-ray discs play in HD DVD players or vice versa.

Some studios may release some titles with both standard versions and high definition versions on the same disc. These discs will be clearly labeled to include this feature.

What are the copy-protection rules associated with high definition discs?

As with standard DVDs, it is illegal to make any copy of a copyrighted high definition disc (such as any movie or TV show). In fact, the copy protection schemes used for high definition discs are much better and less susceptible to being broken.

Where can I learn more about high definition discs and stay on top of the movies that are being released?

More information is available in the Entertainment Merchants Association (EMA) High Definition Resource Center, which can be reached from a link on the home page of www.vsd.org.

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