

The Top 10 Sitcoms of All Time

Intro by Michael Lytle:

Here at [Rambling Ever On](#) our favorite thing to do is argue. Scratch that. Arguing is our SECOND favorite thing to do. Our real favorite is ranking things. That is our passion. So we were excited about trying to determine the best sitcom ever. Most websites would throw a few names in a hat and come up with some ridiculous list. That was simply not an option for us. We had to go above and beyond. Our nine-member panel developed a 128 entry, double elimination tournament to definitively determine the best sitcom in the history of television. We spent months voting. Friendships were severely tested, unkind words were spoken that can never be taken back, but we did it all for our loyal readers. We present now our Top 10 Sitcoms of All Time.

10. 30 Rock



Most sitcoms rely on the tired formula of 1.) Joke set up, 2.) Punchline, and 3.) Canned laughter. The jokes are so predictable you can see them coming a mile away. 30 Rock turned this tired formula on its head. The jokes came in at such a fast pace that if you were not paying attention or if you laughed too long at one joke you might miss the next three. This show was wildly inconsistent, but when it was “on” there was nothing funnier. Tina Fey nailed it when she created this TV show about a TV show. It also gets bonus points for turning Alec Baldwin into a likable character. – Michael Lytle

9. Community



Great, sharp writing. One of the best ensemble casts of any show ever. Even when it was not trying to be funny it had a lot of great things to say about friendship. Greendale Community College is not a place any of us would ever want to attend, but we enjoyed watching the study group make their way through it while trying to maintain their sanity. Possibly the most creative storytelling of any show on this list. The only knock was that the quality varied from season to season. Even the worst seasons were funny, though, and any show that gave us *Troy and Abed in the Morning* deserves a place on the list.
– Michael Lytle

8. The Simpsons



The Simpsons premiere in 1989 was a TV landmark for several reasons. The Simpsons was neither a Saturday morning cartoon nor a family show like prime time cartoons of yore such as The Flintstones and The Jetsons. So, Fox took a big risk when they green-lit the project. But that risk has paid huge rewards! The Simpsons, currently airing its 27th season, is the longest-running animated American series, longest running American sitcom, and longest running scripted prime time

series. The show also pioneered the way for several future prime time animated shows in the same vein. Historical qualification and ramifications aside, The Simpsons is one of the funniest shows I've ever seen. Period. What set the show apart was the style of humor. The freedom accompanied by animation made it possible for The Simpsons to feature comedic moments and styles that would not be realistic for a live action show, such as Homer's day-dream sequences which became one of numerous trademarks. Also, both in subtle and overt form, The Simpsons was often a critique of our culture and fearless in its comedy. The Simpsons took shots at any and everything including its own network, Fox, proving no one was out of bounds. Though the show has declined in recent years proving it's hard to stay fresh for nearly three decades the Simpsons belongs in any discussion of the greatest TV of all-time! – Mark Sass

7. Frasier



What can I say about Frasier? It was smarter than it needed to be, and I mean that as a compliment. There are still hundreds of obscure music, art, or opera references that I will never understand. And that is ok. The show didn't rely on its intelligence to make us laugh. It was simply icing on the cake. The main cast: Kelsey Grammer, David Hyde Pierce, John Mahoney, Jane Leeves, Peri Gilpin, and Moose/Enzo (Eddie the dog) were the perfect comedy team. They were generous as performers, allowing each other moments to shine. They were as capable of silly, over-the-top scenarios, with fast-paced

timing and tongue-twisting dialogue as they were of heartfelt, emotionally bare moments of drama. While the show did climax a few seasons too soon (with Niles and Daphne finally getting together – spoiler alert?), it was still funny throughout its run. I can't fault the actors or the writers for stretching things out a little too much. We didn't want to say goodbye either. – Phill Lytle

6. The Office (U.S. Version)



The Office was good from the beginning. “Diversity Day” in Season 1 leaves no doubt about that. But there was a run starting around season 3 when the Scranton branch usurped the Stamford branch that the show entered rarefied air for entertainment. In a lot of ways, it was like watching a championship basketball team. They had their superstar in Michael. He was definitely the centerpiece and he was such a legendary sitcom character that you can easily divide his moments into Hilarious Michael, Awkward Michael and Redeeming Michael. And there were moments when he was two of these and even times when he was all three (when he gives the speech to Ryan’s college class and drops the mic). But they also had the perfect blend of stars in Dwight, Jim and Andy and role players (Creed and Kevin especially) who all knew their part. The show was good even down to the 10th and 11th most important characters, even if they were not supposed to be funny. If you told me that Oscar and CFO Wallace were real people who they pulled in off the street and didn’t know they were in a sitcom, I’d believe you. The acting was that good. And the juggernaut rolled. Only The Office could make a fire drill the best cold opening ever. And for that it earns a

