

People often prefer the way things were in the past, in many areas of entertainment and hobbies. In this report, I'll investigate how viewers have rated popular anime, and find out how viewer scores have changed over the years. I will plot average viewer scores of the 25 most popular shows from each season, in hopes of answering the question of whether viewers rate newer or older anime more highly.

The data source I found is a large dataset in csv format, gathered from the popular website MyAnimeList. This dataset contains valuable information on anime TV and movies that date all the way back to as late as 1917, and can be found at reference 1 below. In the interest of relevancy I chose to disregard all entries released before 2000, as some seasons before this didn't even reach 25 total shows aired. The dataset tells us the release date of the show, genres, popularity, average user score, source material, total episodes, and other interesting information.

Using this data, my first task was to convert the release date to a typical anime season. In other words, a show with a release date of January 2022 should fall into the Winter 2022 season. To do this, I used `mutate()` and `case_when()` to modify the data into seasonal groups. After this, I had to limit the number of entries per season to the top 25 most popular entries. To do this, I used the `arrange`, `group_by` and `slice` functions. Next, I needed to assemble the average viewer score for each seasonal group, which was easy to do using the `group_by()` and `summarize()` functions learned in class. Finally, I plotted this complete dataframe using `geom_point()`, and overlaid a line of best fit using the `lm` method of `geom_smooth()`.



Surprisingly to me, the plot revealed that users actually score newer anime higher, with some consistency. Because people often say that older shows are better, I expected to see a bias towards older anime, but that doesn't seem to be the case. Of course, there are some outliers, such as Fall and Spring 2006, when classics such as Death Note, Code Geass, Black

Lagoon and Gintama aired. There are also certainly recent seasons which broke this trend, such as Summer 2017 and Summer 2012, when lower-rated shows such as Sword Art Online and Kakegurui aired. This also garners an interesting question around the possibility that maybe summer seasons are historically lower rated than others, for some reason. Outliers aside, the linear model reveals a .5966 correlation coefficient between year and average score, a much stronger positive correlation than I had expected.

In conclusion, I've discovered anime fans actually score newer anime series more highly than older ones, in general. While it may be unreasonable to expect this increase to continue, we can expect that scores for current anime will likely remain higher than they were for anime in the early 2000's and before.

[1] Shafi Walsher. *Mal-anime, animes.csv*. [mal-anime | Kaggle](#)