

Nielsen's TV and Streaming Ratings for January 2026

A trifecta of factors led television viewing in January to a record 12-month high, according to Nielsen's monthly gauge report.

The report, which provides a snapshot of total TV and streaming consumption, revealed that overall TV viewing was up +3.7% compared to the last month of 2025. This was due to win-or-go-home sporting situations, returning broadcast dramas, and colder winter temperatures that kept audiences indoors.

The cable segment was the biggest beneficiary during this period, seeing a +9% increase in viewership compared to December. It also had the largest monthly viewing increase across Nielsen's The Gauge, rising +1.0% to 21.2% from December's 20.2%.

ESPN accounted for the bulk of cable sports viewership, with a +82% monthly viewing increase, driven by its coverage of the College Football Playoffs, including the quarterfinals, semifinals, and championship games.

An active news cycle also gave cable news networks a boost in January, with viewership up +13% from December. Fox News had a +17% gain, and CNN recorded a +29% gain during this period.

Streaming remained the preferred TV viewing format, accounting for 47% of usage in January. Unfortunately, it was down -0.5% from its December showing.

The combined linear segment of broadcast and cable had a share of 42.7%, up +1.1% from the previous month. The two segments were the only ones to see month-to-month increases, and, as mentioned earlier, the cable segment finished up +1% from

December to 21.2%. The broadcast segment was up +0.1% to 21.5% in January.

As with cable, sports dominated the broadcast viewing segment, accounting for 30% of total viewership, with NFL games ranking among the top 15 telecasts of the month. Broadcast dramas were up +24% from December, and broadcast news was up +10% from last month, led by ABC World News Tonight.

Finally, the Other category decreased by -0.6% to stand at 10.3% for the month.

A closer look at the streaming category for January shows YouTube remained in first place among streaming services, accounting for 12.5% of all viewing, down -0.2% from the previous month.

Netflix continues to hold firm in second place, with 8.8% of all streaming consumption. This represented a -0.2% decrease over December.

The Disney group of streaming channels, comprising Disney+, ESPN+, and Hulu SVOD, accounted for 4.9%, up +0.2% from the previous month. It was followed by Amazon's Prime Video, which finished at 4.1%, down -0.2 from the final month of 2025.

The Roku Channel remained steady at 3.0%, followed by the Paramount+ and PlutoTV consortium, which comprises Paramount Global's streaming platforms, finishing January at 2.3%, down -0.2%.

Tubi grew by +0.1% to 2.1% of all streaming consumption, followed by NBCUniversal's streaming service, Peacock, which had a +0.1% gain to finish with 1.8%.

Warner Bros. Discovery's streaming services, comprising HBO Max and Discovery+, remained steady with a 1.4% share in January.

Finally, the Other streaming category remained at 6.3% in the recorded month.

See the media distribution ranking below:

Nielsen's January 2026 gauge report.

The January 2026 interval spanned four weeks, from 12/29/2025 through 01/25/2026. Nielsen reporting follows the broadcast calendar, with weekly intervals beginning on Monday.

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