

= Grey 's Anatomy =

Grey 's Anatomy is an American medical drama television series that premiered on American Broadcasting Company (ABC) as a mid @-@ season replacement on March 27 , 2005 . The series focuses on the fictional lives of surgical interns , residents , and attendings as they gradually evolve into seasoned doctors , while trying to maintain personal lives and relationships . The title is a play on Gray 's Anatomy , a human anatomy textbook by Henry Gray . The show 's premise originated with Shonda Rhimes , who serves as an executive producer , along with Betsy Beers , Mark Gordon , Krista Vernoff , Rob Corn , Mark Wilding , and Allan Heinberg . Although the show is set in Seattle at the fictional Grey @-@ Sloan Memorial Hospital (Formerly Seattle Grace Mercy @-@ West) it is primarily filmed in Los Angeles , California . The show was originally titled Complications following the complicated medical procedures and personal lives of the cast .

The series was created to be racially diverse , utilizing a color @-@ blind casting technique . It revolves around the title character Dr. Meredith Grey played by Ellen Pompeo . The series ' original cast consisted of nine star billed cast members including Ellen Pompeo , Sandra Oh , Katherine Heigl , Justin Chambers , T. R. Knight , Chandra Wilson , James Pickens Jr . , Isaiah Washington and Patrick Dempsey . The cast has undergone major changes throughout the run of the show , with many major cast members leaving and being replaced by several new characters . The series in its twelfth season had a large ensemble of sixteen actors , including four from the original cast . On March 3 , 2016 , ABC renewed Grey 's Anatomy for a thirteenth season , scheduled to premiere on September 22 , 2016 .

Grey 's Anatomy is one of the highest @-@ rated dramas in the 18 ? 49 demographic . Although the ratings have fallen over the past few seasons , it was once among the overall top 10 shows in the United States . Grey 's Anatomy has been well received by critics , considered an impact on culture , the series has received numerous awards , and has also been included in various critics ' top ten lists . It is the recipient of the 2007 Golden Globe Award for Best Television Series ? Drama , and multiple Emmy nominations , including two for Outstanding Drama Series . The show has produced several specials , as well as distributed all seasons to DVD , and released a collection of merchandise . In 2012 , Grey 's Anatomy was named the fifth @-@ highest revenue earning show , in terms of advertising per half @-@ hour . It 's the longest running scripted primetime show currently airing on ABC and the second longest scripted primetime show ever on ABC only behind The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet .

= = Plot = =

The series follows Meredith Grey (Ellen Pompeo) , the daughter of an esteemed general surgeon named Ellis Grey , following her acceptance into the residency program at the fictional Seattle Grace Hospital . During her tenure as a resident , Grey works alongside fellow doctors Cristina Yang (Sandra Oh) , Alex Karev (Justin Chambers) , Izzie Stevens (Katherine Heigl) , and George O 'Malley (T. R. Knight) , who each struggle to balance their personal lives with the hectic work and training schedules assigned to them . They are overseen during their internship by Miranda Bailey (Chandra Wilson) , a senior resident who works beneath Grey 's love @-@ interest Derek Shepherd (Patrick Dempsey) , the head of neurosurgery ; Yang 's fiancée Preston Burke (Isaiah Washington) , the head of cardio ; and Ellis Grey 's ex @-@ lover Richard Webber (James Pickens , Jr .) , the Chief of Surgery . The residents are later joined by Jackson Avery (Jesse Williams) and April Kepner (Sarah Drew) , former Mercy @-@ West residents who join Seattle Grace following an administrative merger in the sixth season . Throughout the first six seasons O 'Malley , Burke and Stevens all depart the series which has become very controversial in the media over the life @-@ span of the series . In addition to Shepherd , Webber , and Burke , the surgical wing is primarily supervised by Owen Hunt (Kevin McKidd) , as head of trauma ; Arizona Robbins (Jessica Capshaw) , as head of pediatric surgery ; Callie Torres (Sara Ramirez) , a resident who later becomes head of orthopedics , who left Seattle at the end of the twelfth season ; Erica Hahn (Brooke Smith) , as head of cardio ; Mark Sloan (Eric Dane) , as head of plastics ; Addison

Montgomery (Kate Walsh) , as head of OB / GYN , neonatal , and fetal surgery ; Teddy Altman (Kim Raver) , as head of cardio ; and Amelia Shepherd (Caterina Scorsone) , Derek 's sister who is hired to replace him as head of neuro . Derek is killed in the series ' eleventh season .

Later additions to the residency program include Lexie Grey (Chyler Leigh) , Meredith 's half @-@ sister . Grey is killed alongside Mark Sloan in the season eight finale ; Leah Murphy (Tessa Ferrer) ; Shane Ross (Gaius Charles) , who departs alongside Yang in the tenth season finale ; Stephanie Edwards (Jerrika Hinton) ; Jo Wilson (Camilla Luddington) , a doctor who begins a romantic relationship with Karev ; Andrew Deluca (Giacomo Gianniotti) , the love @-@ interest of Meredith 's half sister Maggie Pierce (Kelly McCreary) , who also serves as head of cardio ; and Benjamin Warren (Jason George) , an anesthesiologist and currently a resident , has to balance his wife Miranda Bailey 's new role as Chief of Surgery with his own desire to succeed . Season twelve sees the arrival of Nathan Riggs (Martin Henderson) , while Meredith appointed head of general surgery - a post previously held by her mother .

= = Production and development = =

= = = Conception = = =

Shonda Rhimes , the series ' creator , wanted to make a show that she would enjoy watching , and thought it would be interesting to create a show about " smart women competing against one another " . When asked how she decided to develop a medical drama , Rhimes responded :

The series was pitched to ABC Entertainment , who gave the green light , and the show was picked up as a mid @-@ season replacement for Boston Legal in the 2005 television season . Francie Calfo , executive vice president of development at ABC Entertainment , commented that ABC was looking for a medical show that was unlike the others airing at the time . She pointed out that " [m] edical shows are hard , and it was hard trying to figure out where ours could be different . But where everybody else is speeding up their medical shows , [Rhimes] found a way to slow it down , so you get to know the characters . There 's definitely a strong female appeal to it . "

Rhimes initially conceived Grey 's Anatomy as a statement against racism . She endeavored to create a show that featured a racially diverse cast that allowed viewers to relate to characters regardless of race . While creating characters , as well as writing the first script , the series ' writers had no character descriptions in mind , and hoped to cast the best actor available for each part . Rhimes has explained that if the network did not allow her to create characters this way , she would have been hesitant about moving forward with the series . Female roles in particular were developed as multi @-@ faceted characters . Rhimes offered her insight on this , " I wanted to create a world in which you felt as if you were watching very real women . Most of the women I saw on TV didn 't seem like people I actually knew . They felt like ideas of what women are . They never got to be nasty or competitive or hungry or angry . They were often just the loving wife or the nice friend . But who gets to be the bitch ? Who gets to be the three @-@ dimensional woman ? "

Before the series debuted on March 27 , 2005 , there were a few early releases to close friends and family of the producers and actors . The show was scheduled to run in the Boston Legal time slot for four weeks . However , high ratings and viewership led to it holding onto the slot for the remainder of the season . ABC Entertainment President , Steve McPherson , commented on the scheduling change : " Ultimately we decided that , without having adequate lead time or marketing dollars to devote to moving either show so late in the season , we 'd continue to let [Grey 's Anatomy] build on its tremendous momentum through May . " The show 's title , Grey 's Anatomy , was devised as a play on words : a reference to both Henry Gray 's medical textbook , Gray 's Anatomy , and the title character Dr. Meredith Grey (Ellen Pompeo) . Prior to broadcast , it was announced that the show 's title would change from Grey 's Anatomy to Complications , although ultimately this did not come to pass .

= = = Production team = = =

Grey 's Anatomy is produced by ShondaLand , in association with The Mark Gordon Company , and ABC Studios (formerly Touchstone Television) . Rhimes , Betsy Beers , Krista Vernoff , Mark Gordon , Rob Corn , and Mark Wilding have all served as executive producers throughout the course of the series . In subsequent seasons , Steve Mulholland , Kent Hodder , Nancy Bordson , James D. Parriott , and Peter Horton have also been executive producers , with Allan Heinberg joining the show in 2006 in this role . As of season eight , the current executive producers are Rhimes , Beers , Gordon , Vernoff , Corn , Wilding , and Heinberg .

