List of genres

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This is a **list of genres** of literature and entertainment, excluding genres in the visual arts. Genre is the term for any category of literature or other forms of art or entertainment, e.g. music, whether written or spoken, audio or visual, based on some set of stylistic criteria. Genres are formed by conventions that change over time as new genres are invented and the use of old ones are discontinued. Often, works fit into multiple genres by way of borrowing and recombining these conventions.

Literary genres

Absurdist/surreal/whimsical

Absurdist and surreal fiction challenges causal reasoning and the purposefulness of life. There is often, though not always, a connection to comedy.

The whimsical and related styles exaggerate real life in a whimsical, eccentric, quirky or fanciful way, sometimes including 'magical' extensions of reality.

The absurdist genre focuses on the experiences of characters in situations where they cannot find any inherent purpose in life, most often represented by ultimately meaningless actions and events that call into question the certainty of existential concepts such as truth or value.

The closely related/overlapping surreal genre is predicated on deliberate violations of causal reasoning, producing events and behaviours that are obviously illogical. Constructions of surreal humour tend to involve bizarre juxtapositions, non-sequiturs, irrational or absurd situations and expressions of nonsense.

Whimsical and related styles are exemplified by films such as Underground, Amélie, Micmacs and Dieta Mediterranea (Mediterranean Food).[1]

Action

Contents

An action story is similar to adventure, and the protagonist usually takes a risky turn, which leads to desperate situations (including explosions, fight scenes, daring escapes, etc.). Action and Adventure are usually categorized together (sometimes even as "action-adventure") because they have much in common, and many stories fall under both genres simultaneously (for instance, the James Bond series can be classified as both).

- Heroic bloodshed: Hong Kong action revolving around stylized sequences and dramatic themes such as brotherhood, duty, honor, redemption and violence.
- Military fiction: A story about a war or battle that can either be historical or fictional. It usually follows the events a certain warrior goes through during the battle's events.
- Spy fiction: A story about a secret agent (spy) or military personnel member who is sent on a secret espionage mission. Usually, they are equipped with special gadgets that prove useful during the mission, and they have special training in things such as unarmed combat or computer hacking. They may or may not work for a specific government.
- Wuxia: A martial arts genre with chivalrous protagonists on fantastic adventures.
- Girls with guns and swords: This is a subgenre of action films and animation, often Asian films and anime, that portray a strong female protagonist who makes use of firearms to defend against or attack a group of antagonists. The genre typically involves gun-play, stunts and martial arts action.

Adventure

An adventure story is about a protagonist who journeys to epic or distant places to accomplish something. It can have many other genre elements included within it, because it is a very open genre. The protagonist has a mission and faces obstacles to get to their destination. Also, adventure stories usually include unknown settings and characters with prized properties or features.

- Shōnen manga: A manga usually tends to be marketed to males roughly aged 10 and above. It is typically characterized by high-action, often humorous plots featuring male protagonists. The camaraderie between boys or men on sports teams, fighting squads, and the like is often emphasized. Attractive female characters with exaggerated features are also common.
- Superhero fiction: A story that examines the adventures of costumed crime fighters known as superheroes, who often possess superhuman powers and battle similarly powered criminals known as supervillains.

Comedy

Comedy is a story that tells about a series of funny or comical events, intended to make the audience laugh. It is a very open genre, and thus crosses over with many other genres on a frequent basis.

- Comedy of manners: A film satirizes the manners and affectations of a social class, often represented by stock characters. The plot of the comedy is often concerned with an illicit love affair or some other scandal, but is generally less important than its witty dialogue. This form of comedy has a long ancestry, dating back at least as far as Shakespeare's *Much Ado about Nothing*.
- Humorous: Fiction full of fun, fancy, and excitement. Meant to entertain.
- Tall tale: A humorous story with blatant exaggeration, swaggering heroes who do the impossible with nonchalance.
- Parody: A story that mocks or satirizes other genres, people, fictional characters or works. Such works employ sarcasm, stereotyping, mockery of scenes, symbols or lines from other works, and the obviousness of meaning in a character's actions. Such stories may be "affectionate parodies" which merely mean to entertain those familiar with the source of the parody... or they may well be intended to undercut the respectability of the original inspiration for the parody by pointing out its flaws (the latter being closer to satire).
- Romantic comedy aka RomCom: A subgenre which combines the romance genre with comedy, focusing on two or more individuals as they discover and attempt to deal with their romantic love, attractions to each other. The stereotypical plot line follows the "boy-gets-girl", "boy-loses-girl", "boy gets girl back again" sequence. Naturally, there are innumerable variants to this plot (as well as new twists, such as reversing the gender roles in the story), and much of the generally lighthearted comedy lies in the social interactions and sexual tension between the characters, who very often either refuse to admit they are attracted to one another, or must deal with others' meddling in their affairs.
- Comic fantasy: A subgenre of fantasy that is primarily humorous in intent and tone. Usually set in imaginary worlds, comic fantasy often includes puns on and parodies of other works of fantasy. It is sometimes known as low fantasy in contrast to high fantasy, which is primarily serious in intent and tone. The term "low fantasy" is also used to represent other types of fantasy, so while comic fantasies may also correctly be classified as low fantasy, many examples of low fantasy are not comic in nature.
- Comedy horror: See *Shaun of the Dead* and *Jennifer's Body*.
- Black comedy (or dark comedy): A parody or satirical story that is based on normally tragic or taboo subjects, including death, murder, suicide, illicit drugs and war. So-called "dead baby comedy" sometimes falls under this genre.
- Zombie comedy: Often called zom com or zomedy, this is a genre that blends zombie horror motifs with slapstick comedy as well as dark comedy.
- Comic science fiction: A comedy that uses science fiction elements or settings, often as a lighthearted (or occasionally vicious) parody of the latter genre.

Crime

(See also: **Mystery** below)

A crime story is about a crime that is being committed or was committed. It can also be an account of a criminal's life. It often falls into the action or adventure genres.

- Courtroom drama: A television show subgenre of dramatic programming. This subgenre presents fictional drama about law. Law enforcement, crime, detective-based mystery solving, lawyer work, civil litigation, etc., are all possible focuses of legal dramas. Common subgenres of legal dramas include detective dramas, police dramas, courtroom dramas, legal thrillers, etc. Legal dramas come in all shapes and sizes and may also span into other forms of media, including novels, plays, television shows, and films.
- Detective story: A story about a detective or person, either professional or amateur, who has to solve a crime that was committed. They must figure out who committed the crime and why. Sometimes, the detective must figure out 'how' the criminal committed the crime if it seems impossible.
  - Whodunnit: This is a complex, plot-driven variety of the detective story in which the audience is given the opportunity to engage in the same process of deduction as the protagonist throughout the investigation of a crime. The reader or viewer is provided with the clues from which the identity of the perpetrator may be deduced before the story provides the revelation itself at its climax. The investigation is usually conducted by an eccentric amateur or semi-professional detective.
- Gangster: Literature that focuses on gangs, criminal organizations which provide a level of organization and resources that support much larger and more complex criminal transactions than an individual criminal could achieve. Gangsters are the subject of many movies, particularly from the period between 1930 and 1960. A revival of gangster type movies took place since the 1990s with the explosion of hip-hop culture. Unlike the earlier gangster films, the newer films share similar elements to the older films but is more in a hip-hop urban setting.
- Gentleman thief: Centers around particularly well-behaving and apparently well-bred thieves. They rarely bother with anonymity or force, preferring to rely on their charisma, physical attractiveness, and clever misdirection to steal the most unobtainable objects – sometimes for their own support, but mostly for the thrill of the act itself.
- Gong'an fiction: A subgenre of historical crime fiction that involves government magistrates who solve criminal cases.
- Hardboiled: This is a literary genre sharing the setting with crime fiction (especially detective stories). Although deriving from romantic tradition which emphasized the emotions of apprehension, horror and terror, and awe, the hardboiled fiction deviates from the tradition in the detective's cynical attitude towards those emotions. The attitude is conveyed through the detective's self-talk describing to the reader (or – in the film – to the viewer) what he is doing and feeling.
- Legal thriller: A subgenre of thriller and crime fiction in which the major characters are lawyers and their employees. The system of justice itself is always a major part of these works, at times almost functioning as one of the characters. In this way, the legal system provides the framework for the legal thriller much as the system of modern police work does for the police procedural. Usually, crusading lawyers become involved in proving their cases (usually their client's innocence of the crime of which he is accused, or the culpability of a corrupt corporation which has covered up its malfeasance until this point) to such an extent that they imperil their own interpersonal relationships and frequently, their own lives.
- Murder mystery: A mystery story which focuses on one type of criminal case: homicide. Usually, there are one or more murder victims, and the detective must figure out who killed them, the same way he or she solves other crimes. They may or may not find themselves or loved ones in danger because of this investigation; the genre often includes elements of the suspense story genre, or of the action and adventure genres.

