

Amazon Prime Video will soon come with ads, or a \$2.99 monthly charge to dodge them

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Amazon's Prime Video streaming app on an iPad is seen in Baltimore on March 19, 2018. Amazon says that it will now start charging \$2.99 per month in order for users in the U.S. to watch Prime Video ad free. Credit: AP Photo/Patrick Semansky, File

Amazon Prime Video will include advertising during shows and movies

starting early next year, joining other streaming services that have added different tiers of subscriptions.

Members of Amazon Prime can pay \$2.99 per month in the U.S. to keep their service ad-free, the company said Friday.

Streaming services are in a heated tug-of-war over viewers and users are growing more adept at jumping in and out of those services, often depending on price. The platforms risk losing customers with price hikes, but they could lose them if they don't generate new content that wins over users.

Disney will begin charging \$13.99 a month in the U.S. for ad-free Disney+ in mid-October, 75% more than the ad-supported service. Netflix already charges \$15.49 per month for its ad-free plan, more than twice the monthly subscription for Netflix with ads.

Amazon said limited advertisements will be aired during shows and movies starting early next year so that it can "continue investing in compelling content and keep increasing that investment over a long period of time."

Live events on Amazon Prime, like sports, already include advertising.

Ads in Prime Video content will start in the U.S., U.K., Germany, and Canada in early 2024, followed by France, Italy, Spain, Mexico, and Australia later in the year.

Amazon said that it's not making changes to the price of Prime membership next year. It plans to announce pricing for ad-free programming for countries other than the U.S. at a later time.

For U.S. users, Amazon said it will send out an email to Prime members

several weeks before ads are introduced into its programs with information on how to sign up for the ad-free option if they choose to do so.

Amazon's Prime Video is part of a much bigger slate of perks that come with Amazon Prime membership. Members also get free shipping for goods bought on Amazon.com, groceries, online music and more.

In June Amazon was accused by the Federal Trade Commission for allegedly engaging in a yearslong effort to enroll consumers without consent into Amazon Prime and making it difficult for them to cancel their subscriptions. An Amazon spokesperson said at the time that the FTC's claims were false.

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