Rhimes is the series ' most prolific writer . She often promotes the show by answering fan questions on her Twitter account . Other members of the writing staff are Vernoff , Wilding , Peter Nowalk , Stacy McKee , William Harper , Zoanne Clack , Tony Phelan , Joan Rater , and Debora Cahn . From the second through seventh seasons , the writers maintained a blog entitled Grey Matter , where the writer of an episode discussed the motives behind the writing . Directors vary by episode , with Rob Corn directing most frequently , followed by Tom Verica . Horton , Edward Ornelas , and Jessica Yu have also directed a substantial number of episodes . Cast members Chandra Wilson and Kevin McKidd have both directed multiple episodes .

Grey 's Anatomy has been edited by Susan Vaill since the show 's inception , and David Greenspan was named an editor in 2006 . Casting directors Linda Lowy and John Brace have been a part of the production team since 2005 . Production design is led by Donald Lee Harris , assisted by art director Brian Harms , and costume design is led by Mimi Melgaard . Working alongside Melgaard , Thomas Houchins supervises costumes , Ellen Vieira is the makeup artist , and Jerilynn Stevens serves as a hair stylist . The Director of Photography is Herbert Davis . The music coordinator is Danny Lux . Karen Lisa Pike , M.D. is the on @-@ set medical consultant , alongside Linda Klein , a RN . The production staff is part of a Grey 's Anatomy softball team that competes against other television shows , such as CSI : Crime Scene Investigation .

= = = Casting = = =

Grey 's Anatomy used a color @-@ blind casting technique , resulting in a racially diverse ensemble . Each role was cast without the character 's races being pre @-@ determined , keeping Rhimes ' vision of diversity . The production staff began casting with the program 's title character , Meredith Grey , which Rhimes stated was a difficult role to cast . " I kept saying we need a girl like that girl from Moonlight Mile , " said Rhimes , " and after a while , they were like , ' We think we can get that girl from Moonlight Mile . " The next to be cast , Sandra Oh (Dr. Cristina Yang) , was initially invited to audition for the character of Bailey , but pressed to read for the role of Cristina instead . Many actors read for the role of Dr. Derek Shepherd , but when Patrick Dempsey read for the part , " he was just perfect " , according to Rhimes .

The only character developed with a racial description in mind was Dr. Miranda Bailey , who is portrayed by Chandra Wilson . The character was written as a tiny blonde with curly hair , but when Wilson began speaking , Rhimes reported : " [Wilson] is exactly who Miranda is . " James Pickens Jr. was selected to appear as Dr. Richard Webber in the series ' pilot and first season . Katherine Heigl wanted to portray Dr. Izzie Stevens as a brunette , but was requested to retain her natural blonde for the part . Isaiah Washington , who portrayed Dr. Preston Burke , initially read for the role of Shepherd , but was cast as Burke , because the original actor to play Burke had to withdraw . T. R. Knight signed on for the pilot as Dr. George O 'Malley , expecting that the role might be short @-@ lived , because he liked that the character was multi @-@ faceted . Rounding out the season one cast was Justin Chambers as Dr. Alex Karev .

The second season marked the introduction of Dr. Mark Sloan (Eric Dane) and Dr. Callie Torres (Sara Ramirez) . They were initially cast as recurring characters , but both were given star billing at the opening of the third season . Ramirez was cast after ABC executives offered her a role in the network show of her choice , Dane had previously auditioned unsuccessfully for a role in the pilot episode . Dr. Addison Montgomery (Kate Walsh) also joined the show in season two , after making a guest appearance in season one . In October 2006 , Washington allegedly insulted Knight with a

homophobic slur , during an on @-@ set altercation with Dempsey , and ABC terminated Washington 's contract at the end of the third season . Washington also made a guest appearance in season 10 . At the conclusion of the third season , Walsh also departed the show to pursue the Grey 's Anatomy spin @-@ off , Private Practice , but continues to make guest appearances .

Chyler Leigh joined the cast as a main character in the fourth season as Dr. Lexie Grey , Lexie had appeared as a guest star in the final two episodes of the third season . On the selection of Leigh for the role of Lexie , Rhimes said : " Chyler stood out ... It felt like she could be Meredith 's sister , but she had a depth that was very interesting . " Dr. Erica Hahn (Brooke Smith) , who first appeared on Grey 's Anatomy in the second season , became a series regular in the fourth season . Shortly after the announcement that Smith would be a regular member of the cast , Entertainment Weekly 's Michael Ausiello , reported that her character , Hahn , would depart from Grey 's Anatomy on November 6 , 2008 . E ! Online 's Kristin Dos Santos asserted that Smith 's dismissal from the show had been forced by the ABC network , as part of an attempt to " de @-@ gay " Grey 's Anatomy , but Rhimes countered these claims , saying that " we did not find that the magic and chemistry with Brooke 's character would sustain in the long run " .

Season five introduced actor Kevin McKidd (Dr. Owen Hunt) , who was signed as a series regular after originally being cast for a specific story arc . In addition , Jessica Capshaw (Dr. Arizona Robbins) was originally introduced for a three episode arc , but received a contract extension until the end of the season and then became a series regular in the sixth season . Knight departed the show at the conclusion of season five , citing an unhappiness with the development and lack of screen time for his character . Directly following Knight 's departure , it was reported by Entertainment Weekly that Heigl had not returned to the set as scheduled after her maternity leave , and it was later confirmed that Heigl would not return to the show at all .

Kim Raver , who was cast as recurring character Dr. Teddy Altman in the sixth season , was given star billing later in the season . Sarah Drew (Dr. April Kepner) and Jesse Williams (Dr. Jackson Avery) , who both made their series debuts as recurring characters in the sixth season , received star billing in the seventh .

The six original actors ' contracts expired after season eight , but in May 2012 , Pompeo , Oh , Dempsey , Chambers , Wilson , and Pickens renewed their contracts with the show for another two years . At the conclusion of the eighth season , Leigh 's character departed from the show at Leigh 's request , and with Rhimes ' agreement . Raver 's character was also written out of the show during the season eight finale , and Rhimes stated that Raver was offered a contract renewal , but declined . In July 2012 , Dane confirmed that he was departing the show to pursue other projects ; he made his final appearances in the first two episodes of the ninth season . With the start of season 10 , Camilla Luddington , Jerrika Hinton , Gaius Charles & Tessa Ferrer were introduced to the show as series regulars . They were first introduced to the show in season 9 as new interns . On August 13 , 2013 , Oh announced that the show 's tenth season would be her final season . In March 2014 it was announced that Isaiah Washington , who portrayed Preston Burke in the first three seasons of the show , would make a guest appearance to coincide with the departure of series regular Sandra Oh , his former on @-@ screen love interest . As of March 25 , 2014 , both Charles and Ferrer 's contracts were not renewed for season 11 . On May 2 , 2014 it was announced that , in addition to Pompeo and Dempsey , all original remaining cast members ? aside from Sandra Oh ? signed two years deals , extending their contracts through seasons 11 and 12 . Despite joining the series in its second season , Sara Ramirez is on the same negotiation schedule as the first season cast and has also inked a new two @-@ year deal .

= = = Filming locations and technique = = =

Rhimes considered setting the medical drama in her hometown , Chicago , but eventually decided to go with Seattle , to distinguish Grey 's Anatomy from the Chicago ? based ER .

Fisher Plaza , which is the headquarters building of Fisher Communications and Fisher 's ABC affiliated KOMO radio and television stations in Seattle , is used for some exterior shots of Grey @-@ Sloan Memorial Hospital . In particular , air ambulances land on the KOMO @-@ TV

newscopter 's helipad . This suggests the hospital is close to the Space Needle (which is directly across the street from Fisher Plaza) , the Seattle Monorail , and other local landmarks . However , the hospital used for most other exterior and a few interior shots is not in Seattle ; these scenes are shot at the VA Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center in North Hills , California . Most scenes are taped at Prospect Studios in Los Feliz , just east of Hollywood , where the Grey 's Anatomy set occupies six sound stages . Some outside scenes are shot at the Warren G. Magnuson Park in Seattle . Several props used are working medical equipment , including the MRI machine . When asked about operating room scenes , Sarah Drew offered this :

We work with Bovine organs , which is cow 's organs . The smell is repulsive and makes us all gag . And we use an actual soldering tool to solder the organs . It smells like burning flesh . There 's also a lot of silicone and blood matter , red jello mixed with blood and chicken fat . It 's pretty gross .

