

by Alan J. Pierce, EdD

The Mohu Leaf® Indoor HD TV Antenna

Television was once free to watch. The full viewing experience was financed by the commercials that were interspaced throughout your viewing experience. Cable, and other alternatives to free TV, came along and for a price they gave you more channels, better reception, and today they provide analog or digital TV reception.

If you have ever contemplated returning to free TV the first thing you need to know is that all US television stations are now only broadcasting in a digital format. So if you are still watching television on an analog TV, you will need to purchase a digital to analog converter to pickup over the air television programming. This government website <http://www.dtv.gov> can provide you with a great deal of background information on what you need to know and do. Remember not only will you need a converter box you will also need an antenna to pull in the digital channels.

The next thing you need to know before you stop your pay service is what channels you will be able to receive over the air with an antenna. This government website (<http://transition.fcc.gov/mb/engineering/maps>) can provide you with a listing of all the available channels in your local neighborhood. You just type in your zip code and a chart will tell you channel availability and signal strength. The chart shows you what the FCC website expected TV reception to be in New City, NY; the place I tested the Mohu Leaf® antenna. Please note that the chart doesn't show any strong channel signals at all at my test location. I was very surprised to find that the Mohu Leaf® antenna did pull in good picture quality from many channels when the weather was good. However, when I tested TV reception on a very windy and rainy day, reception plummeted to fair or poor on all channels except CBS.

The Mohu Leaf® antenna is a 11 ½ by 9 inch thin plastic rectangular sheet. It is installed inside your home next to your TV. One side of the leaf is black and the other

side is white. It has a cable connector attached to the bottom edge of its longer side. See photo 1. To install this antenna you attach one end of the included coaxial cable to the leaf and the other end to your TV. The antenna is so light that it can be pinned to your wall. The installation kit includes the pins for you to use and you push them through two prefabricated small holes in the top edge of the leaf. If your wall isn't sheet rock, Mohu supplied two small Velcro circles for you to use to Velcro it to your wall. To complete your installation you use the original remote to switch your reception from cable to antenna. After your TV searches the airwaves for available channels you're ready to watch free TV.



The channels labeled "Very Good" in the chart, even in good weather did at times suddenly develop moments of pixilation. After the graphics were created for the review, I tested the Leaf one last time on a very windy day. Photo 2 shows CBS with a perfect picture and photo 3 shows a close-up of the pixilation that suddenly appeared on NBC minutes later. The TV reception on NBC, moments before the pixilation started, was as good as the reception shown in photo 1. Atmospheric conditions, your

geographic location, and location of your antenna will definitely affect your TV reception. If the FCC website shows limited, weak, or no reception don't expect the Leaf to perform miracles.



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