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Best Websites for Finding Streaming Movies and TV for Free

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internet reviews

BEST WEBSITES FOR FINDING STREAMING MOVIES AND TV FOR FREE

BY JENNIFER A. BARTLETT

INTERIM ASSOCIATE DEAN OF TEACHING, LEARNING, & RESEARCH • UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY LIBRARIES

"Movies touch our hearts and awaken our vision, and change the way we see things. They take us to other places, they open doors and minds. Movies are the memories of our lifetime, we need to keep them alive." – Martin Scorsese (<http://www.film-foundation.org/board>)

Remember when you couldn't watch a new film until it hit the local movie theater? Or you had to rent your favorite movies from a video rental store if you wanted to see them again? Well, those days are long since gone – there are hundreds of online options for finding thousands of movies and television shows, both new and old. Popular fee-based sites include Amazon Prime, Netflix, HBO Go/HBO Now, Hulu, and Disney+. Also, some public and academic libraries often offer video streaming through subject databases (Bloomsbury Publishing's Shakespeare's Globe on Screen, ProQuest's CBS News 60 Minutes,

for example) and general film services such as Kanopy.

If you don't want to pay to watch online movies and television programs, there are plenty of sites to choose from, but not all offer free and legally-available video. In addition to the many sites that offer public domain movies and television shows, new Advertising-supported Video on Demand (AVOD) sites are springing up monthly. If you're looking for a specific movie, a quick way to determine viewing options is simply to search by movie title in Google, Bing, or another major search engine to see where it may be available, and for what cost.

For browsing, here are only a few of the many websites that offer free, legal movie and TV show content with good video quality. Pop some popcorn and enjoy!



YouTube Movies ***<http://youtube.com/movies>***

Google-owned YouTube is by far the biggest video hosting service on the web, featuring thousands of videos

including music, educational, gaming, fashion, comedy, how-to, and product review videos. Beginning in 2011, YouTube began offering movie content for rent, purchase, and streaming, including some free content (with advertisements); look for the "free to watch" section.

However, the best way to find programming on YouTube is to search directly by title. As some of these films are uploaded by fans and not the rights-holder,

they can be of poor quality and disappear without notice. Other user-contributed movie content is better curated; for example, several YouTube channels offer classic films, all available for free:

- Timeless Classic Movies - <https://www.youtube.com/user/TimelessClassicMovie>
- Timeless Classic Films - <https://www.youtube.com/user/TimelessClassicFilms>
- Timeless Western Movies - <https://www.youtube.com/user/timelesswesternmovie>
- Timeless Film Noir Movies - <https://www.youtube.com/user/FilmNoirTV>
- TCMovies - <https://www.youtube.com/user/tcmfilm>

Sony Crackle

<https://www.sonycrackle.com>



Sony Crackle features a completely free lineup of feature films, TV shows, and original programming. It's been in existence for almost a decade, which is longer than many streaming services, and has changed its name several times – first Grouper, then Crackle, now Sony Crackle – and there's possibly another name change to Crackle Plus under its new majority owners, Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment.

Titles are organized into genres, including Action, Anime, Thriller, Comedy, Drama, Fandom, and Crackle Original. Given that all content is free, Sony Crackle doesn't offer the depth of content of other sites, but it's well worth a look for some interesting viewing

Plex

<https://www.plex.tv>



Since 2009, Plex has been primarily a place to organize users' video, music, and photo collections and stream them to various

devices. After installation of the Plex software on a computer or external hard drive, the software scans and organizes existing media files in an easily-accessible library that can then be streamed to different devices.

Now the company's goal is to be the one-stop shop for the user's entire digital media library, including movies, news, television, photos, webcasts, music, and more. In late 2019, Plex unveiled a vastly expanded streaming media library including content from MGM, Warner Brothers, Conde Nast, the Associated Press, Bloomberg, and more. The service is supported by advertisements and is completely free to users, although registering for a free account is required before viewing. Streaming in around 220 countries, Plex has now become the largest ad-supported video platform in the world (except for YouTube).

Vudu

<https://www.vudu.com>



Owned by retailer Walmart, Vudu offers thousands of movies and TV shows for free and for rent that can be streamed to PCs, smart TVs, and other devices that have

the Vudu app. It's one of the larger services, offering over 24,000 movie titles and over 8,000 television shows (as of June 2019). Content includes major studio and independent films, documentaries, musicals, cartoons, anime, and other genres. Users are required to create a free account (or use their existing Walmart or Facebook logins) before viewing content.

Pluto TV

<https://pluto.tv>



Looking for the TV experience on your desktop computer or mobile device? With an interface designed to resemble

traditional TV and cable channels, ViacomCBS-owned PlutoTV is a unique, ad-supported streaming service offering feature films, music, sports, news, comedy, technology, lifestyle, Latino, and children's programming – all organized into more than 100 channels. Many of Pluto's programs are presented live, and others on demand. Content is licensed directly from over 75 providers including CNN, Fox Sports, MGM, Sinclair Broadcast Group, Bloomberg, and many others.

JustWatch

<https://www.justwatch.com/us>



Having problems finding your favorite movie? Search for streaming movies and TV shows on JustWatch, an aggregator website that monitors which shows are playing on various platforms, including Netflix, iTunes, Vudu, and other streaming services. Users can filter shows by genre, release year, price, and rating. Searching for a title yields trailers, ratings from websites including Rotten Tomatoes and a list of options for renting, buying, and viewing in theaters. Site visitors can also create a free account, which allows the option to save favorite movies, get recommendations based on preferences, and create a watchlist.

Internet Archive Feature Films

https://archive.org/details/feature_films



INTERNET ARCHIVE

No list of streaming video would be complete without mentioning the wonderful collections available through the Internet Archive. The IA Feature Films section offers not only feature films, but also silent films, trailers, and shorts, all in the public domain and many contributed by viewers. Videos are sorted into categories, including science fiction and horror, comedy, film noir, and silent films; users can also do a full-text search by title, creator, description, collection, date and other fields. This collection is part of the Internet Archive Moving Image Archive (<https://archive.org/details/movies>), which also features a vast library of community video, arts and music, news and television programming, cartoons, and more. Viewer beware: not all content is suitable for all audiences.

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