

THE TV PARENTAL GUIDELINES

KNOW THE FACTS: TV RATINGS AND PARENTAL CONTROLS

The television industry designed a TV ratings system – known as the TV Parental Guidelines – to give parents more information about the content and age-appropriateness of TV programs. The TV ratings can be used in conjunction with the V-Chip – a device built into most television sets – to allow parents to block out programs they don't want their children to see. Parental control technology in cable and satellite set-top boxes can also be used with the TV Parental Guidelines to block programs based on their rating.

KNOW THE RATINGS

Audience: indicates the audience for which a television program is appropriate.



Content Descriptor: Indicates a show may contain violence, sex, adult language or suggestive dialogue.



TV Parental Guidelines may have one or more letters added to the basic rating to let parents know when a show may contain violence, sex, adult language or suggestive dialogue.

D – suggestive dialogue (usually means talk-about sex)
FV – fantasy violence (children's programming only)
L – coarse or crude language
S – sexual situations
V – violence



ALL CHILDREN

This program is designed to be appropriate for all children. Whether animated or live-action, the themes and elements in this program are specifically designed for a very young audience, including children from ages 2-6. This program is not expected to frighten younger children.



DIRECTED TO OLDER CHILDREN

This program is designed for children age 7 and above. It may be more appropriate for children who have acquired the developmental skills needed to distinguish between make-believe and reality. Themes and elements in this program may include mild fantasy violence or comedic violence, or may frighten children under the age of 7. Therefore, parents may wish to consider the suitability of this program for their very young children.



DIRECTED TO OLDER CHILDREN - FANTASY VIOLENCE

Programs where fantasy violence may be more intense or more combative than other programs in this category will be designated TV-Y7-FV.



GENERAL AUDIENCE

Most parents would find this program suitable for all ages. Although this rating does not signify a program designed specifically for children, most parents may let younger children watch this program unattended. It contains little or no violence, no strong language and little or no sexual dialogue or situations.



PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED

This program contains material that parents may find unsuitable for younger children. Many parents may want to watch it with their younger children. The theme itself may call for parental guidance and/or the program may contain one or more of the following: some suggestive dialogue (D), infrequent coarse language (L), some sexual situations (S), or moderate violence (V).



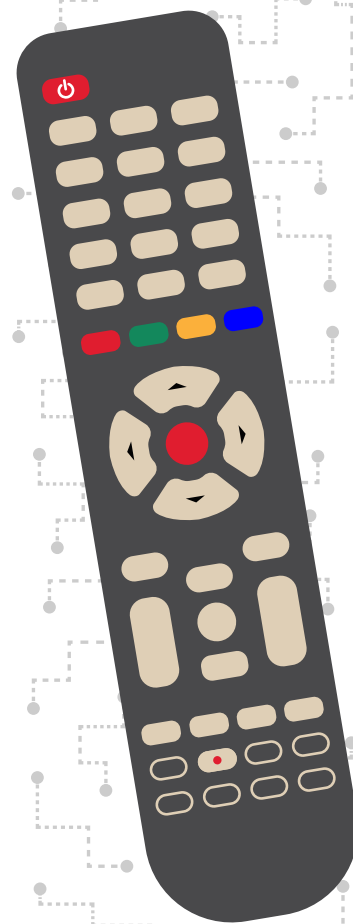
PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED

This program contains some material that many parents would find unsuitable for children under 14 years of age. Parents are strongly urged to exercise greater care in monitoring this program and are cautioned against letting children under the age of 14 watch unattended. This program may contain one or more of the following: intensely suggestive dialogue (D), strong coarse language (L), intense sexual situations (S), or intense violence (V).



MATURE AUDIENCES ONLY

This program is specifically designed to be viewed by adults and therefore may be unsuitable for children under 17. This program may contain one or more of the following: crude indecent language (L), explicit sexual activity (S), or graphic violence (V).





ABOUT THE GUIDELINES

- **Guidelines are modeled after the familiar movie ratings.** They are designed to be easily recognizable and simple to use.
- **Guidelines apply to most television programs, including those directed specifically to young children.** However, sports and news shows as well as most home shopping and religious programming do not carry the Guidelines.
- **The ratings icon and associated content descriptors appear at the beginning of a program in the upper-left corner of the TV screen.** If the program is more than one hour in length, the icon will reappear at the beginning of the second hour. Many channels also display the ratings icon after each commercial break.
- **TV ratings are applied on an episode-by-episode basis.** This can result in individual shows within a series carrying different ratings.
- **Movies and television series may be edited differently based on when and what channel they air.** Individual shows may be edited differently based on the time of day and channel they air – premium cable (e.g., HBO), basic cable (e.g., USA Network) or broadcast (e.g., ABC) – which can result in one show having different ratings to reflect the specific version being aired.
- **Thousands of hours of TV programming are rated every day.** Program producers and distributors expend significant resources reviewing and rating programs before they air and have employees dedicated to ensuring that programs are appropriately rated.

ABOUT THE TV PARENTAL GUIDELINES MONITORING BOARD

The TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board is comprised of experts from the television industry and public interest advocates who are responsible for ensuring there is as much uniformity and consistency in applying the Parental Guidelines as possible. The Board also reviews complaints about specific program ratings to help ensure accuracy.

To contact the TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board, visit www.tvguidelines.org.