Costumes are used to differentiate between attending surgeons , who wear navy blue scrubs , and residents , who wear light blue scrubs . The series is filmed with a single @-@ camera setup , as are many dramas . Grey 's Anatomy is often filmed using the " walk and talk " filming technique , popularized on television by series such as St. Elsewhere , ER , and The West Wing .

= = Series synopsis = =

= = = Overview = = =

Grey 's Anatomy follows the lives of surgical interns and residents at the fictional Grey @-@ Sloan Memorial Hospital (formerly Seattle Grace Hospital , Season 1 ? 6 , Seattle Grace Mercy West Hospital , Season 6 ? 9 , and then Grey @-@ Sloan Memorial Hospital , Season 9 ? present) , as they gradually evolve into seasoned doctors , with the help of their competent mentors . Every installment , typically , commences with a voice @-@ over narrative from Meredith Grey or a season regular , foreshadowing the theme of the episode . Each season tends to represent the physicians ' academic year , with each completed year qualifying the residents at a level higher in the surgical field . The season will always end with a finale , typically involving a tragic event such as a death or character departure . Most installments revolve around the doctors ' everyday lives as surgeons , but the show puts an emphasis on their personal , rather than professional , lives . The series sets aside medical ethic concerns to focus on character development and relationships . Although the physicians treat the illnesses of their patients , often through complex surgeries , their primary motivation is customarily praise and competition .

The residents initially arrive at the hospital each morning and argue over who will care for a certain patient . A hospital superior is in charge of assigning cases , often translating to tense feelings between the residents and their superiors . Episodes migrate back and forth from the doctors interacting with their patients , and with their co @-@ workers . Once assigned a case , each doctor diagnoses the patient , with the help of his or her attending physician , which usually leads to surgery . The surgeons tend to form personal connections with their patients , with a patient often conveying a message to his or her doctor , which unintentionally relates to the doctor 's private life . The show displays the growth of relationships between the doctors , either friendly or sexual , often stemming to a clash between their personal and professional lives . Emotional scenes are often accompanied by an indie rock background song , something that has become a hallmark of the series . At the conclusion of each episode , one of the characters delivers another voice @-@ over , typically contrasting or following up on their initial one .

= = Cast = =

= = = Main characters = = =

The five characters who are first introduced in the series premiere , as surgical interns , are Grey ,

Karev , O 'Malley , Stevens , and Yang . They are initially mentored by Bailey , a senior resident who becomes the hospital 's Chief Resident , and later an attending general surgeon , in season six . The surgical program is initially headed by the Chief of Surgery , Richard Webber , who has a pre -@ -@ existing personal relationship with Meredith , having had an affair with her mother when Meredith was a child . In Webber 's employ are attending neurosurgeon Derek Shepherd , dubbed ' McDreamy ' by the residents , and attending cardiothoracic surgeon Preston Burke . Shepherd is introduced as Meredith 's love interest , while Burke begins a relationship with Yang .

Introduced in the show 's second season are obstetrician @ -@ gynecologist and neonatal surgeon , Addison Montgomery , plastic surgeon Mark Sloan (nicknamed ' McSteamy ' by the interns) , from New York , and orthopedic surgeon Callie Torres . Montgomery is Shepherd 's wife who arrives in Seattle seeking reconciliation with him , Sloan is Shepherd 's former best friend , who aided the breakdown of his marriage by having an affair with Montgomery , while Torres is introduced as a love @ -@ interest , and eventual wife for O 'Malley . The penultimate episode of season three introduces Lexie Grey , Meredith 's half @ -@ sister who unexpectedly decides to pursue her internship at Seattle Grace Hospital after her mother 's sudden death , and begins an on @ -@ again , off @ -@ again relationship with Sloan . Burke and Yang , having been engaged , endeavor to plan their wedding , while Montgomery departs the show at the conclusion of the third season , relocating to California , seeking a new life . The season three finale shows Burke 's exit from the show , after leaving Yang at the altar on their wedding day .

Grey , Yang , Karev , and Stevens are all promoted to residents , in the season four premiere , while O 'Malley is forced to repeat his internship year , following his failing of the intern exam . Subsequently , Torres and O 'Malley divorce one another , due to him having a sexual affair with Stevens , initially concealing it from Torres . Early in the fourth season , cardiothoracic surgeon Erica Hahn becomes Torres ' love interest . During the fifth season , Hahn departs from the series , and O 'Malley retakes his intern exam , passing , joining his fellow physicians as a resident . Two new characters are introduced , former United States Army trauma surgeon Dr. Owen Hunt , and pediatric surgeon Dr. Arizona Robbins . Hunt becomes a love @ -@ interest for Yang , while Robbins becomes a love @ -@ interest for Torres . When Stevens is diagnosed with stage four metastatic melanoma , she and Karev wed one another at the conclusion of the fifth season . In addition , Meredith and Shepherd marry , with their vows written on a post @ -@ it note .

O 'Malley dies in the premiere of the sixth season , due to injuries sustained by being hit by a bus , and Stevens later departs Seattle after being diagnosed with cancer and following a lack of communication between her then husband Karev following the Seattle Grace merger with Mercy West . Several new characters are introduced as Seattle Grace Hospital merges with Mercy West . Residents April Kepner and Jackson Avery both transfer to Seattle Grace Hospital from Mercy West , and the latter entertains a brief relationship with Lexie Grey , until she reunites with Mark Sloan . Subsequently , Teddy Altman is introduced as the new Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery . In the season six finale , a deceased patient 's grieving husband embarks on a shooting spree at the hospital , injuring Karev , Shepherd , and Hunt , and killing residents Charles Percy and Reed Adamson . In the shooting 's emotional reverberations , Hunt and Yang abruptly marry , not wanting to risk separation . Torres and Robbins eventually wed , officiated by Bailey . In season eight , Webber steps down and allocates his job to Hunt . As the final year of residency for Meredith , Yang , Karev , Avery , and Kepner is coming to a close , the doctors are all planning to relocate to different hospitals to pursue their specialty careers . However , all plans are put on hold when several doctors from Seattle Grace Mercy West Hospital are engaged in a plane crash , which kills Lexie and endangers Meredith , Shepherd , Yang , Robbins , and Sloan . At the conclusion of the eighth season , Altman is courteously fired by Hunt as she struggles to decide whether or not to take the job as Chief at the United States Army Medical Command (MEDCOM) . In the season nine premiere , Sloan dies due to sustained injuries from the plane crash following a brief relapse of temporary health (the surge) and the remaining characters work through their post traumatic stress and Arizona Robbins ' loss of limb by way of suing Seattle Grace Mercy West as the hospital was responsible for putting the surgeons on the plane . The season continues with the struggle of the lawsuit and the animosity that it creates within the hospital , Yang and Hunt eventually divorce in

order to help the lawsuit . Robbins cheats on Torres with a visiting facial reconstruction specialist . The doctors who were on the plane won the lawsuit , but the pay out bankrupts the hospital . They all club together and buy Seattle Grace Mercy West , with the help of the Harper Avery Foundation , and they become the Board of Directors , once being called the " Grey @-@ Sloan 7 " . One of the changes they implement is renaming the hospital to Grey Sloan Memorial Hospital . Grey 's Anatomy then concluded its 10th season on ABC and saw the departure of one of its major players , Cristina Yang , played by Sandra Oh . Towards the end of the eleventh season , Derek Shepherd witnesses a car accident and pulls over to help the injured , but his car is hit by a truck with him inside as he attempts to leave the scene . He later dies at another hospital following the doctors ' mishandling of his injuries . The season 12 finale saw the departure of one of the show 's longest running characters , Callie Torres , played by Sara Ramirez .

