



Types of Comedy

Genre	Description	Notable Comedians/Comedy Groups
Alternative comedy	Differs from traditional punch line jokes which features many other forms of comedy such as Observation, Satire, Surrealism, Slapstick and Improvisation	Alexei Sayle, Mark Steel, Dan Harmon, Dave Gorman, Linda Smith, Jeremy Hardy, Ron Sparks, Alan Davies, Craig Ferguson, Ben Elton, Jo Brand, Stewart Lee, Sean Hughes, Rik Mayall, Adrian Edmonson, Malcolm Hardee, Kristen Schaal
Black comedy or dark comedy	Deals with disturbing subjects such as death, drugs, terrorism, rape, and war; can sometimes be related to the horror movie genre	Chris Morris, Brian Graden, Jim Norton, Bill Hicks, Frankie Boyle, Jimmy Carr, Denis Leary, Mike Scully, Richard Pryor, Ricky Gervais, George Carlin, Chris Rush, Mike Ward, Penn & Teller, Matt Stone, Patrice O'Neal, Rich Vos, The League of Gentlemen, Seth MacFarlane, Christopher Titus, Sacha Baron Cohen, Doug Stanhope, Eminem, Brother Theodore, Tom Lehrer, Shel Silverstein, Trey Parker, Quentin Tarantino, The Chaser's War On Everything, Monkey Dust
Blue comedy	Typically sexual in nature (risqué) and/or using profane language; often using sexism, racism, and homophobic views	Eddie Murphy, Jim Davidson, Frankie Boyle, Andrew Dice Clay, Bernard Manning, Eminem, Martin Lawrence, Roy 'Chubby' Brown, George Lopez, Doug Stanhope, Seth MacFarlane, Tommy Tiernan, Jerry Sadowitz, Redd Foxx, Bob Saget, Ron White, Dave Attell, Chris Rock, Derek and Clive, Sarah Silverman, Mike Ward, Chappelle's Show
Character comedy	Derives humour from a persona invented by a performer; often from stereotypes	Kaufman, Bob, Catherine Tate, Paul Eddington, Andrew Dice Clay, Rich Hall, Tim Allen, John Gordon Sinclair, Craig Ferguson, Lenny



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		Henry, Sacha Baron Cohen, Christopher Ryan, Steve Guttenberg, Jerry Sadowitz, Steve Coogan, Bip, Jay London, Larry the Cable Guy, Sarah Silverman, Rob Brydon, Rowan Atkinson, Peter Helliar, Harry Enfield, Margaret Cho, Little Britain, Stephen Colbert, Al Murray, Paul Whitehouse, Charlie Higson
Cringe comedy	A comedy of embarrassment, in which the humour comes from inappropriate actions or words; usually popular in television shows and film, but occasionally in stand-up as well	Ricky Gervais, Craig Ferguson, Richard Herring, Rufus Hound, Larry David, Alan Partridge, Bob Saget; TV shows: Curb Your Enthusiasm, The Office, Peep Show, The Proposal, Family Guy, The Inbetweeners
Deadpan comedy	Not strictly a style of comedy, it is telling jokes without a change in facial expression or change of emotion	Milton Jones, Jack Dee, Jimmy Carr, Steven Wright, Peter Cook, Craig Ferguson, Dylan Moran, W. Kamau Bell, Buster Keaton, Bill Murray, Jim Gaffigan, Les Dawson, Mike Birbiglia, Mitch Hedberg, Bruce McCulloch, Demetri Martin, Elliott Goblet, Aubrey Plaza, Zach Galifianakis
Improvisational comedy	Improvisational (sometimes shortened to improv) comics rarely plan out their routines; television show examples: Curb Your Enthusiasm, Whose Line Is It Anyway?, Thank God You're Here	Robin Williams, Winters, Bob, Paula Poundstone, Paul Merton, Tony Slattery, Josie Lawrence, Jim Sweeney, Steve Steen, Wayne Brady, Ryan Stiles, Craig Ferguson, Colin Mochrie, Drew Carey, Greg Proops, John Sessions, Neil Mullarkey, Kathy Greenwood, Brad Sherwood, Chip Esten, Jeff Davis, Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, Jonathan Mangum, Mark Meer, Larry David
Insult Comedy	A form which consists mainly of offensive insults directed at the	Don Rickles, Andrew Dice Clay, Craig Ferguson, Ricky Gervais, Bob Saget, Frankie Boyle, Jimmy Carr, Jerry Sadowitz, Sam Kinison, Seth MacFarlane, Triumph, the Insult



