



TV Shows Every Self-Respecting Geek Should Watch This Fall

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A quick guide to the sci-fi/fantasy shows sure to get the nerd-rage/love as we start a new round of TV watching.



People of a certain age remember the Fall Preview TV Guide as the issue you had to read. It had the low-down on all the brand new shows and returning mainstays, all of which got a chance to prove themselves over the course of a season.

Today, things are different. We know about new shows sometimes years in advance, have the full casting sheets, spoilers galore, and aren't beholden to just three or four broadcast networks for original content. "TV" is spread across broadcast networks, cable-only networks, and now streaming services—with the

line between all three getting fuzzier all the time. You don't even need a TV to watch; a laptop, tablet, or phone will do.

But shows are shows, and we are excited because, even if a typical September-to-May TV season is practically extinct in this age of binge-watching, the fall timeframe is when the majority of shows come back to the airwaves. We are here to pick the top shows that geekdom is going to be most excited to see, new and returning.

CW

Arrow (Oct. 4)

The Flash (Oct. 5)

Supergirl (Oct. 10)

DC's Legends of Tomorrow (Oct. 13)

Welcome to the Berlanti-Verse, sometimes called the Arrow-verse (Arrow started first), an alternate-microcosm of the DC Comics universe, not to be confused at all with the DC Extended Universe. Greg Berlanti produces no less than four TV shows based on DC Comics heroes for the CW (Supergirl used to be on CBS but is moving to the CW this year). All four share one world, with characters that cross over a minimum of once per year, sometimes more. In fact, a bunch of actors have contracts that put them on all those shows. (Berlanti just nailed down a contract to do a pilot for another DC hero, Black Lightning, but that's for next year on Fox.) If you like superheroes, these are the four to watch. They're hokey. They're angsty (especially Green Arrow). They're all young and incredibly attractive and non-threatening (because CW). But above all that, they're fun.

Note: If you were used to watching them next-day on Hulu, forget that this year. CW and Hulu killed that contract, so new seasons of these shows won't stream until they hit Netflix next May.

Riverdale (midseason)

Another Berlanti-produced show, this is the new take on Archie, Jughead, Betty, Veronica and the whole gang from Archie comics. It promises to be full of teen drama—it starts with a fellow student having died tragically! But this is not the 50s-esque drama they tend to show in the comics. Maybe the best part: it will also feature Josie of Josie and the Pussycats!



iZombie (midseason)

Finally, a show on the CW not from Berlanti Productions. Rob Thomas—the guy behind *Veronica Mars*, not the singer—made the zombie procedural NBC could only dream of with *iZombie*. And it works, amazingly well. Get psyched to see how the slow-burn zombie apocalypse is going for the character of Liv (Rose McIver), especially now that her cop-partner knows her secret—she's already dead.

HBO

Westworld (Oct. 2)

Of course, we all want *Game of Thrones* to return. It's the TV show of the decade. In the meantime, this remake of the old Yul Brynner movie *Westworld*, based on the book by Michael Crichton (who directed that movie) has the potential to be the next big thing. Starring Anthony Hopkins, Evan Rachel Wood, and Ed Harris, it's about a theme park full of "robots" turned bad.

Netflix

Luke Cage (Sept. 30)

The newest tale in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), home of Iron Man, Captain America, and the Avengers movies, is the story of Power Man. He won't use that super-hero name or wear a bright-yellow shirt like in the comics. But Luke—who we met already in Marvel's *Jessica Jones* last year—is still a bullet-proof, ex-con bad-ass looking to keep the streets safe in Harlem.

Black Mirror (Oct 21)

Britain's answer to *The Twilight Zone*, featuring stories with a technological bent of some sort, is back, exclusive to Netflix. Instead of only three episodes like in previous seasons, this one will be six episodes, each self-contained, all available at once for full binging. Though if you've seen previous episodes, you know that's probably not a good idea for your psyche.

Amazon Prime

The Man in the High Castle (Dec. 16)

Reading books by Philip K. Dick can be...challenging. But man, do his ideas translate well to the screen. The latest from the mind that led to *Blade Runner* is *The Man in the High Castle*, an alternate-history where the Axis powers won WWII and split up the United States between Germany and Japan. The first season is a stunning achievement, nominated for four Emmy awards. The second arrives as a holiday gift to everyone so we can figure out just what is going on with that weird (SPOILER) extra-dimensional jump one of the characters made to an Earth much like ours, where the Nazis are not in charge of the East Coast of the USA. And who is the Man in the High Castle? Is it PKD himself?

AMC

The Walking Dead (Oct 23)

Season 7 of the most popular zombie show ever may finally reveal what happened with the cliff-hanger ending last season, when bad-guy Negan (Jeffrey Dean Morgan) finally showed up with his barb-wire wrapped bat (named Lucille) and killed one of the cast. I'm betting on Eugene. Or maybe they won't tell you until three episodes in, in keeping with season six's favorite story-telling device: delays. (What works for Mr. Robot does NOT work for everyone else, Walkers!) I have to be honest, this happiness-void of a show's return is going to make me miss Preacher a lot.

