

TV to stream 24 channels for digital Olympics

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[Roger Mosey](#) | 10:00 UK time, Tuesday, 3 April 2012

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Since the start of our planning for [London 2012](#), we've had two big thoughts about the way most people will enjoy our content.

The first is that these will be the Games where [HD](#) (High Definition) is mainstream, and if you're like my family and friends, then for events like the 100m final you'd probably want to be sprawled on the sofa in front of a TV set to watch every detail on your own large screen.

That's what our flagship channels [BBC One](#) and [BBC Three](#) will deliver across a range of events - taking you to the action when it matters and catching the medal-winning performances.

The second is that these are the first truly [digital Olympics](#) where we'll offer more choice than ever before, and the pledge we made is that you'll be able to watch sport from every venue from first thing in the morning to last thing at night.

How
times
have



changed: The 24 extra BBC-branded Olympic channels will massively extend choice for viewers

At peak this will mean we bring in 24 HD streams of content - with the result that hockey fans can watch live uninterrupted hockey, and table tennis fans can stick all day with their sport too.

This represents four times more channels than in Beijing, and a total of around 2500 hours of live sport - which is at least double what we've offered in the past.

The main way we planned for you to be able to watch those 24 streams was via our [BBC Sport](#) and [2012](#) websites.

But we were always conscious that in a perfect world we'd try to make the services available on your television, because we recognise that the 40-inch HD experience is one that the hockey and table tennis fans and the rest might want for their dedicated service as well as for BBC One and

BBC Three.

So we're pleased to announce today that's precisely what we're offering to a range of television platform operators - that they can [use the BBC's 24 streams in standard or high definition to create additional television channels](#) through the [BBC red button](#) and their Electronic Programme Guides.

We've had discussions with cable and satellite providers on a non-exclusive basis to see if they'd like to run BBC-branded Olympic channels that will massively extend choice for their viewers in addition to what we can offer ourselves online, via the [BBC iPlayer](#) or through connected TV services.

The aim is that you'd be able to pick from watching BBC Olympics 1 right through to BBC Olympics 24 with full programme guides and the ability to record your favourite sports.

Many of those discussions are still continuing, but the BBC, [Sky](#) and [Freesat](#) have announced today that they've come to an agreement that will deliver the 24 channels to all Sky and Freesat homes. Sky will also pick up the costs of satellite distribution, irrespective of whether other platforms join in - though we hope and believe there'll be more announcements soon.

Just to underline - this is a distribution agreement for the Sky platform and Freesat, and it's not about sharing the broadcast rights which remain with the BBC within the UK.

This is no different from existing BBC channels being on Sky, [Virgin](#), [Freesat](#) and [BT Vision](#). But clearly we're delighted by the ability to get BBC channels to as many people as possible on the device of their choosing.

We should be clear that not every platform will be able to accommodate such a huge technical offer, which amounts to 48 channels in total if you count 24 SD (Standard Definition) plus 24 HD.

But for [Freeview](#) users at peak there will be two extra channels (Channel 301 and 302) available via the EPG and BBC Red Button, that will double the choice on offer from BBC One and BBC Three - meaning that from 7pm you'll have at least 4 television services plus the full 24-stream service via our website.

As ever, we'll keep you up-to-date here with further developments.

But in the complexity of navigation through all the content of a digital Olympics, which my colleague Phil Fearnley [writes more about here](#), we reckon this is an exciting development that will make BBC content more convenient and simpler to find.