

<b>Genre</b>	<b>Typical characters</b>	<b>Typical Plots</b>	<b>Typical Aesthetics</b>
Sitcom	Family unit or friends/coworkers who form family-like unit	Simple conflict or misunderstanding resolved in half hour, lack of serious topics	Laugh track; simple indoor sets
Drama	People associated with an organization such as a hospital or law firm, or sometimes families and family units	Multiple storylines that occur over multiple episodes, more serious topics	Indoor and outdoor sets; dramatic music
Reality TV Shows	Characters (i.e. contestants) typically are edited to emphasize "good" or "bad" qualities; characters often fall into stereotypical categories	Some kind of contest, often with eliminations: lots of drama	"real" shots interspersed with the contestants giving accounts of what was going on; dramatic music at elimination ceremony
Game Show	Slick (usually male) host; contestants represent everyday people in appearance and demeanor more than on most TV	Contest; sometimes a series of contests followed by a "bonus round"	Brightly lit set to convey excitement; loud, applauding audience; lots of nifty sound effects and music to convey winning and losing points during the game
Soap Opera	"typical" people who are much more beautiful than the rest of us and who have way more drama in their lives	Melodramatic plot lines that drag on slowly for months without resolution; situations like infidelity, illness and sometimes supernatural occurrences	Glamorous indoor sets and beautiful, glamorous people, melodramatic music
Talk Shows	Sympathetic host; either "everyday" people or celebrities (on Oprah type shows) or "trashy" people (on Maury Povich type shows)	Guests discuss an issue or problem; host and audience comments; an expert sometimes weighs in	Stage with couches; applauding (sometimes screaming) studio audiences; dramatic music during segments that discuss problems