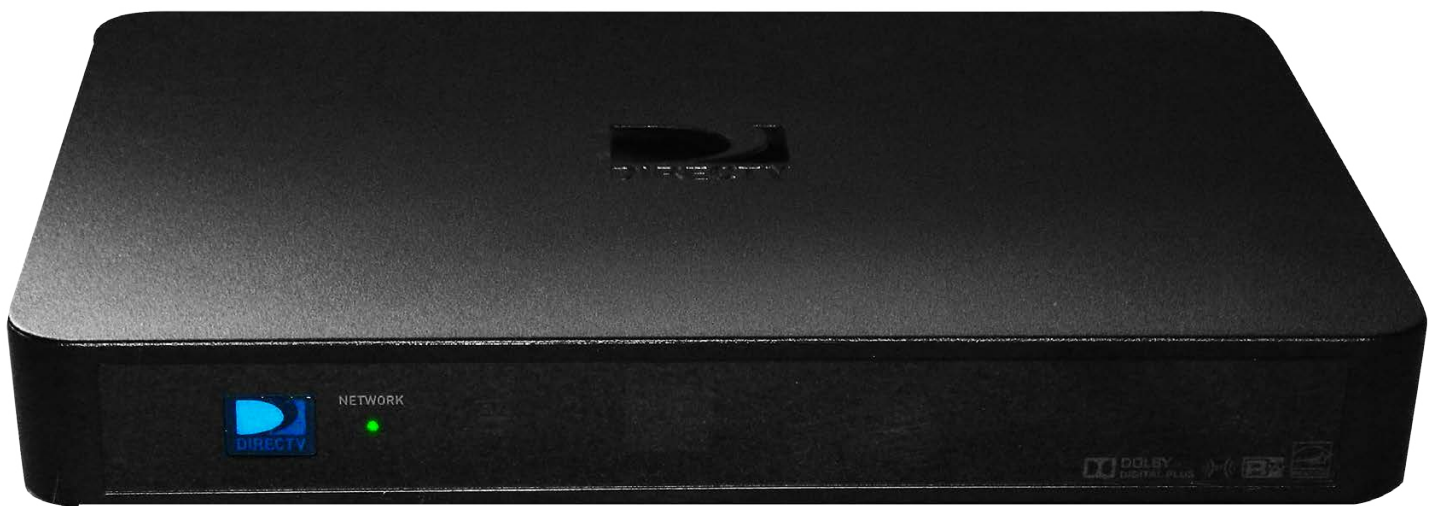


Solid Signal's

HANDS ON REVIEW



DIRECTV C61K Genie
4K Genie Mini Client

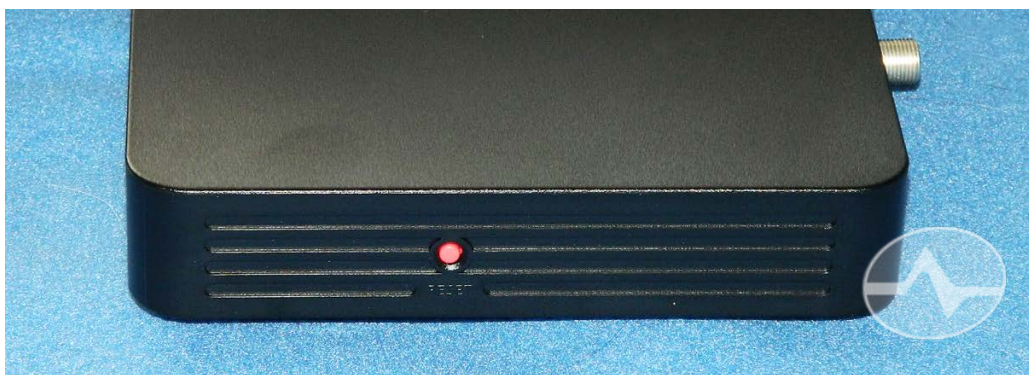
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DIRECTV C61K 4K GENIE CLIENT

It's the next step in your evolution.

