

## Flat Panel Screens: Camouflaging Your TV

For many families, the television has become the focal point for the activity in the family room or home theater room. This means it tends to take up a large portion of the room and is what much of the furniture and lighting is developed around. But that looks all together unnatural when the television is turned off.

There are a number of ways to hide a flat panel television when it is not being used by incorporating the feature into the overall home theater room design. Some use a static image to display a piece of art or favorite family picture. Others use elaborate mounting unites and screens to cover the television when it is not in use. A professionally design theater system can incorporate any idea you have to make the room beautiful both when in use as well as when not.

Below are some display options available for home owners as they consider how they want their flat panel television to be concealed when not in use.

### Screensaver Displays

Since many LCD TVs are simple displays like those used by computer users, they can be set to display art and photos when they are not in use. Using a screensaver however does require the television to be on so it is not recommended for long stretches of time. It is best for use during parties.

### Customized Art Covers

Custom art overlay options are becoming more common. A specialized piece of art on a canvas can be made to be placed over the screen when homeowners are not using the TV. This is an inexpensive solution that does not require any new wiring or customized mounting.

Many homeowners choose to hang their flat panel televisions above a fireplace. For a traditional flare, a wooden frame can be installed around it, thus turning your television into a mantel piece. Professional installers can also design an automated system that slides a screen cover over the flat panel.

### Moving Displays

Pop-up and flip-down displays are the ultimate convenience for home theater owners. At the touch of a button, the screen can be brought up from an inconspicuous piece of furniture or down from the ceiling. This technique is especially useful with flat panel televisions that need to be installed at the foot of the bed; the television can be placed on a motorized lifting mechanism that can move the television up while watching TV before bed and down before you turn off the lights.

### Other Considerations

Most home theaters are not comprised of the TV alone. Mounted televisions prove more difficult to integrate into an entertainment system because all the necessary connections need to be run through walls. Wireless technology for these applications is improving but is not yet fool-proof.

Custom home theater installers can offer advice on how to arrange DVD players and receivers to match the subtle look of a hidden flat panel television.

Choosing the right option to hide a LCD TV into a room's design can be difficult. The size and shape of walls or the way they are built can limit the installation options. Place the television in the appropriate spot for viewing, and then start considering installation options.

~ Ben Anton, 2008

### About the Author

Ben Anton lives in the Northwest and writes for Ronny's 5th St. Audio Vision. Ben Anton invites you to find out more about [home theater design](#) and installation at [Ronny's custom home theater](#) retail web site.

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