

Charmed

<i>Charmed</i>	
	
Genre	Supernatural drama Dramedy Fantasy Action Horror
Format	Serial drama
Created by	Constance M. Burge
Starring	Holly Marie Combs Alyssa Milano Rose McGowan Shannen Doherty Brian Krause Dorian Gregory Julian McMahon Karis Paige Bryant Drew Fuller Kaley Cuoco Ted King Greg Vaughan
Opening theme	"How Soon Is Now?" by Love Spit Love
Composer(s)	J. Peter Robinson and others
Country of origin	United States
Language(s)	English
No. of seasons	8
No. of episodes	178 (List of episodes)
Production	
Executive producer(s)	Brad Kern Constance M. Burge Aaron Spelling E. Duke Vincent
Location(s)	San Francisco
Camera setup	Panavision

Running time	40–45 minutes
Production company(s)	Spelling Television
Broadcast	
Original channel	The WB
Picture format	480i (SDTV)
Audio format	Dolby Digital
Original run	October 7, 1998 – May 21, 2006
Status	Ended
External links	
Website ^[1]	

Charmed is an American television series that originally aired from October 7, 1998, until May 21, 2006, on The WB Television Network.^[2] The series was created in 1998 by writer Constance M. Burge and was produced by Aaron Spelling and his *Spelling Television* company, with the show runner being writer-director Brad Kern.

The series narrative follows the four Halliwell sisters—Prue, Piper, Phoebe and, later, Paige. They are the culmination of the most powerful line of good witches in history. The sisters, despite being perceived as normal women by the non-supernatural community, are known as The Charmed Ones in the magical community, whose prophesied destiny is to protect innocent lives against evil beings, such as demons and warlocks. Each sister possesses unique magical powers that grow and evolve, while they attempt to hold normal working lives in San Francisco. Keeping their paranormal identities separate and secret from their ordinary lives forms part of the series' tension and challenges, with the exposure of magic having far-reaching consequences on relationships, and having resulted in a number of police and FBI investigations throughout the series.

The first episode, "Something Wicca This Way Comes", garnered 7.70 million viewers, breaking the record for the highest rated debut for the Warner Brothers Network.^[3] In January 2006, producer Brad Kern declared that *Charmed* was the longest running hour-long series featuring all female leads (*Murder She Wrote* having only a singular lead, and *The Facts of Life* being a 30-minute sitcom).^[4] The series finale, "Forever Charmed", ended with a season high of 4.49 million viewers.^[5]

Since June 2010 Zenescope Entertainment have been publishing an officially licensed comic continuation of the series *Charmed*. Author Paul Ruditis, who has had previous experience with the Charmed universe after writing several Charmed tie-in novels, will be acting as lead writer of the series. So far 12 issues of the comics are expected.

Production

Development

In 1998, the Warner Brothers Television Network began searching for a drama series, and looked to Spelling Television, which had produced the network's most successful series *7th Heaven*, to create it. Expanding on the popularity of supernatural-themed dramas, the production company explored forms of mythology to find mythological characters they could realize with contemporary storytelling.^[6]

In order to create the series, Burge was hired as the creator as she was under contract with *20th Century Fox* and *Spelling Television* after conceiving the drama *Savannah*.^[6] When the theme of witchcraft was first pitched to her, she was aware of stereotypes of witches (flying brooms, black cats, and warts). After Wicca research, she changed her perspective^[7] and aimed at telling a story of good witches who looked and acted like ordinary people. With this, her initial concept was a series set in Boston, Massachusetts^[7] about three friends and roommates who were all witches.^[6] However, executive producer E. Duke Vincent lacked confidence, asking "Why would anybody want to

watch a show about three witches?" He proposed that the series focus on family values and developed the series-long mantra of it being about "three sisters who happen to be witches, not three witches who happen to be sisters." Spelling warmed to Burge's ideas and, after the concept was re-crafted to be a series about three sisters (now living in San Francisco) descended from a line of witches,^[7] it was pitched to the Warner Brothers's Susanne Daniels, who liked it, allowing the series to begin development.^[6]

Shannen Doherty, having worked with Spelling on *Beverly Hills, 90210*, auditioned for the role of Piper Halliwell but won the role of Prue Halliwell. After the third season, Doherty left the series. The reasons for Doherty leaving the series have never been made public.

Doherty's best friend, Holly Marie Combs, known as Kimberly Brock from the series *Picket Fences*, became interested in the script and won the role of middle sister Piper Halliwell, although she auditioned for the role of Prue Halliwell.