Drama

Within film, television and radio (but not theatre), drama is a genre of narrative fiction (or semi-fiction) intended to be more serious than humorous in tone,[2] focusing on in-depth development of realistic characters who must deal with realistic emotional struggles. A drama is commonly considered the opposite of a comedy, but may also be considered separate from other works of some broad genre, such as a fantasy.

Fantasy

A fantasy story is about magic or supernatural forces, rather than technology, though it often is made to include elements of other genres, such as science fiction elements, for instance computers or DNA, if it happens to take place in a modern or future era. Depending on the extent of these other elements, the story may or may not be considered to be a "hybrid genre" series; for instance, even though the Harry Potter series canon includes the requirement of a particular gene to be a wizard, it is referred to only as a fantasy series.

- Bangsian: A fantasy genre which concerns the use of famous literary or historical individuals and their interactions in the afterlife. It is named for John Kendrick Bangs, who often wrote in this genre.
- Contemporary fantasy (also known as modern fantasy or indigenous fantasy): A subgenre of fantasy, set in the present day. These are used to describe stories set in the putative real world (often referred to as consensus reality) in contemporary times, in which magic and magical creatures exist, either living in the interstices of our world or leaking over from alternate worlds.
    - Urban fantasy: A subgenre of fantasy defined by place; the fantastic narrative has an urban setting. Many urban fantasies are set in contemporary times and contain supernatural elements. However, the stories can take place in historical, modern, or futuristic periods, as well as fictional settings. The prerequisite is that they must be primarily set in a city.
- Dark fantasy: A subgenre of fantasy which can refer to literary, artistic, and filmic works that combine fantasy with elements of horror. The term can be used broadly to refer to fantastical works that have a dark, gloomy atmosphere or a sense of horror and dread and a dark, often brooding, tone.
- Fables: A type of narration demonstrating a useful truth. Animals speak as humans, legendary, supernatural tale.
- Fairy Tales: A literary genre about various magical creatures, environments, et cetera. Many fairy tales are generally targeted for children.
- Hard fantasy: Fantasy where the magical elements are constructed in a logical and rational manner.
- Epic/High fantasy: Mythical stories with highly developed characters and story lines. E.g. Malazan Book of the Fallen and The Lord of the Rings
- Heroic fantasy: subgenre of fantasy which chronicles the tales of heroes in imaginary lands. Frequently, the protagonist is reluctant to be a champion, is of low or humble origin, and has royal ancestors or parents but does not know it. Though events are usually beyond their control, they are thrust into positions of great responsibility where their mettle is tested in a number of spiritual and physical challenges.
- Legends: Stories, oftentimes of a national hero or other folk figure, which have a basis in fact, but also contain imaginative material.
- Magical girl: Popular in Japan, of girls who use magic in either their training, idol stardom or even to fight evil.
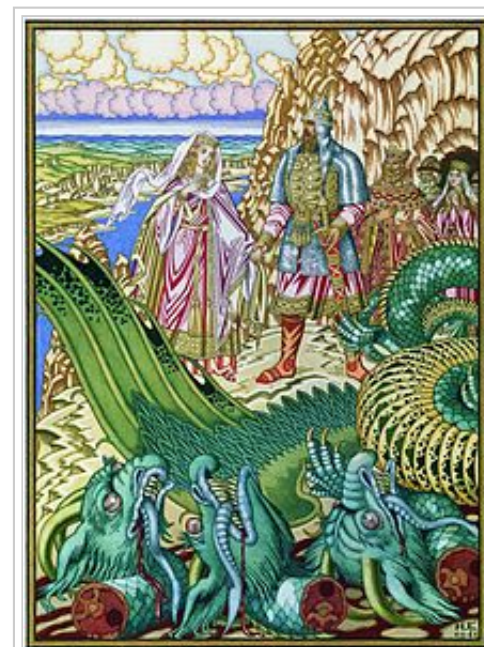
Fairy tales and legends, such as Dobrynya Nikitich's rescue of Zabava Putyatichna from the dragon Gorynych, have been an important source for fantasy.

- Mythic fiction: Literature that is rooted in, inspired by, or that in some way draws from the tropes, themes and symbolism of myth, folklore, and fairy tales.[1] The term is widely credited to Charles de Lint and Terri Windling. Mythic fiction overlaps with urban fantasy and the terms are sometimes used interchangeably, but mythic fiction also includes contemporary works in non-urban settings. Mythic fiction refers to works of contemporary literature that often cross the divide between literary and fantasy fiction.
- Science fantasy: A story with mystical elements that are scientifically explainable, or which combines science fiction elements with fantasy elements. It should be noted that science fiction was once actually referred to under this name, but that it is no longer used to denote that genre, and has somewhat fallen out of favor as a genre descriptor.
  - Sword and planet: A subgenre of science fantasy that features rousing adventure stories set on other planets, and usually featuring Earthmen as protagonists. There is a fair amount of overlap between "Sword & Planet" and "planetary romance" although some works are considered to belong to one and not the other. In general, Planetary Romance is considered to be more of a Space Opera subgenre, influenced by the likes of *A Princess of Mars* yet more modern and technologically savvy, while Sword & Planet more directly imitates the conventions established by Burroughs in the Mars series.
  - Dying Earth: A sub-subgenre of science fantasy which takes place either at the end of life on Earth or the End of Time, when the laws of the universe themselves fail. More generally, the Dying Earth subgenre encompasses science fiction works set in the far distant future in a milieu of stasis or decline. Themes of world-weariness, innocence (wounded or otherwise), idealism, entropy, (permanent) exhaustion/depletion of many or all resources (such as soil nutrients), and the hope of renewal tend to pre-dominate.
  - Gaslamp fantasy: Fantasy's counterpart to steampunk, in which the settings are often Victorian or Edwardian socially or technologically, but with non-scientific elements or characters included. Although it was originated by Girl Genius, modern *Sherlock Holmes*, *Dracula* and Jane Austen pastiches would also fit within this subgenre.
- Shenmo: A genre of fantasy that revolves around the gods and monsters of Chinese mythology.
- Sword and sorcery: A blend of heroic fantasy, adventure, and frequent elements of the horrific in which a mighty barbaric warrior hero is pitted against both human and supernatural adversaries. Robert E. Howard, creator of Conan the Cimmerian, Kull of Atlantis, the Pictish king Bran Mak Morn, etc. is generally acknowledged as the founder of the genre, chiefly through his writings for *Weird Tales* and other 1920s and 1930s pulp magazines.

Historical

A story about a real person or event. Often, they are written in a text book format, which may or may not focus on solely that.

- Biography: The details of the life story of a real person, told by someone else.
  - Autobiography: Essentially the same as a biography, with the exception that the story is written by the person who is the subject of the story.
  - Memoir: Similar to autobiography, with the exception that it is told more "from memory", i.e. it is how the person personally remembers and feels about their life or a stage in their life, more than the exact, recorded details of that period. Though memoirs are often more subjective than autobiography works, memoirs are generally still considered to be nonfiction works. There are also some fiction works that purport to be the "memoirs" of fictional characters as well, done in a similar style, however, these are in a separate genre from their nonfiction counterparts.