= = = Recurring characters = = =

With the drama 's setting being a hospital , numerous medical personnel appear regularly on the show , as well as several other recurring characters . Joe (Steven W. Bailey) , is first shown as the owner of the Emerald City Bar and Grill , across the street from the hospital , which is a common relaxation area for the physicians . Also introduced in the pilot , is the legendary former surgeon , Dr. Ellis Grey (Kate Burton) , Meredith 's Alzheimer 's @-@ stricken mother , who appeared on the show until her death in season three . In the first season , Olivia Harper (Sarah Utterback) , a nurse who appeared on the show occasionally until getting laid off in the merger with Mercy West , engages in sexual activity with O 'Malley , giving him Syphilis . Serving as an assistant and secretary to the Chief of Surgery , former nurse Patricia (Robin Pearson Rose) , has appeared on the show since its debut . Tyler Christian (Moe Irvin) , a hospital nurse , makes occasional appearances throughout the series . Within the second season , Bailey becomes pregnant by her husband , Tucker Jones (Cress Williams) , who makes frequent appearances on Grey 's Anatomy , until their divorce in season five . While Bailey takes a sabbatical , due to her pregnancy , the cheerful Dr. Sydney Heron (Kali Rocha) , fills her position as the resident supervising Grey , Yang , Karev , O 'Malley , and Stevens , and makes occasional appearances until the fifth season .

Thatcher and Susan Grey (Jeff Perry and Mare Winningham) , Meredith 's estranged father and step @-@ mother , are introduced in season two , with Susan making appearances until her death in season three , and Thatcher continuing to appear on the series . Adele Webber (Loretta Devine) , is introduced as Richard 's wife , who eventually acquires Alzheimer 's , in the seventh season , and continued to make appearances until her death in season nine . Introduced as Preston 's mother , Jane Burke (Diahann Carroll) makes occasional appearances until the fourth season . Denny Duquette (Jeffrey Dean Morgan) , a patient suffering from congestive heart failure , originates as one of Burke 's patients , who goes on to propose to Stevens , after weeks of bonding between the two . Facing death , Stevens cuts Duquette 's left ventricular assist device (LVAD) , to elevate his position on the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) transplant list . This ultimately ends in his death , marking his initial departure from the show , and placing Stevens on disciplinary probation . Initially conceived as a veterinarian hired for Shepherd 's dog , Doc , Dr. Finn Dandridge (Chris O 'Donnell) soon becomes a love interest for Meredith , while Shepherd is with Montgomery . Dandridge is included in a multi @-@ episode story arc , consisting of nine episodes , ending when Meredith reunites with Shepherd .

In season three , George 's father , Harold O 'Malley (George Dzundza) , is diagnosed with cancer and dies , with his wife Louise (Debra Monk) and George 's brothers Jerry (Greg Pitts) and Ronny (Tim Griffin) by his side . Louise goes on to appear occasionally , and was last seen in season eight . A ferryboat accident brings along Rebecca Pope (Elizabeth Reaser) , who is initially introduced as a pregnant Jane Doe victim , suffering from Amnesia . Pope eventually embarks on a relationship with Karev , until she is diagnosed with a personality disorder in season four , and makes her final departure . Amidst the crisis of the ferryboat crash , Meredith falls into the water at the disaster site . Although rescued , she goes into cardiac arrest , waking up in what appears to be limbo . Within the limbo , Meredith is entertained by deceased acquaintances Duquette and Dylan

Young (Kyle Chandler) , who was killed during a bomb crisis in the second season , until eventually being resuscitated . Seeking a cure to her depression , Meredith undergoes therapy sessions with the hospital psychiatrist , Dr. Katharine Wyatt (Amy Madigan) , who in addition , serves as a psychiatrist to Hunt .

The season four premiere introduces several new interns , to be trained under Meredith , Yang , Karev , Stevens , and eventually O 'Malley . Among them are Dr. Steve Mostow (Mark Saul) who continues to make appearances , and Dr. Sadie Harris (Melissa George) who formed a friendship with Meredith while the two were in college . Harris is fired in the fifth season , due to not actually having a medical degree , and departs the show immediately after . Meredith and Shepherd 's relationship reaches a toll , and the two separate , leading Shepherd to entertaining a relationship with Rose (Lauren Stamile) , a nurse . Rose appears frequently until season five , when Shepherd rekindles his relationship with Meredith . Throughout the fifth season , Stevens experiences full @-@ out hallucinations of Duquette , signaling that she is ill , and once she is lucid , he departs , marking his final appearance . Following the announcement of her relationship with Robbins , Callie 's father Carlos Torres (Hector Elizondo) initially contests his daughter 's concurrence in homosexuality , but eventually accepts it , and he reappears several times throughout the series .

The hospital 's merging with Mercy West introduces new residents : Dr. Reed Adamson (Nora Zehetner) and Dr. Charles Percy (Robert Baker) , but the two are both murdered in the season six finale . Also introduced in the sixth season is Dr. Ben Warren (Jason George) , an anesthesiologist and eventual husband to Dr. Miranda Bailey , as well as Sloan Riley (Leven Rambin) , Dr. Mark Sloan 's estranged daughter who seeks kinship with him . Dr. Lucy Fields (Rachael Taylor) , an obstetrician @-@ gynecologist , is introduced in the seventh season , and serves as a love interest for Dr. Alex Karev , until eventually relocating to pursue a career in Africa . Robbins receives a grant to aid children in Malawi , which leads to a falling out between her and Torres . While in Malawi , Robbins is replaced by Dr. Robert Stark (Peter MacNicol) , a pediatric surgeon with an interest in Dr. April Kepner , who appears occasionally until season eight . Following the breakdown of Dr. Torres ' relationship with Dr. Robbins , Dr. Sloan and Dr. Torres unite , and she becomes pregnant . Torres ' relationship with Robbins is subsequently mended , and the couple endeavors to raise their new daughter , Sofia Robbin Sloan Torres , with the help of Dr. Sloan . Shepherd and Meredith also become new parents , with their adoption of Zola , a baby girl from Malawi . Conceived as a patient with a tumor condition who later develops diabetes , Henry Burton (Scott Foley) befriends Dr. Altman and eventually joins her in marriage only to get treated using her medical insurance , until he dies while undergoing heart surgery .

In the season nine premiere , interns Dr. Jo Wilson (Camilla Luddington) , Dr. Heather Brooks (Tina Majorino) , Dr. Shane Ross (Gaius Charles) , Dr. Stephanie Edwards (Jerrika Hinton) , and Dr. Leah Murphy (Tessa Ferrer) are introduced . Steven Culp and William Daniels play Dr. Parker and Dr. Craig Thomas , respectively . Dr. Parker is Chief of Cardiothoracic Surgery and Dr. Craig Thomas (William Daniels) is an attending cardiothoracic surgeon at Mayo Clinic , where Cristina worked temporarily . Dr. Alana Cahill (Constance Zimmer) introduced in the ninth season is appointed to cut costs at the hospital and she eventually decides the best course of action would be to seek out a new buyer until the four crash survivors and Torres on the behalf of Sloan to pool their money together in a bid to purchase the hospital themselves . Kepner starts dating a paramedic named Matthew (Justin Bruening) and they form a deep relationship over the course of the ninth and tenth seasons and she eventually agreed to marry before reconciling with Avery in the middle of the wedding Mathew . Lauren Boswell (Hilarie Burton) is introduced as a craniofacial surgeon consulting on a case at Grey Sloan Memorial who showed romantic interest in Arizona and eventually ended up having a one @-@ night stand with her .

Dr. Heather Brooks dies in the premier of season ten . She goes to search for Dr. Webber and finds him lying in the basement of the hospital . Trying to save Dr. Webber , she accidentally steps into a puddle and electrocutes herself while hitting her head as she falls . Bailey moves a cancer patient in Webber 's room to force some perspective and make him take the treatment . Also introduced in the tenth season was Dr. Karev 's estranged father Jimmy Evans (James Remar) who tries to form a relationship with his son but fails repeatedly and ultimately dies in a botched surgery . The

conclusion of season 10 has Cristina leaving Grey Sloan for Dr. Burke 's job overseas while Dr. Ross makes a last @-@ minute decision to follow her in order to study under her . Dr. Maggie Pierce (Kelly McCreary) unknowingly drops a bombshell that she is the adopted love child of Dr. Webber and the late Dr. Grey , which makes for yet another half sister of Dr. Meredith Grey . Also , Dr. Yang leaves her seat on the board to Dr. Karev while Dr. Webber all but promises the seat to Dr. Bailey . Introduced in season eleven is Dr. Nicole Herman (Geena Davis) who is Chief of Fetal Surgery at Grey Sloan Memorial , she mentors Arizona Robbins in a fetal surgery fellowship , Herman plays in a twelve episode arc before departing after episode fourteen .