The series was titled *Charmed* after Spelling's suggestion of *House of Sisters* was dropped, and the three lead roles were cast to Doherty, Combs, and Lori Rom. Burge wrote the pilot's script. They filmed a 28-minute version (the "unaired pilot", never aired on network television) with which the series was picked up by the WB. The majority of the pilot had to be re-filmed after Rom quit and Alyssa Milano took her role, however some of the scenes from Unaired Pilot stayed unchanged.

Upon its debut, *Charmed* received the largest audience for a series premiere in the network's history.^[3] The first season of twenty-two episodes was picked up by Warner Brothers after two shows aired.

Executive producers

The two executive producers from *Spelling Television* were its creator, Spelling, and Vincent, who maintained their roles until the series ended. Burge became an executive producer when she was hired to create the series and write the pilot. After the short "unaired pilot" was shown to the WB and the series was picked up by the network, Kern was recruited as the fourth executive producer and as the show runner in order to decipher how the series would develop over the course of its run. While Kern remained with the show until its end, between the second and third seasons Burge was not an executive producer. She remained as executive consultant until the end of season four when she left *Charmed*.^[8]

Writing and format

Scripting was done by a large number of writers. Kern did the most writing, with a total of 26 episodes, as well as directing one of them. The writers with the most writing credits other than Kern include Daniel Cerone, Curtis Kheel, Zack Estrin, Chris Levinson, Krista Vernoff, Sheryl J. Anderson, Monica Breen, Alison Schapker, Cameron Litvack, and Jeannine Renshaw.^[9] Burge wrote seven episodes for the first and second seasons before leaving her position as executive producer.

Scripting was carried out after group brainstorms took place, discussing the events of the episodes, the emotions of the characters, and the mythology involved. Robert Masello, an executive story editor for the series, credits himself as the only demonologist hired for a series, in order to add his experience to the storyline.^[10]

 *Charmed* is the only show that has a licensed fully bonded demonologist, which is me, on staff and as a result because I've written books  about demonology and the occult of witchcraft, I'm there to answer questions about how a demon would behave.

However, as Combs revealed in *The Women of Charmed* documentary, the series aimed at following a mythology created by fantasy, and not adhering to Wiccan rules too closely, for fear of coming under criticism for either not being "technically correct enough" or missing the truth completely.^[10]

Between the second and the third season, Burge left, leaving her former position to executive producer Kern. Burge remained as creative consultant until season four.^[8] Burge's departure resulted in changes in the story structure of the

show, from a "demon of the week" system to using third- or half-season-long story arcs. In addition, more importance was given to the protagonists' personal lives.

The serial connection of episodes culminated in the second half of season four. Despite the ratings increasing during season four's final story arc from 4.19 to 4.21, Warner Brothers asked Kern to abandon the serial system. This led to the largely episodic structure of season five, and resulted in the two systems being balanced from the sixth season onwards.

Logo and symbols

During the show's run, the Warner Brothers Television Network used two official logos to represent the series. The first was used during the first and second seasons and featured the name *Charmed* underlined and with a triple-aspect symbol above it. The second logo was introduced at the start of the third season and remained until the series ended. It was written in a different font and is still underlined and sometimes featured a triquetra above the name. This logo was designed by Margo Chase. Although the second logo replaced the first in all promotional material by the Warner Brothers, such as posters and television adverts, the first remained to be used on official merchandise after the third season, including on the covers of the novel series, the DVDs, the official *Charmed* magazine and the Charmed Comics.

Music

Charmed shares the theme song "How Soon Is Now?" with the 1996 Columbia Pictures feature film, *The Craft*, appearing under the opening credits in a cover by Psychedelic Furs frontman Richard Butler's hiatus band, Love Spit Love. The song was originally written and composed by The Smiths. Unusually, the series has had three different end title themes (by Tim Truman, J. Peter Robinson and Jay Gruska), with the theme used dependent on the tone of the episode. In stripped (daily) reruns on US cable tier TNT, "How Soon Is Now?" appears in a 5-second abbreviated 'tag' form to accommodate additional advertising; no music appears under closing credits as they are 'stacked' under an ad or over the succeeding show's opening tag.

The song appeared on the soundtrack album *TV Themes: Popular Favorites*, released by the St. Clair record label on September 6, 2005,^[11] as well as its follow-up *TV Themes: Sex and the City and Other Favorites*, on August 30, 2005.^[12] It also appeared on *Your Favorite Television Themes*, released by Artemis Strategic on June 7, 2005.^[13] The song always appeared on the compilations in its full-length version of 4 minutes and 20 seconds.