While many TVs from Sony, Samsung, and LG now include DIRECTV software built-in, there are still a lot of 4K televisions that haven't earned that "DIRECTV-Ready" designation. Until now there hasn't been a way to watch DIRECTV 4K content on those TVs... so we present the DIRECTV C61K 4K Genie Mini Client! The C61K follows DIRECTV's new design



direction of completely featureless black boxes. Much like other Genie clients there's nothing but a power button and a network light on the front, and a red reset button on the side. Of course this is a client so there's no need for an access card, but that red button does look a little bit lonely.

C61K at a Glance

It's a 4K version of the C41.

The C61K brings 4K output to the Genie family. As of this writing it's the only DIRECTV box that outputs 4K natively. It's designed for people who have a 4K TV that doesn't have DIRECTV software built-in.

C61K clients will work with non-4K TVs but will not output any content from 4K channels without HDMI 2.0 and HDCP 2.2.

- **HDMI, Optical, and Coax Audio out**
- **No legacy SD or HD output**
- **RF and IR Remote capable**
- **Requires HDMI 2.0 and HDCP 2.2**
- **Works with HR34, HR44, and H44 plus future Genie hardware**
- **Will display live 4K content when content is available**
- **Size: 8" x 8" x 1.25" (approx.)**

IT'S ALL ABOUT WHAT'S OUT BACK



The good news is that the C61K has a full complement of outputs. The HDMI output is fully HDMI 2.0/HDCP 2.2-compliant, and there are both optical and coaxial digital outputs. DIRECTV puts a USB port on everything, and in this case it won't do much for the software. It's a convenient place to plug in the power from a streaming stick, and that's about it.

Not pictured: The C61K uses DIRECTV's ubiquitous EPS10 power supply, the same one used for all Genie Clients as well as the H25 receiver. The RC73 Genie Remote also comes standard meaning that you can mount this client behind the TV and operate in RF mode.

Note that there are no component or composite outputs. It's presumed that if you're connecting to an SD television you would be using a different piece of hardware. This one's only for 4K. It will work on an HDTV but will not show 4K content that uses the HDCP 2.2 encryption standard.

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

The C61K Genie Mini Client works... just like any other Genie client. It's roughly the same speed and there are no new features other than an option to set 2160p as a resolution. When in 2160p resolution, all HD and SD content is scaled to 4K, including the menus. The menus themselves appear to be rendered in 1080p and upscaled, as opposed to taking advantage of all that beautiful resolution.

Of course this may be temporary as it has now been three years since DIRECTV updated its user interface. Now that they're part of AT&T, it's a pretty good bet that we'll see a new look for these high-end devices.

Overall, the C61K follows DIRECTV's recent trend of "there's really nothing to review because it just works." The quality of the images is excellent and when it comes to daily operation, it's pretty easy to think of this as just another Genie Mini Client. It will really shine when there's some live 4K content, but that's going to be a while and it may require a different DVR than the current HR44 Genie.

Kudos to DIRECTV for another smooth product release. This client should be available at Solid Signal, literally any day now.

THIS IS BIG... LITERALLY



There haven't been too many DIRECTV products that have been bigger than the previous generation. In point of fact, only the HR34 Genie springs to mind (it was quite a bit larger than the HR24.) The C61K breaks the miniaturization mold. It's a big boy, about the size of an H24 receiver at about 8"x8". The box on top of it in the picture is a C31 client, and you can see the C61K is much larger. It's also quite a bit heavier owing to some serious heat sinks inside, or so I'm told.

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What's the difference between a DIRECTV-Ready TV and a 4K TV?

DIRECTV-Ready is a term used for TVs that have DIRECTV software built in. With these TVs, you still have to be connected to the DIRECTV coaxial cable through a special adapter, but all the software used for rendering the menus and displaying the signal is built right into the TV. Currently, most 2015 smart TVs from Samsung, LG, and Sony are DIRECTV-Ready. A DIRECTV-Ready TV's software is maintained by the TV manufacturer, while DIRECTV controls the software on the client. This could mean that an external client gets a new feature faster.

If your TV isn't DIRECTV-ready, a C61K Genie Mini Client is currently the only way to get 4K content. The content records on your Genie DVR, but the HR34, HR44, and H44 devices won't output 4K. Also, receiving and displaying live 4K content may require a different Genie DVR that isn't available yet.

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