- Historical fiction: A story that takes place in the real world, with real world people, but with several fictionalized or dramatized elements. This may or may not crossover with other genres; for example, fantasy fiction or science fiction may play a part, as is the case for instance with the novel *George Washington's Socks*, which includes time travel elements.
  - Alternate history: A more extreme variant of historical fiction which posits a "what if" scenario in which some historical event occurs differently (or not at all), thus altering the course of history; for instance, "What if Nazi Germany had won World War II?" is an alternate history concept that has had treatment in fiction. Alternate History is sometimes (though not universally) referred to as a subgenre of science fiction or speculative fiction, and like historical fiction, may include more fantastical elements (for instance, the *Temeraire series uses the fantasy element of dragons to create an Alternate History plot set during the Napoleonic Era)*.
  - Counterfactual history: Referred to as **virtual history**, it is a recent form of historiography which attempts to answer "what if" questions known as counterfactuals. It seeks to explore history and historical incidents by means of extrapolating a timeline in which certain key historical events did not happen or had an outcome which was different from that which did in fact occur. The purpose of this exercise is to ascertain the relative importance of the event, incident or person the counter-factual hypothesis is negating.
  - Period piece: This type features historical places, people, or events that may or not be crucial to the story. Because history is merely used as a backdrop, it may be fictionalized to various degrees, but the story itself may be regarded as "outside" history. Genres within this category are often regarded as significant categories in themselves.
    - Jidaigeki: A story usually set in the Edo period of Japanese history, from 1603 to 1868.
  - Costume drama: A type of drama that especially relies on lavish costumes and designs. This type crosses over with many other genres.

Historical fiction

The genre historical fiction includes stories that are about the past. To distinguish historical fiction from any fiction that is written about an era in the past, the criteria that the book must have been written about a time that occurred in a historical context in relation to the author of the book.[3][4] The criteria that the story be set before the middle of the previous century is sometimes added.[4] Historical fiction stories include historical details and includes characters that fit into the time period of the setting, whether or not they are real historical people.[3]

Horror

A horror story is told to deliberately scare or frighten the audience, through suspense, violence or shock. H. P. Lovecraft distinguishes two primary varieties in the "Introduction" to *Supernatural Horror in Literature*: 1) Physical Fear or the "mundanely gruesome" and 2) the true Supernatural Horror story or the "Weird Tale". The supernatural variety is occasionally called "dark fantasy", since the laws of nature must be violated in some way, thus qualifying the story as "fantastic".

- Ghost story: A story about the intrusion of the spirits of the dead into the realm of the living. There are subgenres: The Traditional Haunting, Poltergeists, The Haunted Place or Object (i.e. the hotel in Stephen King's *The Shining*), or the etching in M. R. James' "The Mezzotint" (http://gas light.mtroyal.ca/mezztint.htm), etc. Some would include stories of Revenants such as W. W. Jacobs' "The Monkey's Paw." (http://gaslight.mtroya

l.ca/mnkyspaw.htm)

- Monster: A story about a monster, creature or mutant that terrorizes people. Usually, it fits into the horror genre, for instance, Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein*. Although Shelley's *Frankenstein* is often also considered the first science fiction story (biological science reanimating the dead), it does present a monstrous "creature." Other clear Monster stories are of the creatures of folklore and fable: the Vampire, the Ghoul, the Werewolf, the Zombie, etc. Beings such as that depicted in Karloff's *The Mummy* would also qualify.
  - Giant monsters: A story about a giant monster, big enough to destroy buildings. Some such stories are about two giant monsters fighting each other, a genre known as *kaiju* in Japan, which is famous for such works after the success of such films and franchises such as *Godzilla*.
- Werewolf fiction: Stories about werewolves, humans with the ability to shapeshift into wolves.
- Jiangshi fiction: Stories about jiangshi, the hopping corpses under the control of Taoist priests derived from Chinese literature and folklore.
- Vampire literature: A story about vampires, reanimated bodies that feed on the blood of the living, based on European folklore. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* created many of the genre's conventions.
- Occult stories: Stories that touch upon the adversaries of Good, especially the "Enemies" of the forces of righteousness as expressed in any given religious philosophy. Hence, stories of devils, demons, demonic possession, dark witchcraft, evil sorcerers or warlocks, and figures like the Antichrist would qualify. The nature of such stories presupposes the existence of the side of Good and the existence of a deity to be opposed to the forces of Evil.
- Slasher: A horror genre featuring a serial killer or other psychopath as an antagonist, methodically killing a number of protagonists in succession. Dramatic suspense is heightened by the victims' obliviousness of the killer. The victims are typically in isolated settings and often engaged in sexual activity previous to the attacks. The "slasher" kills their victims by stealthily sneaking up on them and then bloodily stabbing and slicing them to death with a sharp object, such as a chef's knife. Gender roles in slasher films are of particular interest in feminist film theory which has extensively examined the trope of the Final girl.
- Survival horror: A horror story about a protagonist who is put in a risky and life-threatening situation that he or she must endure, often as a result of things such as zombies or other monsters, and the rest of the plot is how the hero or heroes overcome this.

An Illustration of Poe's 'The Raven' by Gustave Doré

Magical realism

Magical realism, also called Magic realism, is literary works where magical events form part of ordinary life. The reader is forced to accept that abnormal events such as levitation, telekinesis and talking with the dead take place in the real world. The writer does not invent a new world or describes in great detail new creatures, as is usual in Fantasy; on the contrary, the author abstains from explaining the fantastic events in order to avoid making

them feel extraordinary. It is often regarded as a genre exclusive to Latin American literature, but some of its chief exponents include English authors. One Hundred Years of Solitude, for which Gabriel García Márquez received the 1982 Nobel Prize in Literature, is considered the genre's seminal work of style.

Mystery

A mystery story follows an investigator as he/she attempts to solve a puzzle (often a crime). The details and clues are presented as the story continues and the protagonist discovers them and by the end of the story the mystery/puzzle is solved. For example, in the case of a crime mystery the perpetrator and motive behind the crime are revealed and the perpetrator is brought to justice. Mystery novels are often written in series which allows a more in-depth development of the primary investigator.[5][6]

Paranoid

Paranoid fiction is works of literature that explore the subjective nature of reality and how it can be manipulated by forces in power. These forces can be external, such as a totalitarian government, or they can be internal, such as a character's mental illness or refusal to accept the harshness of the world he or she is in.

Philosophical

Philosophical fiction is fiction in which a significant proportion of the work is devoted to a discussion of the sort of questions normally addressed in discursive philosophy. These might include the function and role of society, the purpose of life, ethics or morals, the role of art in human lives, and the role of experience or reason in the development of knowledge. Philosophical fiction works would include the so-called novel of ideas, including a significant proportion of science fiction, utopian and dystopian fiction, and Bildungsroman. The modus operandi seems to be to use a normal story to simply explain difficult and dark parts of human life.

- Bildungsroman: A coming-of-age novel presenting the psychological, moral and social shaping of the personality of a character, usually the protagonist. The genre arose during the German Enlightenment.

Political

Political fiction is a subgenre of fiction that deals with political affairs. Political fiction has often used narrative to provide commentary on political events, systems and theories. Works of political fiction often "directly criticize an existing society or... present an alternative, sometimes fantastic, reality." Prominent pieces of political fiction have included the totalitarian dystopias of the early 20th century such as Jack London's *The Iron Heel* and

Sinclair Lewis's *It Can't Happen Here*. Equally influential, if not more so, have been earlier pieces of political fiction such as *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), *Candide* (1759) and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). Political fiction frequently employs the literary modes of satire, often in the genres of Utopian and dystopian fiction or social science fiction.

- Utopian fiction: The creation of an ideal world, or utopia, as the setting for a novel
- Dystopian fiction: The creation of a nightmare world, or dystopia, as the setting for a novel
- Survivalism: The creation of world where traditional society has collapsed usually due to some post apocalyptic or doomsday scenario, as a setting for a novel

Romance

Romance novels are emotion-driven stories that are primarily focused on the relationship between the main characters of the story. Beyond the focus on the relationship, the biggest defining characteristic of the romance genre is that a happy ending is always guaranteed.[7][8] The happy ending does not require the characters to be married and living "happily ever after", simply that the reader feels that there is hope for the future of the romantic relationship.[8] Due to the wide definition of romance, romance stories cover a wide variety of subjects and often fall into other genre categories as well as romance.[7][8]

Saga

The sagas (from Icelandic saga, plural sögur) are stories about ancient Scandinavian and Germanic history, about early Viking voyages, about migration to Iceland, and of feuds between Icelandic families. They were written in the Old Norse language, mainly in Iceland. The texts are epic tales in prose, often with stanzas or whole poems in alliterative verse embedded in the text, of heroic deeds of days long gone, tales of worthy men, who were often Vikings, sometimes Pagan, sometimes Christian. The tales are usually realistic, except legendary sagas, sagas of saints, sagas of bishops and translated or recomposed romances. They are sometimes romanticised and fantastic, but always dealing with human beings one can understand.