Unfortunately for the producers, the song's license expired before the Season 8 DVDs went into production. After efforts to get it back in time for the Region 1 release failed, it was replaced by a generic hard-rock instrumental theme.

Plot

"Before Melinda was burned at the stake, she vowed that each generation of Warren witches would become increasingly stronger, culminating in the arrival of three sisters [...] the most powerful witches the world has ever known."

Phoebe Halliwell, "Something Wicca This Way Comes" (series premiere)

(Written by Constance M. Burge)

In 1998, Prue, Piper, and Phoebe Halliwell move back into their childhood home, Halliwell Manor, after their Grams' (Penny Halliwell) funeral. By accident, Phoebe discoveres their family's secret book, the Book of Shadows, and learns that they come from the most powerful witches ever to walk the earth, destined to protect innocents and the world from demons and warlocks. Thinking it's a joke or something she (Phoebe) reads an inscription from the book "activating" their powers.

Each sister gained a special power along with the ability to cast spells and brew potions. Prue, the eldest, had the power of telekinesis—the ability to move objects with her mind. This later evolved to the point of being able to astral

project, or move her astral form outside of her body. Piper, the middle sister, has the power to affect molecules, at first to slow them down until they stop, effectively "freezing" people/objects. As she grows more proficient, she can freeze only certain people or only certain objects or body parts as she wishes. Her powers grow to being able to make molecules move so fast that they explode. Phoebe, the youngest, initially possesses the power of premonition, which evolves into being able to receive visions of both the future and the past. She later picks up the powers of empathy (the ability to both sense and tap into others' emotions) and levitation. When Prue is killed in the Season 3 finale, Piper and Phoebe discover that they have a half-sister, Paige Matthews, who is the daughter of their mother and her Whitelighter. Paige's Whitelighter blood mixes with her witchcraft heritage to give her a form of telekinesis, though she has to verbally call for objects to "orb" them where she wants them. As she learns to control the dual sides of her ancestry, Paige also learns how to orb herself and others (the Whitelighter form of teleportation), and eventually she receives her own charges to train and protect as they learn witchcraft and develops the ability to heal others with the touch of her hand.

Although each sister is quite powerful in her own right, their powers are enhanced by their collective power, the Power of Three, said to be the most powerful magical force ever formed. Their powers are rooted in their bond as sisters, and it is their love for each other that makes them so strong.

During the first two seasons the sisters would face various evil beings from week to week. However, they discover that their true enemy is the Underworld's ruler, Source of All Evil. The Source is discovered to be behind all the attacks on the sisters and becomes the main villain during Season 4 until he is finally vanquished. After this a season long storyline was introduced and a good being/opponent along with it.

On top of the supernatural issues in *Charmed*, the characters had to contend with serious issues in the day-to-day world of the mortals, such as relationships, careers, marriage, childbirth, illness and the deaths of their loved ones. The sisters also had to fight to prevent the exposure of the existence of magic to the community at large, contending with several police and FBI investigations.

Characters

Main protagonists

- Prudence "Prue" Halliwell – (Shannen Doherty) (Seasons 1–3) 67 episodes (Including the unaired pilot)

Born October 28, 1970, Prue is the eldest sister. Born with telekinesis, she handles her power so well that she is often referred to as the "super-witch". She is strong-willed, feisty and intelligent, so she often takes charge of situations and has always been overprotective of her two sisters, Piper and Phoebe. Having spent her childhood taking care of her two younger sisters after the death of their mother, she feels responsible for them and shows a fierce determination at whatever she does, including fighting demons. This sense of responsibility occasionally leads to clashes with the more free-willed Phoebe, but the two grow closer as the series progresses. Though at times Prue lets pride dictate how she handles things, she never lets her personal life interfere with her work life. On May 17, 2001, three years into the craft, she is killed by Shax, a powerful demonic assassin sent by the Source of All Evil. While in the episode "Death Takes a Halliwell" the Angel of Death foreshadows Prue's death, the season-three finale, "All Hell Breaks Loose", remains as a cliffhanger. Prue's death is not established until the premiere episode of the fourth season, "Charmed Again", in which we begin the season with an anguished Piper trying to resurrect her spirit. Instead, the sisters' grandmother appears, telling her that Prue is safe and with their mother and that seeing her now would only hurt her chances at accepting that Prue was not going to come back. It is explained that (in the previous season's finale) before Tempus the demon reset time, Prue and Piper were both attacked by Shax and left near death. After Tempus turned back the clock, Phoebe was caught in the underworld and unable to intervene. She had been forced into the Underworld by The Source in exchange for Tempus' services. So unlike the first time, when Leo had arrived with barely enough time to save both of them, this time he rescued his wife, Piper, but was unable to