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	performer's audience and/or other performers	Comic Dog, Roy 'Chubby' Brown, Eminem, Marcus Valerius Martialis, Jeffrey Ross, Lisa Lampanelli, D.L. Hughley, Greg Giraldo
Mockumentary	A parody using the conventions of documentary style	Films and TV shows: Borat, This is Spinal Tap, The Monkees, The Rutles, Summer Heights High, Electric Apricot: Quest for Festeroo, The Office, Brüno, Parks and Recreation, Modern Family, Come Fly with Me, Angry Boys, The Compleat AI
Musical Comedy	A form of alternative comedy where humour is mostly derived from music with (or sometimes without) lyrics	Bill Bailey, Denis Leary, Tim Minchin, The Lonely Island, Flight Of The Conchords, Les Luthiers, Craig Ferguson, Mitch Benn, Tenacious D, Spinal Tap, Stephen Lynch, Eminem, "Weird Al" Yankovic, Bob Rivers, Bo Burnham, Wayne Brady, the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band
Observational comedy	Pokes fun at everyday life, often by inflating the importance of trivial things or by observing the silliness of something that society accepts as normal	George Carlin, Jerry Seinfeld, Brent Butt, Craig Ferguson, Larry David, Bill Cosby, Mitch Hedberg, Billy Connolly, Russell Howard, Cedric the Entertainer, Steve Harvey, W. Kamau Bell, Ray Romano, Chris Rush, Dane Cook, Dave Hughes, Ricky Gervais, Janeane Garofalo, Chris Rock, Matt Groening, Jeff Foxworthy, Jim Gaffigan, Kathy Greenwood, Ellen DeGeneres, Jeremy Hotz, Peter Kay, Daniel Tosh, Russell Peters, Demetri Martin, Tommy Tiernan, Carl Barron, Lee Evans, Michael McIntyre, Kevin Bridges, Brian Regan
Physical comedy	Somewhat similar to slapstick, this form uses physical movement and gestures; often influenced by clowning	Jim Carrey, Bob Nelson, Norman Wisdom, Jerry Lewis, Robin Williams, Chevy Chase, Craig Ferguson, John Ritter, Conan O'Brien, Kunal Nayyar, Mr. Bean, Michael McIntyre, Lee Evans, Max Wall, Matthew Perry, Brent Butt, Kathy



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		Greenwood, The Three Stooges, Lano & Woodley, Lucille Ball, Dane Cook, Chris Farley
Prop comedy	Relies on ridiculous props, casual jackets or everyday objects used in humorous ways	Bob Nelson, Carrot Top, Jeff Dunham, Gallagher, Craig Ferguson, Timmy Mallett, The Amazing Johnathan, Jerry Sadowitz
Spoof	The recreating of a book, film or play for humour; it can be used to make fun of, or ridicule, a certain production	Mel Brooks, French and Saunders, Mitchell and Webb, I'm Sorry I Haven't a Clue, Peter Serafinowicz, Weird Al Yankovic, Zucker, Abrahams and Zucker; Films and TV shows: Hot Shots, Frankie Boyle's Tramadol Nights, Shriek, Look Around You
Sitcom	Scripted dialogue creating a thematic situation; commonly found on television series	Seinfeld, Fawlty Towers, Black Books, Porridge, Dad's Army, Blackadder, Gavin and Stacey, My Wife and Kids, I Love Lucy, Friends, Corner Gas, That '70s Show, The Office, The Cosby Show, The Simpsons, Open All Hours, Only Fools and Horses, Dinner Ladies, Modern Family, Melissa & Joey
Sketch	A shorter version of a sitcom, practised and typically performed live	Jennifer Saunders, Lorne Michaels, Dawn French, Craig Ferguson, Catherine Tate; TV shows: Monty Python, Saturday Night Live, Chappelle's Show, Firesign Theatre, In Living Color, A Bit of Fry & Laurie
Surreal comedy	A form of humour based on bizarre juxtapositions, absurd situations, and nonsense logic	Spike Milligan, Jay Kogen, Eddie Izzard, J. Stewart Burns, Ross Noble, Bill Bailey, Brent Butt, The Mighty Boosh, Steven Wright, Trey Parker, Monty Python, Seth MacFarlane, David X. Cohen, Vic and Bob, Brian Graden, The Goodies, Jack Handey, Derek Drymon, Wallace Wolodarsky, Harry Hill, The Kids in the Hall, Conan



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		O'Brien, Tim and Eric, Paul Merton, Mitch Hedberg, Firesign Theatre, Shaun Micallef
Topical comedy/Satire	Relies on headlining/important news and current affairs; it dates quickly, but is a popular form for late night talk-variety shows	George Carlin, Bill Hicks, Chris Morris, Dennis Miller, Conan O'Brien, Russell Howard, Craig Ferguson, David Letterman, Jay Leno, Dan Harmon, Andy Hamilton, Bill Maher, Ian Hislop, Brent Butt, Paul Merton, Eminem, Kathy Griffin, Jon Stewart, Stephen Colbert, Stewart Lee, Matt Groening, Rory Bremner, W. Kamau Bell, Ben Elton, David Cross, Lewis Black, Chris Rock, Dave Chappelle, The Chaser, Punt and Dennis, Jon Holmes; TV shows: The Daily Show, Have I Got News For You, Mock The Week, The News Quiz, Saturday Night Live, The Simpsons, The Tonight Show, Late Show with David Letterman, Wait Wait... Don't Tell Me!, South Park
Wit/Word play	More intellectual forms based on clever, often subtle manipulation of language (though puns can be crude and farcical)	Groucho Marx, William Shakespeare, Harry Hill, Craig Ferguson, Jay Jason, Oscar Wilde, Rodney Marks, Eminem, Woody Allen, George Carlin, Tim Vine, Stephen Fry, Demetri Martin, Bo Burnham, Firesign Theatre, Myq Kaplan