- Family saga: The family saga is a genre of literature which chronicles the lives and doings of a family or a number of related or interconnected families over a period of time. In novels (or sometimes sequences of novels) with a serious intent, this is often a thematic device used to portray particular historical events, changes of social circumstances, or the ebb and flow of fortunes from a multiple of perspectives.

Satire

Often strictly defined as a literary genre or form, although in practice it is also found in the graphic and performing arts. In satire, human or individual vices, follies, abuses, or shortcomings are held up to censure by means of ridicule, derision, burlesque, irony, or other methods, ideally with the intent to bring about improvement. Although satire is usually meant to be funny, the purpose of satire is not primarily humour in itself so much as an attack on something of which the author strongly disapproves, using the weapon of wit. A very common, almost defining feature of satire is its strong vein of

irony or sarcasm, but parody, burlesque, exaggeration, juxtaposition, comparison, analogy, and double entendre are all frequently used in satirical speech and writing. The essential point, is that "in satire, irony is militant." This "militant irony" (or sarcasm) often professes to approve (or at least accept as natural) the very things the satirist actually wishes to attack.

Science fiction

Science fiction is similar to fantasy, except stories in this genre use scientific understanding to explain the universe that it takes place in. It generally includes or is centered on the presumed effects or ramifications of computers or machines; travel through space, time or alternate universes; alien life-forms; genetic engineering; or other such things. The science or technology used may or may not be very thoroughly elaborated on; stories whose scientific elements are reasonably detailed, well-researched and considered to be relatively plausible given current knowledge and technology are often referred to as hard science fiction.

- Apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fiction: concerned with the end of civilization either through nuclear war, plague, or some other general disaster. Post-apocalyptic fiction is set in a world or civilization after such a disaster. The time frame may be immediately after the catastrophe, focusing on the travails or psychology of survivors, or considerably later, often including the theme that the existence of pre-catastrophe civilization has been forgotten (or mythologized). Post-apocalyptic stories often take place in an agrarian, non-technological future world, or a world where only scattered elements of technology remain. There is a considerable degree of blurring between this form of science fiction and that which deals with false utopias or dystopic societies.
- Hard science fiction: where the science is detailed, well-researched, and considered plausible such as *Jurassic Park* or *Prey (novel)*.
  - Tech noir: A hybrid of other works of fiction combining the film noir and science fiction or cyberpunk genres such as seen in *Blade Runner* (1982) and *The Terminator* (1984). It is a form of Neo-noir concentrating more on science fiction themes. The term was coined in *The Terminator* as the name of a nightclub, *Tech Noir*. The director James Cameron wanted a name for the particular style he was invoking.
- Soft science fiction: not detailed about the science involved, and typically deals more with cultural, social, and political interactions.
  - Comic science fiction: exploits the genre's conventions for comic effect.
  - Military science fiction: told from the point of view of the military, or a main character who is a soldier in the military. It usually has technology far superior to today's, but not necessarily implausible. Military science fiction essentially is the addition of science fiction elements into a military fiction story. (Note that some military science fiction stories fit at least somewhat into the "hard science fiction" subgenre as well.)
  - Feminist science fiction: tends to deal with women's roles in society. It poses questions about social issues such as how society constructs gender roles, the role reproduction plays in defining gender and the unequal political, economic and personal power of men and women. Some of the most notable feminist science fiction works have illustrated these themes using utopias to explore a society in which gender differences or gender power imbalances do not exist, or dystopias to explore worlds in which gender inequalities are intensified, thus asserting a need for feminist work to continue.
  - Libertarian science fiction: focuses on the politics and social order implied by libertarian philosophies with an emphasis on individualism and a limited state – and in some cases, no state whatsoever. As a genre, it can be seen as growing out of the 1930s and 1940s when the science-fiction pulp magazines were reaching their peak at the same time as fascism and communism. While this environment gave rise to

dystopian novels such as George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, in the pulps, this influence more often give rise to speculations about societies (or sub-groups) arising in direct opposition to totalitarianism.

- Social science fiction: concerned less with the scientific background and more with sociological speculation about human society. In other words, it "absorbs and discusses anthropology", and speculates about human behavior and interactions. Exploration of fictional societies is one of the most interesting aspects of science fiction, allowing it to perform predictive and precautionary functions, to criticize the contemporary world and to present solutions, to portray alternative societies and to examine the implications of ethical principles.

- Space opera: A story characterized by the extent of space travel and distinguished by the amount of time that protagonists spend in an active, space-faring lifestyle. *Firefly*, *Star Trek*, *Star Blazers* and *Star Wars* have often been categorized as such.
  - Science fiction Western: has elements of science fiction in a Western setting. It is different from a Space Western, which is a frontier story indicative of American Westerns, except transposed to a backdrop of space exploration and settlement.
  - Planetary romance: the bulk of the action consists of adventures on one or more exotic alien planets, characterized by distinctive physical and cultural backgrounds. Some planetary romances take place against the background of a future culture where travel between worlds by spaceship is commonplace; others, particularly the earliest examples of the genre, do not, and invoke flying carpets, astral projection, or other methods of getting between planets. In either case, it is the planetside adventures which are the focus of the story, not the mode of travel.
  - Space Western: transposes themes of American Western books and film to a backdrop of futuristic space frontiers; it is the complement of the science fiction Western, which transposes science fiction *themes* onto an American Western *setting*.

- Punk: Several different Science Fiction subgenres, normally categorized by distinct technologies and sciences. The themes tend to be cynical or dystopian, and a person, or group of people, fighting the corruption of the government.
  - Cyberpunk: A futuristic storyline dealing with people who have been physically or mentally enhanced with cybernetic components, often featuring cyborgs or the singularity as a major theme, and generally somewhat cynical or dystopian (hence the "punk" portion of the name). This is often confused or placed with Techno-thriller, which is actually a separate and less specialized genre.
    - Postcyberpunk: some critics suggest has evolved from cyberpunk. Like its predecessor, postcyberpunk focuses on technological developments in near-future societies, typically examining the social effects of a ubiquitous datasphere of computerized information, genetic engineering, modification of the human body, and the continued impact of perpetual technological change. Unlike "pure" cyberpunk, the works in this category feature characters who act to improve social conditions or at least protect the status quo from further decay.
  - Retropunk: As a wider variety of writers began to work with cyberpunk concepts, new subgenres of science fiction emerged, playing off the cyberpunk label, and focusing on technology and its social effects in different ways. Many derivatives of cyberpunk are retro-futuristic, based either on the futuristic visions of past eras, or more recent extrapolations or exaggerations of the actual technology of those eras.
    - Atompunk: relates to the pre-digital, cultural period of 1945–65, including mid-century Modernism, the "Atomic Age", the "Space Age", Communism and paranoia in the US along with Soviet styling, underground cinema, Googie architecture, space and the Sputnik, moon landing, superhero-comics, art & radioactivity, the rise of the US military/industrial complex & the fall-out of Chernobyl. Communist analog atompunk is an ultimate lost world. The Fallout series of computer games is an excellent example of atompunk.
    - Dieselpunk: Initially proposed as a genre by the creators of the role-playing game *Children of the Sun*, dieselpunk refers to fiction inspired by mid-century pulp stories, based on the aesthetics of the interbellum period through World War II (c. 1920–45). Similar to

steampunk though specifically characterized by the rise of petroleum power and technocratic perception, incorporating neo-noir elements and sharing themes more clearly with cyberpunk than steampunk. Though the notability of dieselpunk as a genre is not entirely uncontested, installments ranging from the retro-futuristic film *Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow* to the 2001 Activision video game *Return to Castle Wolfenstein* have been suggested as quintessential dieselpunk works of fiction.

