

TELEVISION IN THE US



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Television in the US

1.1 Work in pairs or groups of three. Discuss the following questions.
Talk with another pair/group.

- a) Do you watch TV regularly? Why? Why not?
- b) How much time do you spend watching films, TV shows and videos?
- c) Is it better to read books or watch films? Is it better to watch films or play video games? Why?

1.2 Match the word to its definition.

award • channel • committee • encryption • network • prime time • rating • revenue • satellite • subscription

- a) a group of people chosen to represent a larger organisation who have to do a particular job or make decisions _____
- b) money that a company receives regularly _____
- c) something given for achievement in a contest or competition, or for winning a lottery

- d) the time when the largest number of people are watching television _____
- e) the money which one pays to receive a service, or copies of a newspaper or magazine

- f) the activity of converting data or information into code _____
- g) the size of an actual audience for a particular programme _____
- h) a TV station and all its broadcast programmes _____
- i) any object launched to orbit the Earth _____
- j) a chain of radio or television broadcasting stations _____

Television is one of the main sources of information and entertainment in the U.S. The first regularly scheduled television service started on July 2, 1928. An experimental station in Washington, D.C. broadcast a 48-line silhouette image and soon more stations followed, mainly in New York City. In the 1930s the quality of broadcast increased gradually until in 1941 the National Television System Committee (NTSC) decided that a 525-line broadcast would be the basis for TV across the country. Currently, free television may be accessed either via 'over-the-air' broadcast or via unencrypted satellite broadcast. Cable television, direct broadcast satellite, and IPTV (Internet Protocol Television) usually require a monthly payment.



The original three major television networks in the U.S. were the National Broadcasting Company (NBC), the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) and CBS Broadcasting Inc. (CBS). NBC was formed in 1926 by the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) as two groups of radio stations. The first NBC television channel opened in 1940. CBS began as the Columbia Broadcasting System in 1928, when William S. Paley bought a collection of 16 radio stations. It started broadcasting television in the 1950s. ABC was established in 1943 as a network of six radio stations and its first television broadcast took place in 1948.

NBC, ABC and CBS are usually referred to as the 'Big Three Television Networks'. They have dominated US television for many years, but in 1987 Fox Broadcasting Company (Fox) was established. After a series of hits produced in the 1990s such as *The X-Files*, *The Simpsons*, *Ally McBeal*, and *Married... with Children*, Fox joined the Big Three in the ratings during the prime time hours and since then it has been perceived as the fourth major television network.

As of 2011, there are around 4,000 TV stations in the United States. Although there is no federal state-owned broadcasting authority, an important organisation is the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). It is a non-profit national public broadcasting television network with over 350 member TV stations.

Cable News Network (CNN) was the first 24-hour, all-news television channel in the United States. CNN was established in 1980 by Ted Turner and its headquarters are in Atlanta, Georgia. One year later, in 1981, Music Television (MTV) was launched. It was a cable television channel based in New York City, whose purpose was to play music videos 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, guided by VJs, or video jockeys.

Cable television is a common medium in the United States. It first became available in 1948 and the first subscription services were launched in 1949. Basic cable TV networks are generally transmitted without

any encryption, so they can be watched free of charge. However, networks which offer premium content require viewers to pay additional monthly fees and the signal delivered to their homes is scrambled or encrypted.

One of the most popular premium cable television networks in the U.S. is Home Box Office (HBO), which was launched in 1972. In 1975, it became the first cable network to be delivered nationwide by satellite transmission. In 1993, it became the world's first digitally transmitted television service. HBO's most successful series include *The Sopranos*, *The Wire*, *Deadwood*, *Six Feet Under*, *Boardwalk Empire*, *Game of Thrones*, and *True Blood*.

The television industry has its own award – the Emmy Award, or Emmy for short. Emmys have been given by the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences since 1949.

1.3 Read the text and answer the following questions.

- a) Where did an experimental TV station broadcast?
- b) What were the three major TV networks.
- c) What is PBS?
- d) What is CNN?
- e) What is MTV?
- f) What are Emmys?

1.4 Read the text again. What do these numbers refer to?

350 • 1928 • 1948 • 1972 • 1980 • 1981 • 1987 • 4000

1.5

Work in pairs. Tick the TV shows that you have seen.
Compare the lists with your partner. Choose one

TV show	You	Your partner
The X-Files		
The Simpsons		
Ally McBeal		
Married... with Children		
The Sopranos		
The Wire		
Deadwood		
Six Feet Under		
Boardwalk Empire		
Game of Thrones		
True Blood		

EXTENSION

2.1

Put the correct word in each gap.