Season 11 begins with new surgical residents coming to the hospital . Meredith is struggling with the idea that Maggie is actually her half sister because of her mother 's romance with Dr. Weber . Callie and Arizona 's relationship falls through after realising they both want different things at the time . April and Jackson learn heartbreaking news that their baby has a lethal birth defect , where April decides that she will carry the baby till full term no matter the consequences . They end up having a boy , Samuel , who dies shortly after birth .

= = Reception = =

= = = Critical response = = =

Grey 's Anatomy has been well received among critics . The show holds an average of 74 % positive score on Rotten Tomatoes and 7 @.@ 7 / 10 score at IMDB site . The A.V. Club gave an insight on both the overwhelming success and lows in the quality of the hit medical drama saying , " The quality arc for the show is all over the place , starting with a steady build in the first season , then skyrocketing into phenomenon in season two , then leveling off and dipping in season three , before having some seriously bumpy moments in seasons four (interrupted by the writers ? strike) and five . The climb begins again in season six " Samantha Highfill of Entertainment Weekly in a review wrote , " I believe the show ? s best season to date is season 2 . Let me make it clear that I ? m not saying seasons 3 through 9 were bad . In my opinion , there have only been a few lulls in the show ? s history , and most of them didn ? t last a full season . " adding , " I still enjoy the show , and I ? ll honestly never stop watching . By any standards , Grey ? s Anatomy has been successful television , ranking highly in the ratings for nine seasons and entering the cultural lexicon via phrases as cloying yet catchy as " McDreamy . " , the show has had its periods of being intensely irritating , and it has had its periods when it seems as if Shonda Rhimes has taken leave of her faculties , but it ? s also got an amazingly high batting average , particularly with every solid season that passes along in this second act of its run . " The site lauded the show saying , " On average , it ? s been very good TV , filled with interesting , driven characters who run the gamut of professions within the show ? s hospital setting . It ? s been , by turns , a good soap , a good romantic comedy , a good medical drama , and a good interpersonal show about an unexpected workplace family . "

The first season received positive reviews which steadily built up , with Gary Levin of USA Today calling Grey 's Anatomy one of the top shows on television . New York Daily News named Grey 's Anatomy a " winner " , whereas Newsday expressed a positive opinion by stating " You simply can 't stop watching . " The Washington Post 's Tom Shales was critical of season one , finding it reminiscent of ER and commenting that : " The show is much more a matter of commercial calculation than an honest attempt to try something fresh and different . " Shortly after its initial airing , the Chicago Tribune 's Maureen Ryan called Grey 's Anatomy the new Friends ; a concluded National Broadcasting Company (NBC) sitcom following the lives of a group of young adults , that all of its ten @-@ year run in the top @-@ five for viewer ratings . The second season received critical acclaim , top critics like Todd VanDerWerff of The A.V. Club called the show a " phenomenon " not just TV adding the show was , " one of the best TV shows around " , Samantha Highfill of Entertainment Weekly later during the tenth season called the second " the show ? s best season to date " however , Kevin Carr of 7M Pictures opined that Grey 's Anatomy is a mere combination of Scrubs , ER , Sex and the City , and The Love Boat . It further garnered positive reviews ,

Christopher Monfette of IGN Entertainment added : " The second season of this medical drama expertly wove its signature elements of complex relationships , whimsical banter and challenging life @-@ lessons ; all to a montage @-@ fetish , indie @-@ rock soundtrack . " Todd Gilchrist also from IGN called the season " terrific " adding , " Indeed , one of the best currently on television . While it remains to be seen what the creators do with it , now that it 's become an outright event program , the season demonstrates that Rhimes and co. know what to do with the opportunities presented them. whether you 're male or female , this is the kind of entertainment that small @-@ screen devotees and folks fed up with television need to see . "

The title character of Grey 's Anatomy , Meredith , has received both overwhelmingly positive and weary feedback by critics along the course of the show , with the development of the character garnering praise from majority critics . Alessandra Stanley of The New York Times referring to her as " the heroine of Grey 's Anatomy " . BuddyTV praised the distinct uniqueness in the character calling Meredith an " unconventional heroine " adding , " From the very beginning Meredith Grey has been an unconventional heroine . Neither black nor white but always ... wait for it ... many shades of grey , she has always been , even in her lighter moments , dark and twisty . " When Pompeo did not receive an Emmy nomination for her work as Meredith , Mary McNamara of the Los Angeles Times suggested that Pompeo , " who has worked very hard and against all narrative odds to make Meredith Grey an interesting character " , should have received a nomination at the 61st Primetime Emmy Awards , in 2009 . IGN 's Monfette , less impressed , criticized her storyline as " some bizarrely under @-@ developed sub @-@ plot about depression and giving Derek a season 's worth of reconsidering to do . " Robert Rorke of the New York Post was also critical of Meredith 's role in the show , writing : " She used to be the queen of the romantic dilemmas , but lately , she 's been a little dopey , what with the endless ' McDreamy ' soliloquies . " Glenn Diaz of BuddyTV commented that " You gotta love Mer when she 's gloomy . " The development of the character has received praise from critics . Reviewing the first part of the eighth season , TV Fanatic wrote : " this season belongs to Meredith Grey . She is the heart and soul of the show and has been outstanding . This is a character that used to be so dark and twisty and has now grown into a more mature woman . Ellen Pompeo has been at the top of her game this season . " Rick Porter reviewing the episode How to Save a Life from the eleventh season for Zap2it wrote , " Without Meredith , and without one of Pompeo 's strongest performances in her long time on the show , " How to Save a Life " would have run the risk of coming across as a baldly manipulative death episode , the likes of which the show has done several times before . He added . " How to Save a Life " may not be the ideal Emmy @-@ submission episode for Ellen Pompeo , considering Meredith is off screen for more than half of it . But it 's among the best work she 's ever done on the show . " Janalen Samson of BuddyTV lauded the Meredith 's development throughout the series saying , " When one considers how this character has grown over eleven seasons , it really is amazing . Kudos to Ellen Pompeo for her fine work . She 's actually done the impossible , because I actually care what happens to Meredith Grey . " Reviewing the season 12 premiere Sledgehammer critics including Alex Hawkins of the Western Gazette again highlighted Pompeo 's due for an Emmy Award .

The majority of the supporting cast of Grey 's Anatomy have been well received as well , with the New York Post 's Rorke deeming Stevens to be " the heart and soul " of Grey 's Anatomy , whereas Eyder Peralta of the Houston Chronicle was critical of her character development , stating : " [She 's] the reason I don 't watch Grey 's Anatomy anymore . " Kelli Catana of The Huffington Post named Yang " the best damn character " and deemed " the Meredith / Yang relationship the most true friendship on network television . " Television Without Pity writer Lauren Shotwell claimed Yang is " the only one of these five [residents] that regularly acts like an actual doctor " . Analyzing Alex Karev Rachel Simon called him ' Underrated ' , she pointed out that Alex 's personal growth never seems to get acknowledged as " Alex has evolved , slowly and realistically , into a genuinely good person whose faults don 't miraculously disappear , but take a backseat to much better qualities . " Robert Bianco of USA Today said Dempsey has a " seemingly effortless way of humanizing Derek 's ' dreamy ' appeal with ego and vanity " . and his friendship with Mark Sloan has been well received Victor Balta said " they 've demonstrated an easy chemistry that makes for some of the great comic relief around Seattle Grace Hospital . " While Addison Montgomery was deemed " sassy and

bright and interesting . " TV Guide said of Walsh 's stint on Grey 's Anatomy : " She [Walsh] adds spice to an already hot show . " ortho surgeon Callie Torres after receiving mixed views earlier was praised for her bisexual storyline and critics further added that the character was anchored by stellar performance by Sara Ramirez .. Lexie Grey initially being criticized became a critics a favorite in the series Keen of The Trades wrote , " Chyler Leigh , does a fantastic job of making the progression feel seamless . Lexie steals the show as one of the best characters on the series . " With the departure of several cast members throughout the seasons , many new characters were added to the drama 's ensemble . McKidd and Capshaw were referred to as " fresh additions " to the series , by Monfette of IGN . In addition , Matt Roush of TV Guide commented : " Hunt / McKidd is the most encouraging thing to happen to Grey 's Anatomy in quite a while . " Matt Mitovich of TV Guide noted that Robbins " quickly established herself as a fan favorite " , describing her as : " a breath of fresh air in the often angsty halls of Seattle Grace . On April Kepner and Jackson Avery Courtney Morrison of TVFanatic wrote " April has grown since her character was introduced . She ? s no longer much less annoying than she used to be , and she ? s honest . A girl with principles is a girl you want to do well . " and described her and Avery as " a couple for whom viewers can root " . Speaking of the new cast members , in addition to the remaining original , Robert Bianco from USA Today called them the show 's " best ensemble in years " .