- Steampunk: A story that takes place around the time steam power was first coming into use. The industrial revolution is a common time frame which steam punk stories take place in, and the steam technology is often actually more advanced than the real technology of time (for instance, *Steam Detectives* features steam-powered robots). The most immediate form of steampunk subculture is the community of fans surrounding the genre. Others move beyond this, attempting to adopt a "steampunk" aesthetic through fashion, home decor and even music.
  - Clockpunk: It has been occasionally used to refer to a subgenre of speculative fiction which is similar to steampunk, but deviates in its technology. As with steampunk, it portrays advanced technology based on pre-modern designs, but rather than the steam power of the Industrial Age, the technology used is based on springs, clockwork and similar. Clockpunk is based very intensively on the works of Leonardo da Vinci and as such, it is typically set during the Renaissance. It is regarded as being a type of steampunk.
- Biopunk: A story that is about genetics and biological research (often falling under the horror category). It often focuses on some harmful effects characters have created when they change an animal's code to (unintentionally) create a violent monster. Biopunk emerged during the 1990s and depicts the underground of the biotechnological revolution that was expected to start having a profound impact on humanity in the first half of the 21st century. Biopunk fiction typically describes the struggles of individuals or groups, often the product of human experimentation, against a backdrop of totalitarian governments or megacorporations which misuse biotechnologies as means of social control or profiteering. Unlike cyberpunk, it builds not on information technology but on synthetic biology.
  - Nanopunk: similar bio-punk, but depicts a world where the use of biotechnologies are limited or prohibited, so only nanotechnologies in wide use (while in biopunk bio- and nanotechnologies often coexist). Currently the genre is more concerned with the artistic and physiological impact of nanotechnology, than of aspects of the technology itself which is still in its infancy. Unlike the cyberpunk, a low-life yet technologically advanced character, the personification of a nanopunk can be set 'hard' or 'soft', depending on your views of the impact nanotechnology will have on our future.

Slice of Life

A slice of life is a story that might have no plot, but represents a portion of (everyday) life. It uses naturalistic representation of real life, sometimes used as an adjective, as in "a play with 'slice of life' dialogue".

Speculative

Speculative fiction speculates about worlds that are unlike the real world in various important ways. In these contexts, it generally overlaps one or more of the following: science fiction, fantasy fiction, horror fiction, supernatural fiction, superhero fiction, utopian and dystopian fiction, apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fiction, and alternate history.

- Slipstream: Fantastic or non-realistic fiction that crosses conventional genre boundaries between science fiction/fantasy and mainstream literary fiction. The term *slipstream* was coined by cyberpunk author Bruce Sterling in an article originally published in *SF Eye #5*, July 1989. He wrote: *"...this is a kind of writing which simply makes you feel very strange; the way that living in the 20th century makes you feel, if you are a person of a certain sensibility."* Slipstream fiction has consequently been referred to as "the fiction of strangeness," which is as clear a definition as any others in wide use.
- Supernatural fiction: exploits or requires as plot devices or themes some contradictions of the commonplace natural world and materialist assumptions about it. It includes the traditional ghost story. *The Turn of the Screw* by Henry James is an example of a work of literary fiction that is also largely concerned with supernatural fiction elements, making play of the possibility that they are psychological at root, but requiring the option that they are not for effect. The newer speculative fiction genres of horror fiction and fantasy fiction, growing out of some of the basic propositions and generic conventions, to a certain extent replaced it.
- Superhero fiction: deals with superheroes, supervillains, super-powered humans, aliens, or mutants, and their adventures. Distinct from (but often derived from) comic books, animated films, and graphic novels, these are prose stories and full-length novels. Superhero fiction is a type of speculative fiction. The largest and longest running of the corporate series are those associated with the DC Universe and the Marvel Universe.
- Utopian and dystopian fiction: The utopia and its offshoot, the dystopia, are genres of literature that explore social and political structures. Utopian fiction is the creation of an ideal world, or utopia, as the setting for a novel. Dystopian fiction is the opposite: creation of a nightmare world, or dystopia. Many novels combine both, often as a metaphor for the different directions humanity can take in its choices, ending up with one of two possible futures. Both utopias and dystopias are commonly found in science fiction and other speculative fiction genres, and arguably are by definition a type of speculative fiction. More than 400 utopian works were published prior to the year 1900 in the English language alone, with more than a thousand others during the 20th century.
- Weird fiction: Speculative literature written in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Weird fiction is distinguished from horror and fantasy in that it predates the niche marketing of genre fiction. Because genre or stylistic conventions had not been established, weird tales often blend the supernatural, mythical, and even scientific. British "weird" authors, for example, published their work in mainstream literary magazines even after American pulp magazines became popular. Although "weird fiction" is chiefly a historical description for works through the 1930s, the term has also been used since the 1980s, sometimes to refer to slipstream fiction that blends horror, fantasy, and science fiction.

Suppositional fiction is a subcategory in which stories and characters are constrained within an internally consistent world, but this category is not necessarily associated with any particular genre.[9][10][11] A work of suppositional fiction might be science fiction, alternate history, mystery, horror, or even suppositional fantasy, depending on the intent and focus of the author.

Thriller

A Thriller is a story that is usually a mix of fear and excitement. It has traits from the suspense genre and often from the action, adventure or mystery genres, but the level of terror makes it borderline horror fiction at times as well. It generally has a dark or serious theme, which also makes it similar to drama.

- Disaster-thriller: A story about mass peril, where the protagonist's job is to both survive, and to save many other people from a grim fate, often a

natural disaster such as a storm or volcanic eruption, but which may also be a terrorist attack or epidemic of some sort.

- Psychological thriller: emphasizes the psychological condition of the hero that presents obstacles to his objective, rather than the action. Some psychological thrillers are also about complicated stories that try to deliberately confuse the audience, often by showing them only the same confusing or seemingly nonsensical information that the hero gains.
- Crime thriller: A story that revolves around the life of detectives, mobs, or other groups associated with criminal events in the story.
- Techno-thriller: A story whose theme is usually technology, or the danger behind the technology people use, including the threat of cyber terrorism such as *State of Fear*.

Urban

Urban fiction, also known as **street lit**, is a literary genre set, as the name implies, in a city landscape; however, the genre is as much defined by the race and culture of its characters as the urban setting. The tone for urban fiction is usually dark, focusing on the underside. Profanity (all of George Carlin's seven dirty words and urban variations thereof), sex and violence are usually explicit, with the writer not shying away from or watering-down the material. In this respect, urban fiction shares some common threads with dystopian or survivalist fiction. In the second wave of urban fiction, some variations of this model have been seen.

A common theme in thrillers involves innocent victims dealing with deranged adversaries, as seen in Hitchcock's film *Rebecca* (1940), where Mrs. Danvers tries to persuade Mrs. De Winter to leap to her death

Western

Stories in the Western genre are set in the American West, between the time of the Civil war and the early twentieth century.[12] The setting of a wilderness or uncivilized area is especially important to the genre, and the setting is often described richly and in-depth. They focus on the adventure of the main character(s) and the contrast between civilization or society and the untamed wilderness, often featuring the characters working to bring civilization to the wilderness.[12][13] This genre periodically overlaps with historical fiction, and while a more traditional definition of westerns is that of stories about lone men facing the frontier, more modern definitions and writings are often expanded to include any person or persons in this time period that feature a strong tone of the contrast between civilization and wilderness and emphasize the independence of the main character(s).[12]

Film and television formats and genres

Genres are listed under the sub-sectioned formats:

Animation

- Traditional animation: also known as "cell animation", this is one of the oldest animation subgenres. Basically, it is a way of animating a cartoon by drawing and painting pictures by hand. Each drawing or painting is a different frame of animation, and when they are flipped or put in sequence at the right speed, they give the illusion of movement. Examples are *Beauty and the Beast* and *Spirited Away*.
- Animated series: created or adapted with a common series title, usually related to one another and can appear as much as up to once a week or daily during a prescribed time slot. Animated cartoon series also approved ly outside broadcast television, as was the case for the *Tom and Jerry* short films that appeared in movie theaters from 1961 to 1962. Series can have either a finite number of episodes like a miniseries, a definite end, or be open-ended, without a predetermined number of episodes.
- Stop motion: similar to traditional animation; instead of using hand drawn pictures, stop motion films are made with small figurines or other objects that have their picture taken many times in order to provide the animation frames. Examples are *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, *Coraline*, and *Corpse Bride*.
- Computer-generated imagery (CGI): A genre of animation that includes animating a cartoon on a computer modeling program. Models of characters or props are created on the computer, and then programmed to do something specific. Then, when the animation is completely programmed, the computer can play a completely computer generated movie. CGI is often used for the visual effects in Live Action films as well. Examples are *Up* or *Toy Story*.
- Puppetry: Although it is technically live action, puppetry is a different way of "animating" a movie and puppets are often used in lieu of live actors. Usually, there are small figurines or figures (similar to stop motion), but these are controlled and filmed in real time. Like CGI, puppetry can be found in live-action films as a method of achieving a special effect. Examples are *The Muppets* and *The Dark Crystal*.