ABC

Marvel's Agents of SHIELD (Sept. 20)

ABC (owned by Disney, which owns Marvel) still has a heavy hand in the MCU via SHIELD, starring Clark Gregg in the same character he played in The Avengers. He's been through a lot since getting killed in that movie. As has the whole team-slash-secret-government-agency. Not always the most beloved bit of MCU, the show made a huge turnaround when it pivoted with the second Captain America movie (HAIL HYDRA!) and has done several pivots since, as in-fighting at the Marvel Studios between the TV and movie folks keeps it on its toes. Truly interesting: this year, the major addition to the show will be a mystical character, in the form of Ghost Rider, now that the rights have reverted back. But it's not the Spirit of Vengeance that Nic Cage played in the movies, just similar facial features (or lack thereof), and driving a car, not a motorcycle.

FX Networks

American Horror Story: Roanoke (Sept. 14)

America's favorite horror anthology show returned last week after weeks of creepy trailers that teased this season's premise. Turns out we'll be following a married couple who buy a (haunted? cursed?) house in the woods of Roanoke, Virginia, in a season that already seems to be blending elements of earlier seasons like Murder House and Coven. In a twist, the story is told documentary-style, with the couple re-telling their story in talking head-style shots as the action occurs out in flashbacks (played by different actors), so we know they survive. Or do they? Catch up with last week's episode on-demand before episode two airs on Wednesday.

NBC

The Good Place (Sept. 19)

The potential for great comedy from the people behind Parks & Recreation is always high, more so with big stars like Ted Danson and Kristen Bell. This one is all about Bell going to Heaven—but she's not who they think she is.

Timeless (Oct. 3)

Three people get thrown together to save history using the crappy backup time machine, after the shiny main one gets stolen by Goran Visnjic. This will either be a blast (aka another 12 Monkeys) or a major crime against sci-fi (looking at you, Timecop the Series).

Disney XD

Star Wars: Rebels (Sept. 23)

There hasn't been a lack of cartoon series in the Star Wars universe, but few have ever done it justice like Rebels. The third season promises to even bring a few of the once-thought-defunct characters from the dead Extended Universe (pre-Episode VII) back to life, including one of the few imperials to give Vader a run for his villainy, the blue-skinned Thrawn.

Starz

Ash vs Evil Dead (Oct.2)

The first season captured the gross-out wacky blood-soaked world of one-handed Ash Williams fighting deadites perfectly. Second season: more of the same. Plus, more Lucy Lawless and a dash of Lee Majors (The Six Million Dollar Man) as Ash's pop.

Fox

The Exorcist (Sept. 23)

Making TV shows about old horror movies is obviously nothing new (see Ash vs. Evil Dead, Bates Motel, Friday the 13th, etc.) But never has anyone had the guts to base a show the scariest film/book of all time. Until now. You won't be getting any wacky adventures of the priests week to week; this looks like a season-long look at a demonic possession. Geena Davis as the mom seals the deal.

Son of Zorn (Sept. 25)

What if He-Man and Thundarr had a love-child just as animated as they were and he was, in turn, a father to a kid in the suburbs, returning after a long hard fight to bond with his son and get back his ex? You're about to find out.

Syfy

Incorporated (Nov. 30)

Ready to see the future? Incorporated shows where we're headed as the corporations of 2074 ask for your hard work and loyalty. They have to—they took over when the government collapsed. That's future patriotism, kids! Having Julia Ormond and Dennis Haysbert as your creepy AF heads of the corporation, Spiga, will certainly sell it as a company the future will want to invest in heavily. But the lead character is going to take them all on to find his true love and save the world. Can't wait to see the product placement in this one.

Van Helsing (Sept. 23)

Having had success with Wynonna Earp (as Wyatt Earp's heir taking on the mantle of modern-day demon hunter), it only makes sense to go back to the well with the original vamp hunter—and make the lead a sexy vamp hunting lady! The difference here: Vanessa Helsing is the direct daughter of Abraham Van Helsing from the original Dracula, and she's brought back to life in a post-vampire-apocalypse. The Vamping Dead, anyone? It's still got to be better than that Hugh Jackman movie.

CBS

Pure Genius (Oct. 27)

What happens when you combine The Social Network, House, Numbers, and Grey's Anatomy? CBS will answer that with a show about a Zuckerberg-esque billionaire misfit who opens a high-tech marvel of a hospital called Bunkerhill for only the world's most astounding medical cases. Because who wouldn't name a medical facility after a battlefield? Of course, he's got an ulterior motive, but this is CBS, so he can probably solve some problems each week along the way. The trailer—which feels like the whole first episode—spells it out with a sledgehammer. Which is an item you should not swing in that glass-plated hospital. All of that is highly believable compared to this bit: supposedly, all the patients picked to go to Bunkerhill don't have to pay! I guess they'll see a lot of ads.

MacGyver (Sept. 23)

The word "macgyver" is actually a verb in the Oxford Dictionary: "Make or repair (an object) in an improvised or inventive way, making use of whatever items are at hand." That should tell you everything you need to know about why a network would want to revive this special agent TV show from the 80s/90s.