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MICHAEL GILTZ AT WORK

Best TV Shows Of All Time -- The Master List

Here's a rundown of my favorite TV shows of all time. It's a mishmash of everything: dramas, comedies, TV movies, miniseries, you name it. Everything here is scripted; reality TV and game shows and news magazines like "60 Minutes" and talk shows are an entirely different beast. (If you're wondering: David Letterman, Dick Cavett, Johnny Carson and Craig Ferguson.)

As of October of 2014, some 300+ new and ongoing scripted shows are airing on the major networks, basic cable, premium cable, satellite and websites such as Amazon and Netflix. That's just in the US. Literally no one can watch it all. Any more than one person can read even a smattering of the 106,000 books published a year worldwide. And then you have all those shows that need to be watched again. Exactly how well does "The Wonder Years" hold up, you wonder?

So this list is a never-ending process and if your favorite show isn't on here, maybe I haven't seen it yet (or at least not enough of it) or maybe I feel I need to really re-watch it before deciding or maybe, just maybe, I don't like it. It happens. Hopefully, you'll find some shows here you'd been thinking of trying or ones you've never heard of and give them a shot. Thanks to streaming and BluRays and On Demand, classic TV is always ready and waiting to be rediscovered.

What follows is my master list of the best TV shows of all time, followed by some current shows that are too soon to call, the shows I've never seen or feel the need to rewatch before deciding on and then a breakdown of best shows by category like drama, comedy, miniseries, documentary and so on. Enjoy!

THE BEST TV SHOWS OF ALL TIME -- THE MASTER LIST

- Hill Street Blues* (1981 drama)
- The Mary Tyler Moore Show* (1970 comedy)
- Eyes On The Prize* (1987 documentary)
- Monty Python's Flying Circus* (1969 sketch show)
- Brideshead Revisited* (1981 miniseries)
- Upstairs, Downstairs* (1971 drama)
- I Love Lucy* (1951 comedy)
- Freaks And Geeks* (1999 drama)
- The Wire* (2002 drama)/*The Corner* (2000 miniseries)
- The Office* (2001, UK comedy)

- I'll Fly Away* (1991 drama)
- All In The Family* (1971 comedy)
- The Decalogue* (1989 miniseries)
- The Muppet Show* (1976 variety show)
- The 7-Up Series* (1964 documentary)
- Buffy The Vampire Slayer* (1997 drama)
- Pride And Prejudice* (1995 miniseries)
- The Honeymooners* (1955 comedy)
- The Adventures Of Sherlock Holmes* (1984-1994 Jeremy Brett series)
- Faulty Towers* (1975 farce)

- Pee-wee's Playhouse* (1986 comedy)
- Moonlighting* (1985 romantic comedy)
- Lonesome Dove* (1989 miniseries)
- MASH* (1972 comedy)
- The Civil War* (1990 documentary)
- Breaking Bad* (2008 drama)
- The Cosby Show* (1984 comedy)
- Horatio Hornblower* (1998 ongoing drama/miniseries w Ioan Gruffudd)
- Prime Suspect 1 and 2* (1991, 1992+ drama)
- The Dick Van Dyke Show* (1961 comedy)

- The Royle Family* (1998 comedy)
- I, Claudius* (1976 miniseries)
- Your Show Of Shows* (1950 sketch show)
- Battlestar Galactica* (2004 drama)
- A Charlie Brown Christmas* (1965 special)
- Middletown* (1982 documentary)
- Northern Exposure* (1990 romantic comedy)
- The Twilight Zone* (1959 sci-fi anthology)
- The Simpsons* (1989 comedy)
- The Singing Detective* (1986 miniseries)/*Pennies From Heaven* (1978 miniseries)

- The Carol Burnett Show* (1967 sketch show)
- Gilmore Girls* (2000 comic drama)
- Tales Of The City* (1993 miniseries)
- Seinfeld* (1989 comedy)
- The Blue Planet* (2001 documentary)
- Deadwood* (2004 drama)
- Police Squad!* (1982 comedy)
- Talking Heads 1 and 2* (1988/1998 Alan Bennett specials)
- Batman: The Animated Series* (1992 drama)
- Twin Peaks* (1990 drama)

