

10 GREATEST AMERICAN SITCOMS



1 The Simpsons 1989-present

2 Seinfeld 1989-98

3 The Mary Tyler Moore Show 1970-77

4 All in the Family 1971-79

5 The Andy Griffith Show 1960-68

6 I Love Lucy 1951-57

7 Cheers 1982-93

8 The Cosby Show 1984-92

9 Roseanne 1988-97

10 Arrested Development 2003-06, 2013

42 Taxi

1982-87 | NBC  
1982-83 | NBC  
In a most unlikely workplace setting (NYC taxi garage), the most unlikely collection of characters (ex-hippie actor/boxer immigrant mechanic played by Andy Kaufman) joined forces for a riotous blue-collar comedy that deftly blended wit, kindness, relatability, and heart.

43 St. Elsewhere

1982-88 | NBC  
This gritty, brainy, darkly funny hospital drama propelled Denzel Washington, Mark Harmon, and Howie Mandel to fame, and turned the term "snow globe" into pop jargon for "polarizing, unforgettable series finale."

44 Frasier

1993-2004 | NBC  
Spinning off an erudite character like *Cheers*' shrink Frasier Crane and pairing him with an even more highbrow character (brother Niles) was a double-down on top of a gamble. The payoff: five Emmys for Outstanding Comedy Series.



45 Gilmore Girls

2000-06 | THE WB  
2006-07 | THE CW  
The magic realism of *Stars Hollow*, with its mother-daughter duo of Lorelai and Rory Gilmore, brought classic film screwball comedy to prime time, courtesy of a zany cast and creator Amy Sherman-Palladino.

46 The Rifleman

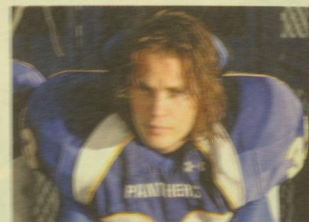
1958-63 | ABC  
Chuck Connors had the title role as Lucas McCain, a peaceable homesteader who carried a mean gun on this vivid Western. Its realistic tone was set by writers including film director Sam Peckinpah.

47 The Rockford Files

1974-80 | NBC  
James Garner embodied one of the most likable private detectives on the small screen, breaking with then-standard tradition to present a debt-ridden PI who made mistakes but usually solved his cases.

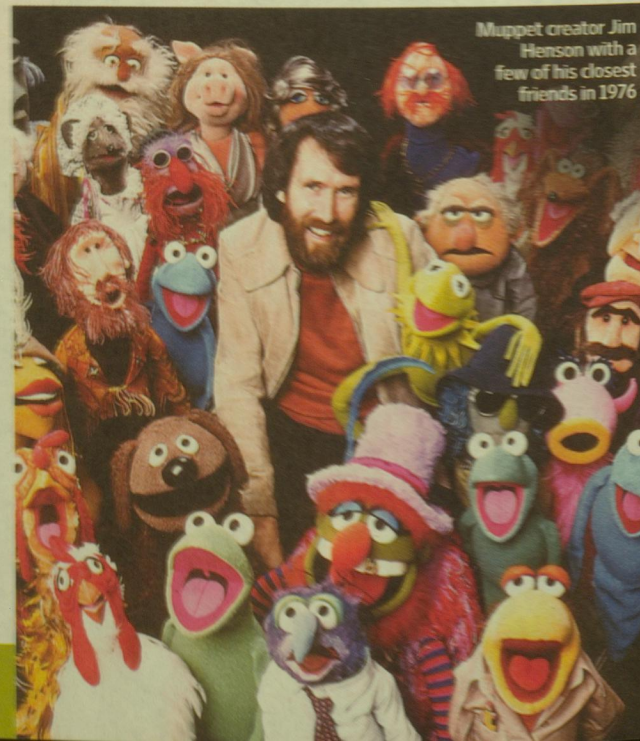
48 Friday Night Lights

2006-11 | NBC  
Centered on a Texas high school football team, *Friday Night Lights* offered an earnest look at the hardships of living in contemporary America. Though it seemed to always be on the brink of cancellation, it was kept alive by a small but passionate fan base, DirecTV—and Tim Riggins' hair.



49 ↓ The Muppet Show

1976-81 | CBS  
Simply the most sensational, inspirational, celebrational, and downright Muppetational variety show hosted by a frog ever made. Kermie and Piggy and their entertaining pals were—are—certifiable stars, and as funny and moving as their flesh-and-blood celebrity guests...often more so.



Muppet creator Jim Henson with a few of his closest friends in 1976

The Antiheroes

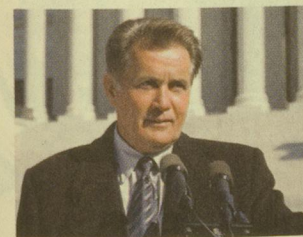
Despicable...or dashing? That's the quandary of these infinitely dissectable men: Tony Soprano of *The Sopranos* (5), Don Draper of *Mad Men* (9), and Walter White of *Breaking Bad* (18)

50 Survivor

2000-present | CBS  
Once upon a time, 16 strangers set off for a remote island to compete for a million dollars, and TV would never be the same. No show has changed television more over the past 20 years—for better or worse.

51 The West Wing

1999-2006 | NBC  
Aaron Sorkin and a perfectly cast group of loquacious characters gave us the best walking and talking and debating and flirting and faith-in-government-restoring TV show of all time.



52 Soap

1977-81 | ABC  
Built on an ingenious conceit, the series parodied daytime soaps with a mixture of absurdist humor (Chuck and his mind-reading ventriloquist's dummy, Bob), social commentary (Billy Crystal as Jodie, one of TV's first gay characters), and truly poignant family drama.

53 American Idol

2002-present | FOX  
The long-running series has produced stars like Kelly Clarkson and Carrie Underwood, set the template for musical-competition shows

in the U.S., and turned a cranky, brush-haired Brit named Simon Cowell into an unlikely icon.

54 NYPD Blue

1993-2005 | ABC  
The network-TV landscape was forever altered after 12 years of this Emmy-winning cop saga, which introduced viewers to a groundbreakingly raw style of detective drama. (And Dennis Franz's naked butt.)

55 thirtysomething

1987-91 | ABC  
A show about yuppie baby boomers struggling with marriages, careers, and friendships could have been annoying. But in the hands of Marshall Herskovitz and Edward Zwick, along with excellent actors, it was funny, inventive, and sometimes devastating (R.I.P. Gary).

56 30 Rock

2006-13 | NBC  
Mining her experience at *Saturday Night Live*, Tina Fey played the prickly, winningly uncool, sandwich-loving head writer of a sketch-comedy show who thrived on managing the egos of her wacko stars and her maddeningly superior boss (Alec Baldwin at his most sublime).



57 The Shield

2002-08 | FX  
The journey of Vic Mackey (Michael Chiklis), a corrupt cop

with his own brand of street justice, ended with a gut punch of a series finale—showing a man who was ultimately punished for his many crimes, but not in the way anyone expected.

58 Sex and the City

1998-2004 | HBO  
The sex was fun, the locations chic, and the clothes out of this world, but the greatest legacy of HBO's pioneering series about the life and times of Carrie Bradshaw is how lovingly it celebrated New York City and the power of female friendship.



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