Live-action scripted

- Drama:
  - Adult content: the portrayal of sexual or sensual subject matter for the purpose of sexual arousal. A distinction is also made between softcore and hardcore pornography. Softcore pornography can generally be described as focusing on nude modeling or suggestive, but not explicit, simulations of sexual activity, whereas hardcore pornography explicitly showcases penetrative intercourse or other sex acts.
  - Art television (also called "quality television"): shares some of the same traits of art films. Television shows such as David Lynch's *Twin Peaks* series and BBC's *The Singing Detective* also have "...a loosening of causality, a greater emphasis on psychological or anecdotal realism, violations of classical clarity of space and time, explicit authorial comment, and ambiguity."
  - Action: where one or more heroes are thrust into a series of challenges that typically include physical feats, extended combat scenes, violence and frenetic chases. Action films tend to feature a resourceful character struggling against incredible odds, including life-threatening situations, a villain, or a pursuit, which generally conclude in victory for the hero.
  - Adventure: features the hero in action scenes which also display and explore exotic locations. The subgenres of adventure films include swashbuckler film, disaster films, and historical dramas – which is similar to the epic film genre. Main plot elements include quests for lost continents, a jungle or desert settings, characters going on a treasure hunts and heroic journeys into the unknown. Adventure films are mostly set in a period background and may include adapted stories of historical or fictional adventure heroes within the historical context. Kings, battles, rebellion or piracy are commonly seen in adventure films. Adventure films may also be combined with other movie genres such as, science fiction, fantasy and sometimes war films.
  - Courtroom drama: presents fictional drama about law. Law enforcement, crime, detective-based mystery solving, lawyer work, civil

litigation, etc., are all possible focuses of legal dramas. Common subgenres of legal dramas include detective dramas, police dramas, courtroom dramas, legal thrillers, etc.

- Detective fiction: a subgenre of crime fiction and mystery fiction in which an investigator or a detective – either professional or amateur – investigates a crime, often murder.
- Docudrama: A program depicting some sort of historical or current news event, with specific changes or fabrications for legal, continuity or entertainment reasons. Depending on the quality of the feature and intended audience, these changes can minimally or completely change the story in relation to the actual events. These programs often depict crime or criminals but can also be used to depict heroics or tell a less-explored side of a well-known story. Example: *United 93* by Paul Greengrass depicts the events aboard United Airlines Flight 93 on September 11, 2001 via reconstruction from the available evidence. Since the specific words the passengers exchanged while planning their assault on the cockpit will never be known, the filmmakers created the dialogue based on research and evidence. The Onion Field is another example. This genre is often criticized for creating sensationalized programs intended to capitalize on public interest in lurid news stories; in the case of the Scott Peterson murder trial, a docudrama starring Dean Cain was filmed and aired during jury deliberations.
- Fantasy: featuring elements of the fantastic, often including magic, supernatural forces, or exotic fantasy worlds. Fantasy television programs are often based on tales from mythology and folklore, or are adapted from fantasy stories in other media. The boundaries of fantasy television overlap with science fiction and horror.
- Horror is a film genre seeking to elicit a negative emotional reaction from viewers by playing on the audience's primal fears. Horror films often feature scenes that startle the viewer; the macabre and the supernatural are frequent themes. Thus they may overlap with the fantasy, supernatural, and thriller genres.
- Legal drama: Legal drama sometimes overlap with crime drama, most notably in the case of the show *Law & Order*.
- Medical drama: based around a team of medics helping patients who have been involved in accidents serious or otherwise. Most commonly, an accident occurs which results in the medics being called to help the injured. Most are usually based around a hospital, with some based around a mobile medical team etc. Examples of this genre are Casualty, Holby City and ER.
- Police procedural: pioneered by the popular show *Dragnet*. The stories revolve around a crime that has been committed and must be solved by the end of the episode following a very generic and usually unchanging structure of events. The crime is committed, witnesses are questioned, an arrest occurs, and then a judicial conclusion wraps it up. As the name implies, the show communicates everything "by the book," as it would happen in real life. In such modern Police Procedurals such as Law & Order, you see and hear even the officers reading freshly arrested criminals their Miranda rights. Not quite as dramatic or action-oriented as the Dick Tracy-style of detective shows.
- Political drama is a TV program that has a political component, whether reflecting the author's political opinion, or describing a politician or series of political events. Dramatists who have written political dramas include Aaron Sorkin, Robert Penn Warren, Sergei Eisenstein, Bertolt Brecht, Jean-Paul Sartre, Caryl Churchill, and Federico García Lorca. Television series that can be classified as political drama include *Yes Minister*, its sequel *Yes, Prime Minister*, *The West Wing*, *Borgen*, *Boss*, *Jack and Bobby*, *The Bold Ones: The Senator*, *Commander in Chief*, and *House of Cards*.
- Science-fiction
- Teen drama
- Thriller
- Western series: set in the American West and embody the spirit, the struggle and the demise of the new frontier. Western series use stock characters such as cowboys, gunslingers, and bounty hunters, often depicted as semi-nomadic wanderers who wear Stetson hats, bandannas,

spurs, and buckskins, use revolvers or rifles as everyday tools of survival, and ride between dusty towns and cattle ranches on their trusty steeds.
- Comedy:
    - Action comedy: A subgenre of comedy which emphasizes physically humorous antics, unorthodox body-language and oftentimes exasperating situations. Examples are: Charlie Chaplin, Jackie Chan, and Lucille Ball.
    - Comedy-drama
    - Mockumentary: A story that employs the style of the documentary to present fictional, and generally humorous, events or characters. Very common in film and television programs, both as a full film or series, or as a brief sequence or episode within a larger work. Examples include *This Is Spinal Tap* and *Best In Show*.
    - Romantic comedy (aka Rom-com)
    - Satire
    - Slapstick: A type of comedy involving exaggerated physical violence and activities which exceed the boundaries of common sense. These hyperbolic depictions are often found in children's media, and light comedies.
    - Sitcom: Short for *situational comedy*, a generally lighthearted genre which features characters having to deal with odd or uncomfortable situations or misunderstandings.
    - Sketch comedy

Live-action unscripted

- Documentary: a feature-length or near-feature-length film depicting a real-world event or person, told in a journalistic style (if told in a literary narrative style the result is often a docudrama). Examples: *Hoop Dreams*, *The Thin Blue Line* (documentary).
- Dramality: a combination of television drama and reality television genres[14][15] (e.g., the soap opera *The Only Way Is Essex*[16]).
- Educational: helps kids learn their basics to go through school.
- Factual television: non-fiction television programming that documents actual events and people. These type of programs are also described as documentary, television documentary, observational documentary, fly on the wall, docudrama, and reality television. Although the genre has existed in some form or another since the early years of television, the term factual television has most commonly been used to describe programs produced since the 1990s.
- Game show: depicting a real contest, typically a trivia competition or physical challenge, with rewards in prizes or money. The players may include celebrities, who can be found on such game shows as *Match Game*, *Hollywood Squares*, *Hollywood Game Night* and *Celebrity Name Game*. More often the participants are ordinary "everyday" people, such as *Let's Make a Deal*, *Wheel of Fortune*, *Jeopardy!*, and *The Price Is Right*.
- Instructional: the use of television programs in the field of distance education. Educational television programs on instructional television may be less than one half hour long (generally 15 minutes in length) to help their integration into the classroom setting. These shows are often accompanied by teachers' guides that include material to help use this program in lessons. Instructional television programs are often shown during the daytime on Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) stations in the United States. However, fewer public television stations devote their airtime to ITV today than they do in the past; these days, ITV programs are either seen on a digital subchannel of Non-commercial educational

public television station, or passed on to a local educational-access television channel run by a Public, educational, and government access (PEG) cable TV organization.

