

THE MONTH'S TOP FIFTY PROGRAMMES.

Programme Title	Day & Date	Viewing Including Timeshift (millions)
1 CORONATION STREET	Wed 04 December /Sun 08 December	21.47
2 CORONATION STREET	Fri 13 December /Sun 15 December	20.62
3 EASTENDERS	Thu 05 December /Sun 08 December	20.51
4 EASTENDERS	Thu 19 December /Sun 22 December	20.26
5 EASTENDERS	Thu 12 December /Sun 15 December	20.00
6 CORONATION STREET	Fri 20 December /Sun 22 December	19.95
7 CORONATION STREET	Fri 06 December /Sun 08 December	19.81
8 CORONATION STREET	Wed 18 December /Sun 22 December	19.74
9 CORONATION STREET	Mon 09 December	19.72
10 EASTENDERS	Tue 03 December /Sun 08 December	19.65
11 CORONATION STREET	Mon 02 December	19.46
12 CORONATION STREET	Wed 11 December /Sun 15 December	19.18
13 EASTENDERS	Tue 17 December /Sun 22 December	19.11
14 EASTENDERS	Thu 26 December /Sun 29 December	18.87
15 EASTENDERS	Tue 10 December /Sun 15 December	18.84
16 CORONATION STREET	Mon 16 December	18.64
17 WOGAN	Sun 29 December	18.24
18 NEIGHBOURS (1331/1737)	Mon 02 December	18.17
19 ONLY FOOLS/HORSES	Tue 24 December	17.70
20 NEIGHBOURS (1330/1736)	Mon 09 December	17.65
21 NEIGHBOURS (1331/1737)	Tue 03 December	17.53
22 NEIGHBOURS (1331/1737)	Wed 11 December	17.33
23 YOU'VE BEEN FRAMED	Sun 08 December	17.28
24 NEIGHBOURS (1329/1737)	Mon 16 December	17.26
25 NEIGHBOURS (1316/1737)	Mon 23 December	16.95
26 NEIGHBOURS (1331/1737)	Fri 13 December	16.91
27 NEIGHBOURS (1329/1736)	Tue 10 December	16.90
28 CORONATION STREET	Fri 27 December	16.89
29 NEIGHBOURS (1331/1736)	Thu 05 December	16.84
30 NEIGHBOURS (1329/1737)	Thu 12 December	16.82
31 NEIGHBOURS (1332/1736)	Wed 04 December	16.69
32 NEIGHBOURS (1330/1737)	Fri 20 December	16.68
33 NEIGHBOURS (1331/1736)	Thu 19 December	16.63
33= NEIGHBOURS (1330/1737)	Wed 18 December	16.63
35 EASTENDERS	Tue 24 December /Sun 29 December	16.58
36 NEIGHBOURS (1329/1737)	Tue 17 December	16.50
37 BIG	Wed 04 December	16.46
38 DARLING BUDS/MAY	Sun 22 December	16.44
39 NEIGHBOURS (1329/1736)	Fri 06 December	16.41
40 NEIGHBOURS (1329/1754)	Thu 26 December	16.24
41 NEIGHBOURS (1317/1737)	Fri 27 December	15.96
42 IT'LL/ALRIGHT/NGHT	Sat 14 December	15.81
43 NEIGHBOURS (1317/1737)	Tue 24 December	15.68
44 CASUALTY	Fri 13 December	15.48
45 CASUALTY	Fri 06 December	15.17
46 THE BILL	Tue 03 December	15.16
47 CORONATION STREET	Mon 23 December	15.05
48 ONLY FOOLS/HORSES	Wed 25 December	14.88
49 THE BILL	Tue 10 December	14.83
50 THE BILL	Tue 17 December	14.68

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4 WEEKS ENDING
29 December 1991

THIS MONTH'S VIEWING SUMMARY

Produced for BARB

Channel	Average Weekly Viewing per person		Share of Total Viewing	
	December (Hrs : Mins)	November (Hrs : Mins)	December (%)	November (%)
ALL/ANY TV	30:27	28:49	100.0	100.0
BBC 1 (incl. Brkfst Time)	11:00	9:36	36.0	33.3
BBC 2	2:56	2:49	9.6	9.7
TOTAL BBC	13:55	12:26	45.6	43.1
ITV (incl. T.V. am)	12:30	12:17	41.0	42.5
CHANNEL 4/S4C	2:47	2:48	9.1	9.7
TOTAL/ANY ITV	15:17	15:05	50.1	52.3
Other Viewing	1:15	1:19	4.1	4.5

DEFINITIONS

Share of Total Viewing - The percentage of total viewing accounted for by each channel.