Regarding season three , Bill Carter of The New York Times called Grey 's Anatomy " television 's hottest show " , adding : " [No show] is expected to challenge Grey 's Anatomy for prime @-@ time pre @-@ eminence . " Contrasting with Carter 's view , Monfette of IGN said that it speedily found itself " mired in the annoying and absurd " , adding : " This third season may very well represent a case of over @-@ writing a concept that has , perhaps tragically , run bone @-@ dry on narrative fuel . " At the conclusion of season three , Entertainment Weekly 's Gregory Kirschling said " the show lacked a defining happy , warm @-@ gooseflesh moment " , adding that the season " didn 't leave you dying for the [next] season premiere " . Speaking of the fourth season , Laura Burrows of IGN said the series became " a little more than mediocre , but less than fantastic " , adding : " This season proved that even strong chemistry and good acting cannot save a show that suffers from the inevitable recycled plot . "

In contrast to the moderately negative feedback the third and fourth seasons received , Alan Sepinwall of The Star @-@ Ledger said of the fifth season : " Overall , it feels more like the good old days than Grey 's Anatomy has in a long time . " Misha Davenport from the Chicago Sun @-@ Times said season five " hits on all the things the show does so well " , adding : " There is romance , heartbreak , humor and a few moments that will move fans to tears . " Brian Lowry of Variety , less impressed , opinionated that the season five displayed the show running out of storylines . Speaking of the sixth season , Bianco of USA Today wrote : " Grey 's has always loved grand gestures . You like them or you don 't ; the only real question is whether the show pulls them off or it doesn 't . This year , it did . "

The series has a score of 66 out of 100 on Metacritic , based on five reviews for season seven . In response to the season , Bianco from USA Today commented : " Happily , it now seems to have landed on solid ground . " Also of the seventh season , Entertainment Weekly 's Jennifer Armstrong said : " It 's in the shooting 's emotional reverberations that the show is regenerating after the past few hit @-@ and @-@ miss seasons , " whereas Verne Gay of Newsday commented : " Unfortunately , they 've settled on far @-@ too @-@ easy and facile answers for the most part . " HitFix gave a positive review saying that , " season 7 overall has been one of the show 's strongest ever . " and added , " There was a time when Grey 's Anatomy was this show where I suffered through a lot of stuff that made me cringe to get to those genius melodrama moments it could do so well . Over the last couple of years , it 's evolved into a show that 's much more consistent in tone , where it may not move me as often as it did in the early years but also very rarely makes me question my reasons for watching . " Speaking of season eight , Entertainment Weekly 's Mandi Bierly called it a " so @-@ so season " , and Lesley Goldberg of The Hollywood Reporter called it " emotional " . Also acknowledging the fan base Verne Gay of Newsday wrote " Grey 's has had a good season and has an intensely loyal fan base to prove it . " regarding the 8th season .

The ninth season received more positive reviews , Rob Salem of Toronto Star called it " a solid

return to form . " Brad Williams writing for What Culture praised the show 's development over the season saying , " Grey 's Anatomy has developed into a fine example of how a TV show can mature beyond its initial purpose . " calling it " something almost anyone can watch and enjoy . " Praising the friendship between Cristina and Meredith of Entertainment Weekly wrote , " There 's still one good reason to keep watching : Where else can you find such deep friendships between female co @-@ workers " . The tenth season was also marked with praise , Annie Barrett for Entertainment Weekly wrote " There 's true sorrow here along with the passion , which keeps their dynamic so intriguing to me . " Caroline Siede from The A.V. Club wrote in her review for the 10th season " At its best , Grey 's Anatomy is about everyday bravery , sacrifice , and courage . At its worst , it 's a melodramatic , moralizing soap opera . Both sides are on display as the show heads confidently into its 10th season . " Many sources , including Rachel Simon of Bustle and Nicole Pomarico of Wetpaint , claimed that Sandra Oh 's performance during her final season on Grey 's Anatomy is worthy of an Emmy nomination .

Bryce Olin of Netflix ranked Grey 's 9th among the 50 Best TV Shows on Netflix stating , " It ? s a tough call , but based on Grey ? s casting choices and revolutionary portrayals of female doctors in the series , I ? m willing to argue that Grey ? s Anatomy is the best medical drama of all time . Obviously , Shonda Rhimes didn ? t reinvent the wheel with the series , but there ? s no denying its popularity . " adding , " I understand its significance in the pop culture sphere . " He also stated that the show could go higher in the ranks with the upcoming season stating , " Apparently , Grey ? s Anatomy fans are passionate about their show , although it seems like they ? ve been closeted for the last few years . I ? d love to move Grey ? s Anatomy even higher on the ranking , but I ? ll have wait until the 11th season comes to Netflix . "

== == Critics ' top ten lists == ==

Critics included Grey 's Anatomy in top ten lists for five of its twelve seasons ; these are listed below in order of rank .

== == Impact == ==

Grey 's Anatomy has been considered an impact on culture by Entertainment Weekly 's executive editor , Lori Majewski , with her writing : " Grey 's Anatomy isn 't just a show , it 's a phenomenon . When [the] final shows air , every place in New York City is empty . You could get a table at the best restaurants . " The Daily Beast 's Jace Jacob also considered the show an impact , comparing its success to that of Friends , and calling it a " cultural phenomenon " . Steve Sternberg , a media analyst with Magna Global USA explained that the show appeals to a broad audience , writing : " Roughly 80 percent of households during prime time only have one TV set on . People are looking for shows they can watch with other household members . " Grey 's Anatomy introduced a " mc @-@ labeling " surge , ever since it dubbed Dempsey 's character " McDreamy " . Canadian newspaper the National Post considers this trend a " phenomenon " .

Analyzing the show 's impact on culture , Dessylyn Arnold of Yahoo ! Voices noted that the " mc @-@ labeling " trend has been parodied on other shows including ER and Deglassi : The Next Generation . Mark Lawson of The Guardian has credited Grey 's Anatomy with popularizing the " songtage " , or musical montage segments . Parodying this , MADtv created a spoof on the show in 2006 , making fun of the series ' emotional scenes including those accompanied by a musical montage . The show 's premise inspired the creation of A Corazón Abierto , a Colombian adaptation of Grey 's Anatomy , which in turn spawned a Mexican version of the same name . A study conducted by the University of Western Sydney revealed that 94 % of 400 polled medical students are regular viewers of Grey 's Anatomy . An additional study conducted by Brian Quick of the University of Illinois indicated that the show 's portrayal of doctors being " smart , good looking , capable , and interesting " , leads viewers to associating real @-@ world doctors to be that way .

Grey 's has also been credited to have changed the perception on how good and bad television can be defined , The A.V. Club write , " Since The Sopranos burst onto the scene , we ? ve too often

classified a show as " good " based on how closely it adhered to the dark , violent , male @-@ centric template set out by that particular show . It ? s time for that to end . At its best , Grey ? s has been among the very best shows on TV , and at its worst , it ? s been at least fascinating to watch . To write it off is to unnecessarily narrow the definition of what good TV can be , to limit what the medium is capable of . TV is at its best when it emotionally connects , and even when it seems to be otherwise merrily hurtling off a cliff , Grey ? s Anatomy is nothing but emotional connection , which is more than other , more consistently better shows can say . "

In 2011 , a woman residing in Sheboygan , Wisconsin became unresponsive due to an asthma attack . Unable to wait for an ambulance , her daughter and a friend performed cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on her , which they learned from Grey 's Anatomy . Despite this , Resident Karen Zink , M.D. , deemed the show 's portrayal of interns inaccurate , adding : " None of [the characters] have bags under their eyes . They all leave the hospital dressed cute , with their hair done and makeup on . That is so far away from the reality of interns . You are just dragging your butt , trying to stay alive . You don 't have time to do your hair . You don 't have time to put on makeup . Every surgical intern has bags under their eyes . " The series placed at No. 66 on Entertainment Weekly 's " New TV Classics " list , and was declared the third highest rated show for the first ten years of the Internet Movie Database (2002 ? 2012) .