The first letter of the word is given.

- a) We use c_____ television in our supermarket to prevent shoplifting.
- b) When we first saw c_____ television we were surprised by the richness and quality of the image.
- c) In Britain you need to buy a television l_____ in order to legally use a TV in your home.
- d) I can't understand why you spend so much money on p_____ television.
- e) In 2009 the U.S. has finished the transition from analog broadcasting to d_____ television. Our company provides analog and digital c_____ television to over 800,000 customers in
- f) Poland.
- g) The management has decided that our station will begin broadcasting its main channels in h_____ d_____ television in October.
- h) P_____ television broadcasting started in the United Kingdom in 1936.
- i) Watching b_____ television was a strange experience for our children, who had never seen monochrome television.
- j) Currently, Poland is switching to digital t_____ television broadcasting.
- k) The first national network of s_____ television was created in the Soviet Union in 1967.
- l) Caroline cannot imagine her life without b_____ television which she always watches in the morning.

2.2

Use the words and expressions to make meaningful sentences. Modify the words and add articles, auxiliaries, connectors and prepositions if necessary. Do not change the order of the words given.

a) television / be / one / main / source / information / entertainment / U.S.

b) first / regular / scheduled / television service / start / July 2, 1928

c) original / three / major / television network / U.S. / be / NBC / ABC / CBS

d) NBC / ABC / CBS / be / usual / referred / Big Three Television Networks

e) as / 2011 / there / be / around / 4,000 / TV station / United States

f) CNN / be / first / 24-hour / all-news / television channel / United States

g) one / most / popular / premium cable television network / U.S. / be / HBO / which / be launch / 1972

h) television industry / have / own / award / Emmy Award / Emmy / short

Teacher's Notes

1. The main lesson is intended as a **45-minut session**.
2. Extension provides extra material which can be used during another 45-minute lesson or set as homework.
3. 3. When students look up vocabulary items, encourage them to use English definitions from reliable dictionaries such as dictionary.cambridge.org.

Key

1.1 Students' own answers

1.2 a) committee; b) revenue; c) award; d) prime time; e) subscription; f) encryption; g) rating; h) channel; i) satellite; j) network

1.3 a) An experimental TV station broadcast in Washington, D.C.
b) The three major TV networks were NBC, ABC and CBS.
c) PBS is a non-profit national public broadcasting television network with over 350 member TV stations.
d) CNN is the a 24-hour, all-news television channel.
e) MTV is television channel which plays music videos 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
f) Emmys are awards given by the television industry.

1.4 350 – the number of member TV stations in PBS
1928 – first regularly scheduled television service, CBS launched
1948 – fist cable TV available
1972 – Home Box Office (HBO) launched
1980 – CNN established
1981 – MTV established
1987 – Fox Broadcasting Company (Fox) established
4000 – the number of TV stations in the United States

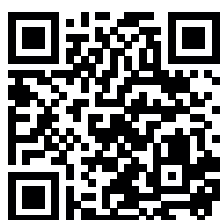
1.5 Students' own answers

- 2.1** a) closed-circuit; b) colour; c) licence; d) pay; e) digital; f) cable; g) high definition; h) Public; i) black-and-white; j) terrestrial; k) satellite; l) breakfast
- 2.2** a) Television is one of the main sources of information and entertainment in the U.S.
b) The first regularly scheduled television service started on July 2, 1928.
c) The original three major television networks in the U.S. were NBC, ABC and CBS.
d) NBC, ABC and CBS are usually referred to as the Big Three Television Networks.
e) As of 2011, there are around 4,000 TV stations in the United States.
f) CNN was the first 24-hour, all-news television channel in the United States.
g) One of the most popular premium cable television networks in the U.S. is HBO, which was launched in 1972.
h) The television industry has its own award – the Emmy Award, or Emmy for short.

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Nasi specjaliści dzielą się najnowszą wiedzą z zakresu metodyki nauczania języków obcych, dydaktyki i psychologii.

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Znajdziesz tam:

- dodatkowe materiały edukacyjne do wykorzystania podczas lekcji
- zapowiedzi szkoleń oraz relacje z wydarzeń
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Szczegóły na stronie:
www.jezykiobce.pwn.pl