Timeshift - Viewing of broadcast material recorded at home and played back within 7 days of recording.

Population - Individuals aged 4 and over in UK private households containing a TV set in working order.

Other Viewing - Viewing to channels other than ITV, CH4/S4C, BBC1, BBC2. This is for all households.

Satellite/Cable Viewing - Viewing in homes able to receive broadcasts either via dish antenna or cable.

SHARE OF VIEWING BY ITV REGION

	ITV		CHANNEL 4/S4C		BBC 1		BBC 2		OTHER VIEWING	
	Dec (%)	Nov (%)	Dec (%)	Nov (%)	Dec (%)	Nov (%)	Dec (%)	Nov (%)	Dec (%)	Nov (%)
London	39.1	41.5	9.2	10.0	36.4	33.4	10.1	9.9	5.0	4.9
Midlands E&W	41.6	43.6	8.4	9.1	35.2	31.7	9.5	9.9	5.1	5.5
North West	42.5	43.9	8.8	9.0	35.9	33.6	9.1	9.2	3.5	4.2
Yorkshire	41.3	44.0	9.4	9.6	37.0	33.3	8.7	8.8	3.3	4.0
C. Scotland	40.6	41.1	11.4	11.7	35.4	33.7	9.8	9.9	2.5	3.3
Wales & West	39.8	40.6	7.0	7.9	35.4	33.4	9.8	10.4	5.1	5.1
South & S. East	42.3	43.1	8.6	9.3	35.6	33.1	9.6	9.6	3.7	4.5
North East	39.7	40.4	9.8	10.9	36.9	34.1	9.9	10.1	3.5	4.3
East of England	38.4	39.3	8.9	9.4	36.8	34.7	10.5	11.0	5.2	5.4
South West	39.0	40.5	9.2	8.8	39.2	36.8	9.1	9.5	3.2	4.2
Ulster	42.9	43.7	8.6	9.4	32.9	30.0	7.1	7.3	8.2	9.3
Border	43.0	46.4	9.5	9.8	33.4	30.6	8.5	8.6	5.3	4.4
N. Scotland	43.5	44.4	10.2	10.6	33.9	31.8	8.3	9.1	3.9	3.9
Network	41.0	42.5	9.1	9.7	36.0	33.3	9.6	9.7	4.1	4.5

N.B 1. The Network Share figures are based on BBC viewing and all ITV viewing in the U.K. For an individual ITV region, however, the share of audience is based upon viewing to the individual ITV Channel and to the BBC regional transmitter(s) covering that ITV region.

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HOURS OF WEEKLY VIEWING AND SHARE OF TOTAL VIEWING - SATELLITE/CABLE Including Timeshift

Channel	Average Weekly Viewing per person		Share of Total Viewing	
	December (Hrs : Mins)	November (Hrs : Mins)	December (%)	November (%)
ALL/ANY TV	31:25	29:28	100.0	100.0
BBC 1 (incl. Brkfst Time)	8:20	6:40	26.5	22.6
BBC 2	1:56	1:38	6.1	5.5
TOTAL/ANY BBC	10:16	8:18	32.7	28.1
ITV (incl. T.V. am)	9:26	9:05	30.0	30.8
CHANNEL 4/S4C	1:45	1:35	5.5	5.3
TOTAL/ANY ITV	11:11	10:39	35.6	36.1
Total Terrestrial	21:27	18:57	68.2	64.3
Sky 1	2:16	2:38	7.2	8.9
Sky News	0:35	0:32	1.8	1.7
Sky Sports	0:38	0:49	2.0	2.7
The Movie Channel	1:25	1:14	4.4	4.1
Sky Movies	2:16	2:22	7.2	8.0
The Comedy Channel	0:11	0:15	0.5	0.8
Total B Sky B	7:20	7:49	23.3	26.5
Children's Channel	0:24	0:30	1.2	1.6
MTV	0:34	0:32	1.7	1.8
Lifestyle	0:23	0:19	1.2	1.0
Screensport	0:18	0:16	0.9	0.8
Total Astra	8:59	9:26	28.5	32.0
Others	0:59	1:05	3.1	3.6