= = = U.S. television ratings = = =

Grey 's Anatomy has received high viewership and ratings since its debut . The first four seasons of the program each ranked in the top ten among all viewers , reaching its peak Nielsen ratings in the second season , attracting an average of 19 @.@ 44 million viewers per episode , and ranking at fifth place overall . Following the show 's time @-@ slot being relocated , overall rankings steadily declined , dropping below the top ten in its fifth season . Grey 's Anatomy made its greatest fall from its sixth to seventh season , slipping from seventeenth place to thirty @-@ first . The series is on a steady decline in terms of overall viewership and rankings , yet Grey 's Anatomy still holds value in charts when numbers are pulled from the digital video recorder (DVR) . It was the most recorded show between 2007 and 2011 , based on cumulative totals , and has been for several years in a row .

The most @-@ watched episode of the series is " It 's the End of the World " , with 37 @.@ 88 million viewers , aided by a lead @-@ in from Super Bowl XL . In 2011 , Grey 's Anatomy was named the fourth @-@ highest revenue earning show of the year , with US \$ 2 @.@ 67 million per half hour , behind Desperate Housewives , Two and a Half Men , and American Idol at the top . In 2012 , the show was the fifth @-@ highest revenue earning show of the year , with US \$ 2 @.@ 75 million per half hour , behind Glee , Two and a Half Men , The X Factor (U.S.) and American Idol . While Grey 's Anatomy is no longer ranked in the top numbers for overall ratings , the show 's ranking in the key 18 ? 49 demographic has remained high . As of season eight , the series is the highest @-@ rated drama on television in the target demographic . Below is a table of Grey 's Anatomy 's seasonal rankings in the U.S. television market , based on average total viewers per episode . Each U.S. network television season starts in September and ends in late May , which coincides with the completion of May sweeps .

= = = Awards and accolades = = =

Grey 's Anatomy has won a number of awards . As of July 2012 , the show has been nominated for twenty @-@ five Primetime Emmy Awards , having been nominated for at least one every year , except in 2010 . At the 57th Primetime Emmy Awards in 2005 , Oh was nominated for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series , which she went on to be nominated for every year until 2009 , and Horton was nominated for Outstanding Directing for a Drama Series . The following year , at the 58th Primetime Emmy Awards , the series received a nomination for Outstanding Drama Series , which they were nominated for again in 2007 . Also in 2006 , Wilson was nominated for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series , which she went on to be nominated for every year until 2009 .

, and Kyle Chandler was nominated for Outstanding Guest Actor in a Drama Series . The 58th Ceremony also honored Rhimes and Vernoff , who were both nominated for Outstanding Writing for a Drama Series . Rhimes , whose career kicked off in 1995 , has since produced yet another ABC series , Scandal , which began on air in 2012 and is continuing into the third season . Beginning in 2005 , Rhimes has been continually nominated for numerous awards , including three Emmy Awards : first in 2006 for a dramatic series and a separate nomination for writing a dramatic series , followed by a third nomination in 2007 for a dramatic series .

In 2007 , at the 59th Primetime Emmy Awards , Heigl won the award for Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series , while Knight was nominated for Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Drama Series . Numerous guest actresses have been nominated for Outstanding Guest Actress in a Drama Series , including Burton in 2006 and 2007 , Christina Ricci in 2006 , Reaser in 2007 , Diahann Carroll in 2008 , and Sharon Lawrence in 2009 , but the only actress to have won the award is Devine in 2011 , who was nominated again in 2012 . The show has also been nominated for thirteen Creative Arts Emmy Awards , having won three of them : Outstanding Casting for a Drama Series , Outstanding Makeup for a Single @-@ Camera Series (Non @-@ Prosthetic) , and Outstanding Prosthetic Makeup for a Series , Miniseries , Movie or a Special .

The show has received ten Golden Globe Award nominations since its premiere . At the 63rd Golden Globe Awards , in 2006 , the series was nominated for Best Drama Series , Dempsey was nominated for Best Actor in a Drama Series , which he was nominated for again in 2007 , and Oh won the award for Best Supporting Actress in a Series , Miniseries , or Television Film . The following year , at the 64th Golden Globe Awards , in 2007 , Pompeo was nominated for Best Actress in a Drama Series , and the show won the award for Best Drama Series . At the 65th Golden Globe Awards , in 2008 , Heigl was nominated for Best Supporting Actress in a Series , Miniseries , or Television Film , while the series in whole was nominated for Best Drama Series .

The series has won People 's Choice Awards for Best Drama thrice in 2007 , 2013 and 2015 and has been nominated for several other People 's Choice Awards , with nominations received by Oh as well as multiple wins from Dempsey , Pompeo winning in recent years 2013 and 2015 , Heigl , Wilson , Demi Lovato , for guest starring , and the drama in whole for Favorite TV Drama . In 2007 , Rhimes and the female cast were the recipient of the Women in Film Lucy Award , in recognition of the excellence and innovation in the show as a creative work that has enhanced the perception of women through the medium of television . The series has been honored with numerous NAACP Image Award nominations , many having been won , including five awards for Outstanding Drama Series . Grey 's Anatomy has also received several Screen Actors Guild Awards , with nominations received by Dempsey , as well as wins from Oh , Wilson , and the main cast for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series .

= = Broadcast history = =

Grey 's Anatomy 's first season commenced airing as a mid @-@ season replacement to Boston Legal on March 27 , 2005 and concluded on May 22 , 2005 . The nine @-@ episode season aired on Sundays in the 10 : 00pm EST time slot , following Desperate Housewives . The show was renewed by ABC for a second season , that aired in the same time slot as season one . Premiering on September 25 , 2005 and concluding on May 15 , 2006 , the season consisted of twenty @-@ seven episodes . The first five episodes of the second season were originally scheduled to air during the first , but the network decided to close the first season of Grey 's Anatomy on the same night as Desperate Housewives ' finale . During the second season , Grey 's Anatomy produced two specials recapping the events of recent episodes , narrated by Bailey , entitled " Straight to the Heart " and " Under Pressure " . The show was renewed for a third season , which was relocated to the coveted Thursday 9 : 00pm EST time slot ? a slot that the series has held onto since then . Commencing on September 21 , 2006 and ending on May 17 , 2007 , season three consisted of twenty @-@ five episodes . Two more specials were produced during the show 's third season , entitled " Complications of the Heart " and " Every Moment Counts " , which were narrated by Bailey and Morgan , respectively .

ABC renewed Grey 's Anatomy for a fourth season , which aired from September 27 , 2007 to May 22 , 2008 , and ultimately consisted of seventeen episodes . The fourth season had a reduced number of episodes , due to the 2007 ? 08 Writers Guild of America strike , which caused production to cease from February to April , leaving the show with no writing staff during that time . At the beginning of the fourth season , the show aired its final special entitled " Come Rain or Shine " , created to transition viewers from Grey 's Anatomy to Private Practice , which was narrated by the editors of People magazine . The show received a renewal for a fifth season , which premiered on September 25 , 2008 and concluded on May 14 , 2009 ; consisting of twenty @-@ four episodes . The series was renewed for a sixth season consisting of twenty @-@ four episodes , which commenced on September 24 , 2009 and ended on May 20 , 2010 . During its sixth season , Grey 's Anatomy aired a series of webisodes entitled Seattle Grace : On Call at ABC.com. ABC renewed the show for a seventh season , which premiered on September 23 , 2010 and concluded on May 19 , 2011 ; consisting of twenty @-@ two episodes . Following up with Seattle Grace : On Call , Seattle Grace : Message of Hope aired during the beginning of the seventh season . Also during the seventh season , the series produced a musical episode entitled " Song Beneath the Song " , featuring music that became famous through their use in Grey 's Anatomy . The show received a twenty @-@ four episode eighth season renewal , which commenced on September 22 , 2011 with a two @-@ hour episode , and ended on May 17 , 2012 . Grey 's Anatomy was renewed for a ninth season , which premiered on September 27 , 2012 and ended on May 16 , 2013 . Grey 's Anatomy was renewed for a tenth season on May 10 , 2013 and premiered on September 27 , 2013 with a two @-@ hour episode , and ended on May 15 , 2014 .