- Band Of Brothers* (2001 miniseries)
- Doctor Who* (1963 drama)
- Arrested Development* (2003 comedy)
- Warrendale* (1967 documentary)
- The Tracey Ullman Show* (1987 sketch show)
- thirtysomething* (1987 drama)
- Frasier* (1993 comedy)
- Star Trek* (1966 drama)
- SpongeBob SquarePants* (1999 comedy)
- The X-Files* (1993 drama)

- Yes, Minister* (1980 comedy)
- Friday Night Lights* (2006 drama)
- The Judy Garland Show* (1963 variety)
- The Beatles Anthology* (1995 documentary)
- Cheers* (1982 comedy)
- Holocaust* (1978 miniseries)
- Eddie Izzard: Dress To Kill* (1998 stand-up special)
- Firefly* (2002 drama)
- South Park* (1997 comedy)
- 24* (2001 drama)

- Mj Name Is Barbra* (1965 variety)
- Mj So-Called Life* (1994 drama)
- Leave It To Beaver* (1957 comedy)
- Amerika* (1987 miniseries)
- All Creatures Great And Small* (1978 drama)
- Chappelle's Show* (2003 sketch)
- American Dreams* (2002 drama)
- The Larry Sanders Show* (1992 comedy)
- The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* (1974 TV movie)
- Space Ghost: Coast To Coast* (1994 comedy)

- The Night Stalker* (1972 TV movie)
- The Wonder Years* (1998 dramedy)
- America: A Tribute To Heroes* (2001 concert special)
- Dexter* (2006 drama)
- Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman* (1976 comedy)
- The Prisoner* (1967 miniseries)
- The Rocky And Bullwinkle Show* (1959 comedy)
- Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* (1979 miniseries)
- The Andy Griffith Show* (1960 comedy)
- Duel* (1972 TV movie)

- TOO SOON TO CALL*
- Inspector George Gently* (2007)
- Archer* (2009 comedy)
- The Walking Dead* (2010 drama)
- Game Of Thrones* (2011 drama)

- SHOWS I NEED TO SEE FOR THE FIRST TIME OR RE-WATCH (BECAUSE IT'S BEEN SO LONG)**
- Alan Partridge*
- An American Family* (1973 PBS documentary)
- Anne Of Green Gables* (1985)
- The Avengers*
- Baseball* (Ken Burns)
- Blackadder*
- Brassed Off*
- Broken Trail* (2006 TV movie)
- Buffalo Bill*
- Civilization*
- Cosmos*
- Danger LIXB*
- The Day After*
- Eleanor and Franklin*
- Elizabeth R*
- Gulliver's Travels* (1996 miniseries)
- Jazz* (Ken Burns)
- The Kids In The Hall* (1988 sketch)
- The Jewel In The Crown*
- Leonard Bernstein's Young People's Concerts*
- Mr. Show*
- The Paper Chase*
- Party Down*
- Planet Earth*
- Reilly: Ace Of Spies*
- The Rockford Files/Maverick*
- S.C.T.V. (1976 sketch)*
- Shogun*
- Sons Of Anarchy*
- St. Elsewhere* (1982 drama)
- Tattlingers* (1988 light drama)
- Victory At Sea*
- The Waltons* (1971 drama)
- The World At War*

- BEST TV SHOWS OF ALL TIME -- BY CATEGORY**
- BEST DRAMAS**
- Hill Street Blues* (1981 drama)
- Upstairs, Downstairs* (1971 drama)
- Freaks And Geeks* (1999 drama)
- The Wire* (2002 drama)/*The Corner* (2000 miniseries)
- I'll Fly Away* (1991 drama)
- Buffy The Vampire Slayer* (1997 drama)
- The Adventures Of Sherlock Holmes* (1984-1994 Jeremy Brett series)
- Breaking Bad* (2008 drama)
- Horatio Hornblower* (1998 ongoing drama/miniseries w Ioan Gruffudd)
- Prime Suspect 1 and 2* (1991, 1992+ drama)
- Battlestar Galactica* (2004 drama)
- Gilmore Girls* (2000 comic drama)
- Deadwood* (2004 drama)
- Twin Peaks* (1990 drama)
- Doctor Who* (1963 drama)
- thirtysomething* (1987 drama)
- Star Trek* (1966 drama)
- Friday Night Lights* (2006 drama)
- Firefly* (2002 drama)
- 24* (2001 drama)
- Mj So-Called Life* (1994 drama)
- The X-Files* (1993 drama)
- Dexter* (2006 drama)
- American Dreams* (2002 drama)
- The Waltons* (1971 drama)

