



CSI (Crime Scene Investigation)

CSI: Crime Scene Investigation is an American drama about a team of forensic investigators trained to solve criminal cases by examining the crime scene, collecting irrefutable evidence and finding the missing pieces that solve the mystery. The series made DNA a familiar term to millions of fans in over 170 countries who learned the importance of blood, saliva and skin as evidence and how those elements help solve crimes.

It originally ran on CBS from 2000 to 2015 spanning 15 seasons. The team of crime-scene investigators is originally led by an awkward forensic entomologist and career criminalist who is promoted to *CSI* supervisor following the death of a trainee investigator. His second-in-command is a single mother with a policewoman's instinct.

During its fifteen years in production, *CSI* had an estimated world audience of over 73.8 million viewers (in 2009), and reached milestone episodes including the 100th ('Ch-Ch-Changes'), the 200th ('Mascara') and the 300th ('Frame by Frame'). *CSI* also produced three spin-off series: *CSI Miami*, *CSI NY*, and *CSI Cyber*, as well as a book series, several video games, and an exhibit at Chicago Museum of Science and Industry. At the time of its cancellation, *CSI* was the seventh longest-running scripted US primetime TV series overall and had been rec-

ognized as the most popular dramatic series internationally.

Critical reception to the show was positive, and the reason for *CSI* success is that it combines a few time-tested TV elements in an interesting way. Each episode presents a murder case and a group of investigators who, equipped with cool, high-tech gadgets, do the sleuthing and solve the mystery in an hour.

At the same time *CSI* was often criticized for its level and explicitness of graphic violence and strong images. The *CSI* series and its spin-off shows have been accused of pushing the boundary of what is considered acceptable viewing for primetime network television. *CSI* was ranked among the worst primetime shows by the Parents' Television Council from its second to its sixth season. Despite all this, people have developed a strong interest in forensic science and, in 2004, USA Today reported for the first time the effect made on trial jurors by TV programmes featuring forensic science. The *CSI* effect, also known as the *CSI* syndrome and *CSI* infection, is the way in which public perception is influenced by the exaggerated portrayal of forensic science on crime television shows.

ACTIVITIES

1 Answer the following questions.

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| 1 What is <i>CSI</i> ? | 6 What else was produced after the main series? |
| 2 What was its impact on the audience? | 7 What is the reason for its success? |
| 3 How long did it last? | 8 Why was it also criticized? |
| 4 Who are the main protagonists? | 9 Which effect does it have on jurors? |
| 5 How many people watched it? | 10 What is the <i>CSI</i> effect? |

2 Provide a definition for the following words.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Irrefutable | 5 Primetime |
| 2 To span | 6 Sleuthing |
| 3 Awkward | 7 Juror |
| 4 Spin-Off | 8 To feature |

3 Do you know *CSI*? Have you ever watched it? Do you watch similar TV series? Discuss this topic in your group.