On May 8 , 2014 , ABC renewed the series for an eleventh season that aired from September 2014 to May 2015) . In addition , the show was relocated to the Thursday 8 : 00pm EST time slot . After four seasons outside the top 25 rated shows , Grey 's Anatomy was the number 15 show in the 2013 ? 2014 season , the show 's tenth . The show also re @-@ entered the top five shows in the 18 ? 49 viewer demographic .

On May 7 , 2015 , ABC renewed the series for a twelfth season that premiered on September 24 , 2015 and concluded on May 19 , 2016 .

On March 3 , 2016 , ABC renewed Grey 's for a thirteenth season which will air from 2016 to 2017 .

= = = Private Practice = = =

On February 21 , 2007 , The Wall Street Journal reported that ABC was pursuing a spin @-@ off medical drama television series for Grey 's Anatomy featuring Walsh 's character , Montgomery . Subsequent reports confirmed the decision , stating that an expanded two @-@ hour broadcast of Grey 's Anatomy would serve as a backdoor pilot for the proposed spin @-@ off . The cast of Grey 's Anatomy was reportedly unhappy about the decision , as all hoped the spin @-@ off would have been given to them . Pompeo commented that she felt , as the star , she should have been consulted , and Heigl disclosed that she had hoped for a spin @-@ off for Stevens . The backdoor pilot that aired on May 3 , 2007 sees Montgomery take a leave of absence from Seattle Grace Hospital , to visit her best friend from Los Angeles , Naomi Bennett (Merrin Dungey , later Audra McDonald) , a reproductive endocrinology and infertility specialist . While in Los Angeles , she meets Bennett 's colleagues at the Oceanside Wellness Center . The two @-@ hour broadcast entitled " The Other Side of This Life " served as the twenty @-@ second and twenty @-@ third episodes of the third season , and was directed by Michael Grossman , according to Variety . The cast included Amy Brenneman , Paul Adelstein , Tim Daly , Taye Diggs , Chris Lowell , and Merrin Dungey .

KaDee Strickland 's character , Charlotte King , who would be introduced in the spin @-@ off 's first season premiere , did not appear in the backdoor pilot . Her addition to the main cast was announced on July 11 , 2007 , prior to the commencement of the first season . She did not have to audition for the role , but was cast after a meeting with Rhimes . Also not present in the backdoor pilot was McDonald , due to her character , Naomi Bennett , being portrayed by a different actress , Merrin Dungey . However , on June 29 , 2007 , ABC announced that Dungey would be replaced ,

with no reason given for the change . The drama was titled Private Practice , and its premiere episode followed the second part of the season debut of Dancing with the Stars , and provided a lead @-@ in to fellow freshman series Dirty Sexy Money . Pushing Daisies , a third new series for the evening , rounded out the lineup as a lead @-@ in to Private Practice . The series ended its run in January 2013 after six seasons .

Grey 's Anatomy had three crossover storylines with Private Practice .

" Before and After " / " Ex @-@ Life " / " An Honest Mistake " ? Addison 's brother Archer is brought to Seattle Grace for surgery , after which Derek asks for help with a pregnant neuro patient .

" Blink " / " Another Second Chance " ? Addison helps Mark perform an operation on his pregnant daughter .

" Have You Seen Me Lately ? " / " You Break My Heart " ? Derek 's sister Amelia asks him to perform a risky gliosarcoma surgery .

= = Distribution = =

Grey 's Anatomy episodes appear regularly on ABC in the United States . All episodes are approximately forty @-@ three minutes , and are broadcast in both high @-@ definition and standard . The series ' episodes are also available for download at the iTunes Store in standard and high @-@ definition qualities , and Amazon Video . ABC Video on demand also releases recent episodes of the show for temporary viewing . Recent episodes are also available at ABC 's official Grey 's Anatomy website , and on Hulu and Xfinity . In 2009 , ABC signed a deal allowing Grey 's Anatomy episodes to be streamed on Netflix . Grey 's Anatomy is syndicated on Lifetime , with one hour blocks weekdays at 1 : 00 pm , 2 : 00 pm , and 3 : 00 pm EST .

Since its debut , Buena Vista Home Entertainment has released the first eight seasons on DVD to regions 1 , 2 , and 4 . The first season 's DVD , released on February 14 , 2006 , features an alternate title sequence , bloopers , behind @-@ the @-@ scenes footage , audio commentaries , and an extended edition of the pilot episode . Season two 's DVD , released on September 12 , 2006 , which includes extended episodes , an interview with Wilson , deleted scenes , a set tour , a " Q & A " with the cast , and a segment on the creating of special effects . The DVD for the third season was released on September 11 , 2007 , with bonus features including extended episodes , an interview with star Dempsey , audio commentaries , and bloopers .

The fourth season 's DVD released on September 9 , 2008 , features an interview with Heigl and Chambers , extended episodes , bloopers , and deleted scenes . Season five 's DVD was released on September 15 , 2009 , and includes unaired scenes , bloopers , and extended episodes . The DVD for season six , released on September 14 , 2010 , features deleted scenes , an extended finale , and bloopers . The seventh season 's DVD , released on September 13 , 2011 , includes an extended edition of the musical episode , bloopers , as well as deleted scenes . In addition , the eighth season 's DVD was released on September 4 , 2012 with several bonus features and deleted scenes .

The ninth season 's DVD released on August 27 , 2013 with several bonus features and deleted scenes . The tenth season 's DVD was released on September 2 , 2014 with new several bonus features and deleted scenes . The season was officially released on DVD as a six @-@ disc boxset under the title of Grey 's Anatomy : The Complete Tenth Season ? Live For The Moments on September 2 , 2014 and featured an extended episode Do You Know ? and a special feature from Sandra Oh titled " An Immeasurable Gift " . The eleventh released on DVD as a six @-@ disc box set on August 18 , 2015 with interviews with new series regular Caterina Scorsone and a special feature for Dempsey 's departure How To Say Goodbye Dr. Derek Shepherd .

= = Merchandise = =

ABC has partnered with CafePress and Barco Uniforms to provide branded merchandise through an online store . The products available include shirts , sweatshirts , kitchen @-@ ware , home @-@ ware , and bags , with the Grey 's Anatomy logo on it . Also available are custom unisex

scrubs and lab coats in a variety of colors and sizes , designed by Barco . The merchandise released by ABC is available for purchase at the Grey 's Anatomy official website , and US \$ 1 from every purchase to Barco 's Nightingales Foundation .

Five volumes of the Grey 's Anatomy Original Soundtrack have been released as of 2011 . For the first two seasons , the show 's main title theme was an excerpt from " Cosy in the Rocket " , by British duo Psapp ; it is featured on the first soundtrack album released via ABC 's corporate cousin , Hollywood Records , on September 27 , 2005 . The second soundtrack , featuring songs from the series ' second season , was released on September 12 , 2006 , followed by a third soundtrack with music from the third season . Following the seventh season musical episode " Song Beneath the Song " , " Grey 's Anatomy : The Music Event " soundtrack was released , with volume four of the soundtrack released subsequently .

In January 2009 , Ubisoft announced that it had signed a licensing agreement with ABC Studios to develop a video game based on Grey 's Anatomy . Designed for the Wii , Nintendo DS , and PC , Grey 's Anatomy : The Video Game was released on March 10 , 2009 . The game allows the player to assume the role of one of the main characters , making decisions for the character 's personal and professional life , and competing in a number of minigames . It has been criticized by reviewers because of the simplicity of the mini @-@ games and voice actors who do not play the same characters on the series , with Jason Ocampo of IGN giving it a 6 @.@ 0 / 10 overall rating .

ABC and Nielsen partnered in 2011 to create a Grey 's Anatomy application for Apple 's iPad . The application was designed to allow viewers to participate in polls and learn trivial facts as they watch a live episode . It uses Nielsen 's Media @-@ Sync software to listen for the episode and to post features as the episode progresses .

= = International adaptation = =

An adaptation named as " Doktorlar " (Doctors) was aired on December 28 , 2006 , in a Turkish Network , Show TV , and it lasted four seasons .

In 2010 , " A Corazón Abierto " , an adaptation of the series , was made by the Colombian network RCN TV .