place in our Top 10 of all time. – Gowdy Cannon

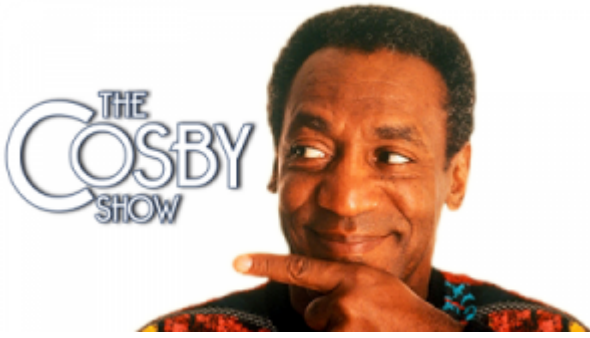
5. The Andy Griffith Show



There are those who will tell you that Don Knotts made the show. It cannot be denied that he was a huge part of the success and hilarity of the show during its first five seasons. Nor can it be forgotten that the quality of the show went downhill soon after he left. However, Barney was just one of a huge and unforgettable cast of iconic characters that included the likes of Otis Campbell, Floyd Lawson, The Darlins, Ernest T. Bass, Aunt Bee, Opie Taylor, and, of course, the inimitable Andy Taylor. This is not to mention the many, many other amazing and colorful characters who gave the show its rich texture. This is also not to mention some of the best music and intro theme song of all time.

– Benjamin Plunkett

4. The Cosby Show



Throughout all eight seasons, The Cosby Show had some pretty bad acting or just plain annoying side characters. But the show was all about the Huxtables, and these actors clicked in every single season. And in every single season they made you love them, live with them, and laugh with them. All of this loving, living, and laughter was brought together by Bill Cosby's amazing Dr. Cliff Huxtable, one of the greatest and most hilarious T.V. fathers of all time. With the steady support of his true love, the lovely Clair Huxtable, the two created a home that warmed its way into the hearts of millions of watchers and ascended to timeless T.V. sitcom greatness. – Benjamin Plunkett

3. Parks and Recreation



In a TV landscape filled with cynicism, vitriol, and negativity, Parks and Recreation was a breath of fresh air. Joyously optimistic and earnest, Amy Poehler and company made a show that was cheery, happy, and unflappably nice. If you think this would limit how funny it could be, you would be wrong. One of the best acting ensembles proved repeatedly that you didn't have to be mean spirited to make the audience laugh. The merry humor relied on an assortment of colorful and memorable characters. People like Ron Swanson, Andy Dwyer, Tom Haverford, and Leslie Knope. Bolstered by minor characters like Jean-Ralphio and Councilman Jamm. Parks and Recreation was a dose of smiles and laughs without all the snark. – Phill Lytle

2. Arrested Development

Irreverent. Original. Hilarious. Arrested Development only needed 3 seasons (we are going to pretend the fourth, long delayed Netflix season never happened) to prove that it belonged in the conversation for best sitcom of all time. The cast is as good as it gets, with every single cast member owning their role from the first minute they are onscreen. The jokes were fast paced and one on top of the other. The show set up jokes in the first season that didn't fully pay off until the third season. A sitcom about a completely dysfunctional family should not have been this fresh or this funny. Thankfully, it was. So yes, we only got 53 original episodes. That was still enough for half days at Army, never-nudes, hermano, Tobias Funke's acting career, STEVE HOLT, chicken dances, and a thousand eye rolls by Lucille Bluth. The Bluth's are terrible, terrible people. But they are family, and that is the most important thing. Or is it breakfast? –
Phill Lytle

1. Seinfeld



Chances are you know a close talker or a low talker. Chances are you have re-gifted something in your lifetime. Chances are you've at least considered not dating someone because of a weird mannerism they have. Chances are that Seinfeld captured

something you can relate to, even if it is at your most petty or annoyed. There are a million reasons why Seinfeld remains at the top of many lists of greatest sitcoms of all time, including ours. But perhaps the one that sticks out after all these years is how it took the daily, trivial, menial moments we all experience and it made them funny. At times it was funny because the characters would say out loud what most of us wouldn't dare ("I'm much more comfortable criticizing people behind their back.") At times it was funny because they would do what most of us wouldn't dare (Have you ever told an annoying person you can't be friends with them any more?) But it was funny every time because it made the boring outrageous, the irritating hilarious and the mundane memorable. It is the Jerry Rice of sitcoms and I don't know that it will ever be beaten. – Gowdy Cannon

Didn't see your favorite on here? Upset that the shows we picked wouldn't make your top 100? Tell us about it. Seriously, we encourage healthy and exuberant debate. There is a handy comment section just a little ways down the page. Have at it!