

Aug 19 1950

The American Broadcasting Company (ABC) is an American television network.

Created in 1943 from the former NBC Blue radio network, ABC is owned by The Walt Disney Company and is part of Disney-ABC Television Group. It first broadcast on television in 1948. Corporate headquarters are in Manhattan in New York City, while programming offices are in Burbank, California adjacent to the Walt Disney Studios and the Walt Disney Company corporate headquarters.

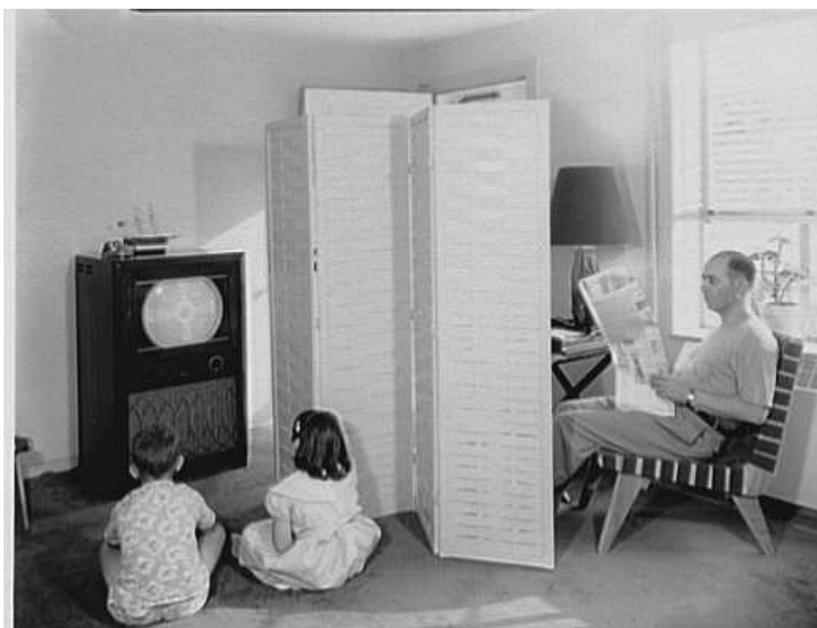
The current slogan is "Start Here", except television idents continue to use the former "America's Broadcasting Company" slogan. Before the "America's Broadcasting Company" slogan, television idents used the full corporate name from 1997-2000.

The formal name of the operation is American Broadcasting Companies, Inc., and that name appears on copyright notices for its in-house network productions and on all official documents of the company, including paychecks and contracts. A separate entity named ABC Inc., formerly Capital Cities/ABC Inc., is that firm's direct parent company, and that company is owned in turn by Disney. The network is sometimes referred to as the Alphabet Network, due to the letters "ABC" being the first three letters of the Latin alphabet, in order.

The American Broadcasting Company (ABC) First Aired Saturday Morning Television Shows For Children

The American Broadcasting Company (ABC) first aired Saturday morning television shows for children on August 19, 1950. The network introduced two shows: Animal Clinic, which featured live animals, and the variety show, Acrobat Ranch, which had a circus theme. The latter show, hosted by Jack Stillwell ("Uncle Jim"), featured two young acrobats, Tumbling Tim and Flying Flo, and children competing in games and stunts.

The first children's entertainer to perform for television was Burr Tillstrom, who broadcast live from the New York World's Fair in 1939. The National Broadcasting Company (NBC) began the first regular televi-



Father Reading Newspaper, Two Children Viewing Television

sion broadcasts in the United States the same year. Initially, the network offered just two hours of programming per week, which were to be received on RCA television sets.

Children's television evolved slowly during the early years. Network executives assumed that families would view programs on their (single) TV set together. Consequently, programming was geared to families while advertising targeted adults. Several children's shows emerged in the late 1940s and early 1950s including Bob Emery's *The Small Fry Club*, Burr Tillstrom's *Kukla, Fran, and Ollie*, and Robert E. "Buffalo Bob" Smith's *The Howdy Doody Show*. The Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) began airing animated cartoons in 1955 under the title *Mighty Mouse Playhouse*.



Bob Smith, chairman of the Westchester County Cerebral Palsy campaign, introduces Howdy Doody to Max Holland