- Music television: where viewers listen to music on the television similar to a radio station apart from commonly having a visual or complete music video.
- News show: depicting real, up-to-date events
  - Current Affairs: Broadcast journalism where the emphasis is on detailed analysis and discussion of a news story.
  - Tabloid television: (also known as Teletabloid) a form of tabloid journalism. Tabloid television newscasts usually incorporate flashy graphics and sensationalized stories. Often, there is a heavy emphasis on crime, stories with good video, and celebrity news. It is a form of "infotainment."
- Public affairs (broadcasting): This refers to radio or television programs which focuses on matters of politics and public policy. Among commercial broadcasters, such programs are often only to satisfy Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulatory expectations and are not scheduled in prime time. Public affairs television programs are usually broadcast at times when few listeners or viewers are tuned in (or even awake) in the US, in time slots known as graveyard slots; such programs can be frequently encountered at times such as 5–6 a.m. on a Sunday morning.
- Religious: produced by religious organizations, usually with a religious message. It can include church services, talk/variety shows, and dramatic movies. Within the last two decades, most religious programming is found on religious television networks.
- Reality: A purportedly unscripted show (although evidence suggests that some scripting or manipulation occurs) featuring non-actors interacting with each other or dealing with invented or contrived challenges, such as competing against others for a prize. Produced in a similar fashion as the documentary film genre, but with more emphasis on the showing of interpersonal conflict, emotional reactions, or unusual occurrences. The genre has numerous widely varying subgenres (see main article).
- Stand-up comedy: A style in which a comedian performs in front of a live audience, speaking directly to them. The performer is commonly known as a comic, stand-up comic, stand-up comedian or simply a stand-up. In stand-up comedy the comedian usually recites a fast-paced succession of humorous stories, short jokes called "bits", and one-liners, which constitute what is typically called a monologue, routine or act. Some stand-up comedians use props, music or magic tricks to enhance their acts. Stand-up comedy is often performed in comedy clubs, bars, neo-burlesques, colleges, and theaters. Outside of live performance, stand-up is often distributed commercially via television, DVD, and the internet.
- Sports: The coverage of sports as a television program, on radio and other broadcasting media. It usually involves one or more sports commentators describing the events as they happen, which is called "colour commentary."
- Talk show: A television show in which one person (or a group of people) discuss various topics put forth by a talk show host. Usually, guests on a talk show consist of a group of people who are learned or who have great experience in relation to whatever issue is being discussed on the show for that particular episode.
  - Tabloid talk show: A tabloid talk show is a subgenre of the talk show genre. On this type of talk show, the host invites either a guest or a group of guests to discuss provocative topics. Such topics can range from marital infidelity to more outlandish topics. Additionally, the guests are encouraged to make public confessions, and even resolve their issues via on-camera "group therapy."[17]
- Television documentary: A genre of television programming that broadcasts documentaries.
- Variety show: Also known as variety arts or variety entertainment, this is an entertainment made up of a variety of acts (hence the name), especially musical performances and sketch comedy, and normally introduced by a compère (master of ceremonies) or host. Other types of acts include magic, animal and circus acts, acrobatics, juggling and ventriloquism. Variety shows were a staple of anglophone television from its early

days into the 1970s, and lasted into the 1980s. In several parts of the world, variety TV remains popular and widespread.

Other television formats

- Anthology series: presents a different story and a different set of characters in each episode. These usually have a different cast each week, but several series in the past, such as *Four Star Playhouse*, employed a permanent troupe of character actors who would appear in a different drama each week. Some anthology series, such as Studio One, began on radio and then expanded to television.
- Children's series: Aimed at children and families.
- Cooking show: A television program which presents food presentation in a kitchen television studio. Over the course of the program, the show's host, who is usually a celebrity chef, prepares one or more dishes over the course of the episode. The chef takes the viewing audience through the food's inspiration, preparation, and stages of cooking.
- Court show: A court show is a television programming subgenre of either legal dramas or reality legal programming. Court shows present content mainly in the form of legal hearings between plaintiffs and defendants, which are presided over by a pseudo-judge. Court shows first arose in the United States, and are still predominantly found in the country today.
- Infomercials: Also known as Direct Response TV (DRTV), these are television commercials which generally include a phone number or website. There are long-form infomercials, which are typically between 15 and 30 minutes in length, and short-form infomercials, which are typically 30 seconds to 120 seconds in length. Infomercials are also known as paid programming (or teleshopping in Europe). This phenomenon started in the United States where infomercials were typically shown overnight (usually 2:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.), outside of prime time commercial broadcasting peak hours. Some television stations chose to air infomercials as an alternative to the former practice of signing off. By 2009, most US infomercial spending is during early morning, daytime, and evening hours.
- Miniseries and Television movies
- Serial: A television show which is one continuous story. Each episode picks up from where the last one left off. The story may shift with a new season.
  - Soap opera: Usually on every day of the week instead of once a week. Some can go on for over 50 years. Examples: *Guiding Light*, *As the World Turns*, *All My Children*, *Days of Our Lives*, *General Hospital*, *The Young and the Restless*, *EastEnders* and *Coronation Street*
  - Telenovela: A serial melodrama popular in Latin America and the Philippines. They are similar to a soap opera in miniseries format. They often feature Love and Drama, as well as other situations depending on the genre of telenovela. Examples include: Desire (TV series), Fashion House and Wicked Wicked Games.
  - Dizi: A serial period or contemporary drama produced in Turkey and broadcast weekly in Turkey, the Balkans, the Middle East, Central Asia and other regions. Depending on the audience they may be dubbed or sub-titled. Examples include: *Muhteşem Yüzyıl*, *Binbir Gece* and *Gümüş*. See Turkish television drama.

Other television-related topics

- Specialty channels are commercial broadcasting or non-commercial television channel which consists of television programming focused on a single genre, subject or targeted television market at a specific demographic. The number of specialty channels has greatly increased during the

1990s and 2000s while the previously common concept of countries having just a few (national) TV stations addressing all interest groups and demographics became increasingly outmoded, as it already had been for some time in several countries. About 65% of today's satellite channels are specialty channels.

Video game genres

Genres in video games are somewhat different from other forms of art as most video game genres are based on the way in which the player interacts with the game. All genres from all other types of media can be applied to video games but are secondary to the genre types described below.

Genres unique to video games:

- Arcade games:
    - Classic/Vintage: Games which require the player to navigate a maze or other obstacle.
- Shooter: Where the main purpose is to fight using guns.
    - First-person shooter (FPS): A variant of the shooting game. In the game, the camera is actually in place of the character's eyes, so that you are playing the game from his or her view, looking down the barrel of a gun
        - Massively multiplayer online First-person shooter (MMOFPS): An online gaming genre which features a persistent world and a large number of simultaneous players in a first-person shooter fashion. These games provide large-scale, sometimes team-based combat.
    - Third-person shooter: A shooting game where the camera angle is actually hovering over the playable character as you play.
- Strategy: Where the purpose is to strategize. You have an opponent with the same abilities as you, more or less, and to beat him, you must use your abilities in a much more tactical way.
    - Real-time strategy (RTS): Where everybody plays at the same time, and races to think of a better strategy than the other players. Most of these video games are about military.
        - Massively multiplayer online real-time strategy (MMORTS): A Real Time Strategy game that is played online. Many players can sign on a play at the same time, creating empires and battling each other.
    - Turn-based strategy: Where everybody takes turns. Once everybody has placed their units and military characters in the right spot they can't move again until the next turn begins. This structure is prominently used in RPGs.
- Musical: Where music is usually played. To win, the players must match the rhythm of the music by pushing the right button combination until their opponents are unable to keep up with them. Not to be confused with the stage musical or musical film, which are stories that feature characters singing about the events in the plot.
- Simulation: Where you must manage and develop fictitious business. For example, in a game you might be asked to manage and build a zoo, and the game simulates this for you in as accurate a way as possible.
    - Simulation shooter: Features the basic mechanics of a shooter, where using a gun is the primary method of gameplay, but emphasizes realism, often incorporating features like ballistics and realistic character damage.
    - Simulation strategy: A strategy game that emphasizes realism, such as the Total War series of games, usually focusing on a specific time and location in human history, such as the Roman Empire.

