

Saturday Night Live: Celebrating 50 Years [B1]

Il programma che ha intrattenuto intere generazioni con la sua comicità e satira politica festeggia cinquant'anni come punto di riferimento globale.

A comedy sketch **airs** on Saturday Night Live (SNL) and millions of viewers watch it. The sketch is so popular on the US TV show that it goes viral online, where it gets billions of views. This is very common for SNL sketches, and is remarkable given that the show launched fifty years ago and **predates** social media and the invention of the internet. This year, SNL celebrates its anniversary with a weekend-long celebration on the broadcasting company NBC. The celebrations culminate with a three-hour live primetime special on 16 February.

SATIRICAL TV

SNL debuted on 11 October 1975. It was created by the Canadian-American producer Lorne Michaels and was originally called NBC's Saturday Night, but changed its name to Saturday Night Live a few years later. It became **renowned** for its clever satirical content with a political **edge**. It transformed TV comedy, then dominated by sitcoms, and went on to become a cultural phenomenon. It has won over one hundred Emmy Awards, more than any other TV programme, and is one of the longest-running network TV shows in US history.

TYPICAL EPISODE

Each episode of SNL begins with the cast members, who include longtime, new and guest performers, and who perform a comedy sketch based on **current events**. The opening sketch ends with one of the cast members **breaking character** and reciting the famous line, "Live from New York, it's Saturday Night Live!"

CELEBRITIES

A celebrity guest then [hosts](#) the rest of the episode. Most celebrity guests are Hollywood actors, but have also included singers such as Justin Timberlake and big names from politics and business, including Donald Trump and Elon Musk. The celebrity guest gives an opening monologue, performs with cast members in sketches parodying US culture and politics, and introduces a performance by a musical guest.

CONTROVERSIAL

Long before any of SNL's sketches went viral, some of them were developed into Hollywood films, including *The Blues Brothers* (1980) and *Coneheads* (1993). The most lucrative film that began as an SNL sketch was *Wayne's World* (1992), starring Mike Myers and Dana Carvey, which made over \$120 million.

PLACE OF PROTEST

SNL has also produced some controversial moments, the most memorable of which was in 1992, when Irish singer Sinéad O'Connor was the musical guest on an episode. While performing an a cappella [rendition](#) of Bob Marley's *War*, O'Connor changed the line "fight racial injustice" to "fight sexual abuse", and then ripped up a photograph of Pope John Paul II in protest against child sex abuse in the Catholic Church.

Glossary

- **breaking character** = uscire dal personaggio
- **hosts** = presentare
- **rendition** = interpretazione
- **airs** = trasmettere
- **predates** = precedere
- **renowned** = rinomato
- **edge** = margine
- **current events** = fatti di attualità