

NFL, Big Bang Theory, Game of Thrones Among 2019's Most-Watched Shows

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As if the television industry needed more proof that the NFL is its single most valuable resource in continuing to draw audience, football dominated the year's most-watched telecasts and regular series in total viewers, according to new data from Nielsen.

Eight of 2019's 10 highest-rated single telecasts were football games, and NFL games also took four of the top 10 regularly scheduled prime-time programs of the year. (All of Nielsen's year-end stats are in total viewers, live-plus-7.)



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Super Bowl LIII was the most-watched single telecast of the year, averaging 98.8 million viewers on CBS, followed by the postgame show, which averaged 54.5 million. CBS' AFC Championship game between New England and Kansas City averaged 54.4 million. Fox's division playoff game between Los Angeles and Dallas drew 33.7 million, and ABC's Oscars telecast brought in an audience of 30.5 million.

Fox's NFL wild-card game between Dallas and Seattle averaged 29.7 million, and ESPN's College Football National Championship drew 24.9 million. The Big Bang Theory's series finale on CBS (24.8 million), CBS' AFC Championship postgame (24.6 million) and the Sept. 29 Sunday Night Football showdown between Dallas and New Orleans (24.4 million) rounded out the top 10.

Among regularly scheduled prime-time shows, Sunday Night Football was No. 1 (NBC, 20 million), ahead of The Big Bang Theory (CBS, 18.5 million). The rest of the top 10: NCIS (CBS, 15.4 million), Game of Thrones (HBO, 15.2 million), Thursday Night Football (Fox and NFL Network, 13.8 million), Sunday Night Football pre-kickoff (NBC, 13.5 million), Young Sheldon (CBS, 12.5 million), Monday Night Football (ESPN, 12.5 million), This Is Us (NBC 12.4 million) and FBI (CBS, 12.4 million).

Several of the year's most watched series also ended up among 2019's top time-shifted shows, by difference in audience between live and live-plus-7. Game of Thrones was on top with 9.2 million, followed by The Big Bang Theory (8.5 million), This Is Us (7.1 million), ABC's The Good Doctor (7 million), NBC's Manifest (6.7 million), NCIS (6.5 million), NBC's New Amsterdam (6 million), Fox's 911 (5.9 million), CBS' Blue Bloods (5.8 million) and Young Sheldon (5.6 million).

Cable shows once again dominated the list of most time-shifted shows by percentage change in viewers between live and live-plus-7. Paramount's Yellowstone (366% increase from live to live-plus-7) was out in front, followed by FX's American Horror Story (340%), Bravo's The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills (233%), History's Vikings (214%), Fox's The Orville (183%), ABC's The Rookie (176%), NBC's Blacklist (170%), History's Project Blue Book (168%), AMC's The Walking Dead (167%) and ABC's Emergence (157%).

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