- Puzzle: Where you must solve puzzles in order to progress through the levels.
- Party: Mostly suitable for multiple players and social gatherings. In most of these, the player or players compete or cooperate in smaller games, or minigames, within the main game.
- Platform: Where the player must jump onto various platforms to evade obstacles and reach their goal, these games are fairly linear most of the time with levels adhering to a simple A to B structure.
- Fighting: Where two or more playable characters fight. Each character usually has their own unique moves, and the goal of the game, usually, is to be the last man standing.
- Racing game: Either in the first-person or third-person perspective, in which the player partakes in a racing competition with any type of land, air, or sea vehicles. They may be based on anything from real-world racing leagues to entirely fantastical settings. In general, they can be distributed along a spectrum anywhere between hardcore simulations, and simpler arcade racing games. Racing games may also fall under the category of sports games.
- Role-playing game (RPG): A game that is not (necessarily) about combat. It is a game where the player plays a character, and goes around pretending to be a real person in a fictitious world. This is also similar to non-video game forms of gaming that involve roleplaying, including play by post gaming and tabletop roleplaying games.
    - Massive multiplayer online role playing game (MMORPG): Similar to a regular Role Playing Game, but it is a multiplayer game played via the internet. During this game, thousands of players from around the world can play the same game at the same time and chat with each other. Players sign onto the game and complete quests while exploring the virtual world. Many MMORPGs are free to play by just signing up on the specific game site and downloading the game file but some require a monthly fee.
- Sports games: Games that simulate playing real-life sports.
- Survival/horror: The player is placed in a horrifying situation of which they must escape. The major emphasis of most survival horror games is placed upon tension and a truly terrifying or grisly scenario. Puzzle-solving is a major characteristic of the genre. Examples of survival horror games include the *Resident Evil*, *Silent Hill* and *Clock Tower* series.
- Stealth: The player must proceed through an environment or complete an objective without being seen.

Music genres

- Medieval music: Music composed from around the middle of the 5th century to the middle of the 15th century, largely characterized by monophonic and polyphonic music.
- Renaissance music: largely composed from the middle of the 15th century to around 1600.
- Baroque music: composed from around 1600 to the middle of the 18th century. Much Baroque music is written in the form of dance suites.
- Classical: Music that was composed from around the middle of the 18th century until the early 19th century. The key musical forms were the symphony, the concerto, and the sonata. Also includes some more recently written music (neo-classical) that contains many of the same musical elements.
- Romantic: composed from the early 19th century to about 1900, which emphasized dramatic themes and subject matter. Also includes more recently written music (Neo-romantic) that contains similar musical elements.
- 20th-century music: A wide classification of music composed in the 20th century. This music deals largely with sound experimentation and

moving away from the traditional tendencies of tonality.
- Opera, Operette and Zarzuela
- Folk: adaptations of old stories that were passed from generation to generation. Considered somewhat more niche now. Also see Neofolk, Folk Noir, Pagan Folk.
- Country music: American popular music that began in the rural regions of the Southern United States in the 1920s. It takes its roots from southeastern American folk music and Western music. Blues modes have been used extensively throughout its recorded history. Country music often consists of ballads and dance tunes with generally simple forms and harmonies accompanied by mostly string instruments such as banjos, electric and acoustic guitars, fiddles, and harmonicas.

The term country music gained popularity in the 1940s in preference to the earlier term hillbilly music; it came to encompass Western music, which evolved parallel to hillbilly music from similar roots, in the mid-20th century. The term country music is used today to describe many styles and subgenres. In 2009 country music was the most listened to rush hour radio genre during the evening commute, and second most popular in the morning commute in the United States.

- Rock: originated from folk and blues. It used newer electrical instruments instead of relying solely on the classical woodwinds and stringed instruments. It first became popular in the mid-20th century because of famous bands like The Beatles and The Rolling Stones.
    - Heavy metal: Similar to rock, and generally considered a subgenre of it. It usually uses the same electrical instruments, but the music is more intense and less "pop" in style (see below) such as Black Sabbath, Judas Priest, Iron Maiden and Metallica.
    - Punk rock: developed between 1974 and 1976 in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Rooted in garage rock and other forms of what is now known as protopunk music, punk rock bands eschewed the perceived excesses of mainstream 1970s rock. Includes work by The Adverts, the Sex Pistols and The Clash.
- Pop: once referred to any popular music during the time period, though the term has slowly gained use as a more specific (yet still somewhat vague) genre descriptor for music with a catchy, relatively consistent melody, among other aspects. It is commonly placed as having started in the mid-20th century, alongside rock music. Much dance music falls under this genre, and much modern rock music is considered to include elements of it as well, since bands such as the Beatles were a significant stylistic influence on what is now considered pop.
- Rhythm and blues (R&B): an evolving range of genres of popular African-American music that first began to develop in the early 20th century.
    - Blues: A somewhat somber, quieter style of music whose name refers to the unhappiness of the performer, and which gained popularity in the early 20th century alongside jazz, and influenced the early development of rock music. A major genre within R&B, and one of its earliest genres as well.
    - Hip hop: more rhythmically based, mostly African-American urban-derived genres, with a wide array of subgenres between them.
    - Jazz: originated at the beginning of the 20th century in African American communities in the Southern United States from a confluence of African and European music traditions. Jazz has, from its early 20th century inception, spawned a variety of subgenres, from New Orleans Dixieland dating from the early 1910s, big band-style swing from the 1930s and 1940s, bebop from the mid-1940s, a variety of Latin jazz fusions such as Afro-Cuban and Brazilian jazz from the 1950s and 1960s, jazz-rock fusion from the 1970s and late 1980s developments such as acid jazz, which blended jazz influences into funk and hip-hop.
- Electronic music: employs electronic musical instruments and electronic music technology in its production. It consists of a number of separate genres, many of which are still evolving. One major category within this form of music is electronic dance music (EDM) which consists of a

multitude of genres and subgenres and is primarily associated with the dance and club scene.

- Breakbeat: usually characterized by the use of a non-straightened 4/4 drum pattern (as opposed to the steady beat of house or trance). Includes work by The Chemical Brothers, Fatboy Slim and Orbital.
- Drum and Bass or Jungle: emerged in the late 1980s which is characterized by fast breaks and basslines. Includes work by Roni Size, Chase & Status and London Elektricity.
- Ambient: focuses on the timbral characteristics of sounds, particularly organised or performed to evoke an "atmospheric", "visual" or "unobtrusive" quality.
- Downtempo: a laid-back style similar to ambient music, but usually with a beat or groove unlike the beatless forms of Ambient music.
- Electro: directly influenced by the use of TR-808 and funk records. Includes work by Kraftwerk.
- House: originated in Chicago, Illinois, US in the late 1970s and early 1980s; includes work by Fedde Le Grand and Frankie Knuckles.
- Trance: generally characterized by a tempo of between approximately 128 and 150 BPM, melodic synthesizer phrases, and a musical form that is progressive as it builds up and down throughout a track. Includes work by Darude, ATB and Chicane.
- Techno: emerged in Detroit, Michigan, US during the mid-to-late 1980s. Includes work by Tomcraft, Leftfield and Moby.
- UK Garage: generally connected to the evolution of house in the United Kingdom from early/mid-1990s. Includes work by T2, The Artful Dodger and Shanks & Bigfoot.

- Reggae: first developed in Jamaica in the late 1960s. While sometimes used in a broader sense to refer to most types of Jamaican music, the term *reggae* more properly denotes a particular music style that originated following on the development of ska and rocksteady. Reggae is based on a rhythmic style characterized by accents on the off-beat, known as the skank. Reggae is normally slower than ska. Reggae usually accents the second and fourth beat in each bar. Reggae song lyrics deal with many subjects, including religion, love, sexuality, peace, relationships, drugs, poverty, injustice and other social and political issues.
- Calypso: developed in the mid-20th century out of Kaiso music. The genre became a worldwide hit in the 1950s when the 1956 album titled Calypso was the first full-length record to sell more than a million copies.

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- A geographical representation of genres in fiction (http://www.jasperfforde.com/more/tn6map.html)

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