TALKBACK - With Peter Fiddick

DECEMBER'S viewing levels were up yet again, topping the 30 hours per head mark, even on the monthly average, and with Christmas week itself tipping three minutes over 35 hours. The monthly figure, 30:27 (hrs;mins), compares with 28:49 in November and 27:00 in October.

Even so, as the Month's Top Fifty chart shows, individual Christmas audiences themselves did not capture the commanding heights of the ratings. Even though the aggregation of repeat audiences always favours the soaps in this chart, and even though Coronation Street was given special Christmas Day afternoon episodes, while more people were at home and available to view, it is not their Christmas week editions that make the top of the Top Fifty. The best Christmas week performance is Eastenders, at No. 14 with its Boxing Day episode and Sunday repeat. Thereafter, that week's best from Eastenders, Coronation Street or Neighbours are to be found at Nos. 28, 35, 40, 43, and 47.

This would seem to be a further demonstration of the powerful scheduling battle in play at the festive season, with very high total audiences being split two or more ways by the abundance of choice. The more impressive, then, is the achievement of the one Christmas week programme that does make the Fifty. The Only Fools and Horses Christmas special, a two parter scheduled on Christmas Eve and the following afternoon, is found at Nos. 19 and 48. One other Christmas special, a new episode of Darling Buds of May, comes in at 38 on the strength of its 16.44 million audiences, leaving an intriguing question dangling in the air. Given that this much-awaited programme was a couple of million off its peak in last Spring's debut series, was it better served this time by being scheduled somewhat out of the fray - on the Sunday before Christmas - or would it have matched Only Fools had ITV's schedulers thrust it into the hurly-burly of the holiday period? In which case, ITV would have made the Christmas week gap between it and BBC1 - 42.3/38.5 in the latter's favour - even narrower, relative to previous years, than its efforts in fact achieved.

THE perennially vexed topic of repeats (or should we say "Another chance to see...") is raised by a letter from a Casualty fan who managed to keep a point about it in mind across the Christmas period. He observed, when the weekly Top Thirty charts for the week ended Sunday, December 22 came out in early January, that Casualty for the Friday of that week was viewed by 13.22 million people. Casualty, is of course, one of the most popular drama series on television, so it was no great surprise to find it that night's best performer, outside the soaps.

What the Casualty fan remembered, however, was that this was due to the last of the series, with the well-flagged departure of a central character as part of the story-line - but that it was pulled from schedule because it dealt with the aftermath of a plane crash and the anniversary of the Lockerbie disaster was felt to be uncomfortably close. So an earlier episode was repeated. And still it was high in the ratings. A demonstration, surely, that people are not that troubled by re-runs?

Up to a point. Most programmes certainly, would be pretty happy with 13.22 million and the 59 per cent share achieved by Casualty that night. But a glance at the Top Fifty for the month puts that in context. The series' two other December episodes are together at Nos. 44 and 45, with more than 15 million viewers apiece. On Friday, December 13 that 15.48 million crowd constituted a 65 per cent share. Since the opposition was not greatly changed, week-to-week (and not particularly strong, the ITV opposition in the 9-10 pm slot being non-networked), it would seem that the resort to re-run cost Casualty viewers, though at a couple of million the cost might be considered great.

And BARB's logging of video playback enables us to split that a little further. Whereas the audience for the episode of December 13 had a playback audience of 700,000, the equivalent figure for the following week was almost exactly half that. That is not bad, even so, for a repeat, but would seem to emphasise the drop in interest. That said, there is one other difference we might have expected to see a faster rate of drop-off during the hour of the repeat, as people cottoned on to the fact that they had seen it before. So far as one can tell from the network report, it didn't happen, a slip of four ratings points between the first and last quarter-hours occurred both weeks.