- BEST COMEDY/VARIETY**
- The Mary Tyler Moore Show* (1970 comedy)
- Monty Python's Flying Circus* (1969 sketch show)
- I Love Lucy* (1951 comedy)
- The Office* (2001, UK comedy)
- All In The Family* (1971 comedy)
- The Muppet Show* (1976 variety show)
- The Honeymooners* (1955 comedy)
- Faulty Towers* (1975 farce)
- Pee-wee's Playhouse* (1986 comedy)
- Moonlighting* (1985 romantic comedy)
- MASH* (1972 comedy)
- The Cosby Show* (1984 comedy)
- The Dick Van Dyke Show* (1961 comedy)
- The Royle Family* (1998 comedy)
- Your Show Of Shows* (1950 sketch show)
- Northern Exposure* (1990 romantic comedy)
- The Simpsons* (1989 comedy)
- The Carol Burnett Show* (1967 sketch show)
- Gilmore Girls* (2000 comic drama)
- Seinfeld* (1989 comedy)
- Police Squad!* (1982 comedy)
- Arrested Development* (2003 comedy)
- The Tracey Ullman Show* (1987 sketch show)
- Frasier* (1993 comedy)
- SpongeBob SquarePants* (1999 comedy)
- Yes, Minister* (1980 comedy)
- The Judy Garland Show* (1963 variety)
- Cheers* (1982 comedy)
- South Park* (1997 comedy)
- Leave It To Beaver* (1957 comedy)
- Chappelle's Show* (2003 sketch)
- The Larry Sanders Show* (1992 comedy)
- Space Ghost: Coast To Coast* (1994 comedy)
- Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman* (1976 comedy)
- The Wonder Years* (1998 dramedy)
- The Rocky And Bullwinkle Show* (1959 comedy)
- The Andy Griffith Show* (1960 comedy)

- BEST MINISERIES/TV MOVIES**
- Brideshead Revisited* (1981 miniseries)
- The Decalogue* (1989 miniseries)
- Pride And Prejudice* (1995 miniseries)
- Lonesome Dove* (1989 miniseries)
- I, Claudius* (1976 miniseries)
- The Singing Detective* (1986 miniseries)/*Pennies From Heaven* (1978 miniseries)
- Tales Of The City* (1993 miniseries)
- Talking Heads 1 and 2* (1988/1998 Alan Bennett specials)
- Band Of Brothers* (2001 miniseries)
- Holocaust* (1978 miniseries)
- Amerika* (1987 miniseries)
- The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* (1974 TV movie)
- The Night Stalker* (1972 TV movie)
- Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* (1979 miniseries)
- Duel* (1972 TV movie)

- BEST DOCUMENTARIES**
- Eyes On The Prize* (1987 documentary)
- The 7-Up Series* (1964 documentary)
- The Civil War* (1990 documentary)
- Middletown* (1982 documentary)
- The Blue Planet* (2001 documentary)
- Warrendale* (1967 documentary)
- The Beatles Anthology* (1995 documentary)

- BEST ANIMATED SHOWS**
- A Charlie Brown Christmas* (1965 special)
- The Simpsons* (1989 comedy)
- Batman: The Animated Series* (1992 drama)
- SpongeBob SquarePants* (1999 comedy)
- South Park* (1997 comedy)
- Space Ghost: Coast To Coast* (1994 comedy)
- The Rocky And Bullwinkle Show* (1959 comedy)

- BEST SCI-FI/FANTASY/HORROR**
- Buffy The Vampire Slayer* (1997 drama)
- Battlestar Galactica* (2004 drama)
- The Twilight Zone* (1959 sci-fi anthology)
- Batman: The Animated Series* (1992 drama)
- Doctor Who* (1963 drama)
- Star Trek* (1966 drama)
- The X-Files* (1993 drama)
- Firefly* (2002 drama)
- Space Ghost: Coast To Coast* (1994 comedy)
- The Night Stalker* (1972 TV movie)
- The Prisoner* (1967 miniseries)

- BEST SPECIALS/ONE-OFFS**
- A Charlie Brown Christmas* (1965 special)
- Eddie Izzard: Dress To Kill* (1998 stand-up special)
- Mj Name Is Barbra* (1965 variety)
- America: A Tribute To Heroes* (2001 concert special)
- Live Aid* (1985) (not on master list)



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POSTED BY MICHAEL GILTZ AT 3:00 PM

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