save Prue. Doherty never appears as Prue again, not even in family photos. In the fifth season episode "Cat House", during the "flashbacks" that the girls visit, only her back is shown, and also she is seen as a dog, when she was transformed in Season 3. Even in the afterlife, Prue is said to still help her sisters; it is suggested that she sometimes turns the pages of the Book of Shadows. In the season seven finale, Prue's influence is seen when her astral projection power is summoned via a spell by the sisters, which allows them to finally defeat Zankou,^[14] after which Piper says, "Thank you, Prue" when the power's effect has ended. Also, in the later seasons Prue's telekinetic 'jingle' can be heard whenever the front door of the manor closes by itself. The jingle sounds the same way it was heard when Prue herself would close the door with a wave of her finger in the first and second seasons.

- Piper Halliwell – (Holly Marie Combs) (Seasons 1–8) 179 episodes (Including the unaired pilot)

Born August 7, 1973, Piper is the middle child. Upon Prue's death, she becomes the eldest and most powerful sister. Her powers include the ability to freeze time, temporarily suspending objects, enemies and movement. At first, her powers were limited to the room or area she was currently in, but as the series progressed, her mastery over the power grew to much higher levels, allowing her to freeze and unfreeze specific parts of a person's body and on a much larger scale. Just as Piper was unable to freeze other good witches at first, by the end of the series she had gained the ability to do so, using her freezing power to stop Billie. Later, Piper's power grew to allow her to blow up objects at will (through molecular combustion) by rapidly speeding up the movement of atoms instead of slowing them to a stop, causing their molecular bonds to separate from one another, usually killing low level demons in one blast and often creating an accompanying fiery explosion. Although initially afraid to use this new and highly destructive power for fear of hurting someone, she eventually becomes skilled enough in the use of her new power to attack and injure enemies without making them explode if she chose, or to cause only a small break in an object's structural integrity, causing it to fall apart or crack without being completely combusted. Piper is the most concerned with having a normal life of the three, and always has reservations about her life as a Charmed One. When she becomes a Charmed One, she is quiet and reserved, often having to mediate between Prue and Phoebe. As the show progresses, she gains a stronger persona and takes more authority after Prue dies. She eventually becomes the mother of two sons Wyatt and Chris, with her husband Leo Wyatt, and goes to great lengths to protect her children, as Wyatt is believed to be the chosen child and many demons, warlocks and witches are after him. In the series finale, the final montage shows her with a daughter and later a granddaughter.^[15] Piper's love of food steers her to a culinary career, which leads her to open her own club, and as revealed in the last episode, her own restaurant. She is the best potion-maker among the Charmed Ones, an outgrowth of her abilities as a cook. Holly Marie Combs, portraying Piper, is the only cast member who appears in every episode of Charmed, including the original unaired pilot.

- Phoebe Halliwell – (Alyssa Milano) (Seasons 1–8) 178 episodes

Phoebe, born November 2, 1975 is the baby of the family and is a spontaneous, free-spirited young woman. She was born with the power of premonition, which enabled her to see into the past as well as the future, usually locating a demon in need of vanquishing or an innocent in need of saving. Her powers often served as the catalyst for that episode's mission. Her premonitions can usually only be accessed by making physical contact with an item or person that is somehow linked to the vision she experiences. Later, this ability allows her to project herself into the future and the past, which gives her a much more in-depth look at what is to come or what has already happened. Finally, after desiring for a long time that her powers would evolve and she would possess an "active power" (unlike the involuntary nature of her premonitions), Phoebe gains the power of levitation, which she often combines with her proficient martial arts skills and kickboxing. Later, she also gains the power of empathy, which allows her not only to feel the emotions of others, but also to copy the powers of someone attacking her (since the Charmed Ones' powers are directly linked to the emotions of those who use them). Then later, Phoebe loses access to all of her active powers (she keeps only her ability to cast

Power of Three spells and make potions), because she misused her abilities for personal gain. She later regains the power of premonition. She is a romantic, and becomes a successful columnist and author. For most of her life, she had a turbulent relationship with Prue, but the two eventually grew very close. After Prue's death, she becomes the middle sister. Her longest relationships are with Cole Turner, which lasted over 2 years and produced a son, but The Seer steals their son (to her own demise), and with Coop, a Cupid. In 2006, the Angel of Destiny marries Phoebe and Coop, as seen in the series finale, and they eventually have three daughters. She continues to work at the Bay Mirror and writes a book on finding love.

When the property was given a green light to go to series, actress Rom (from the pilot) was unavailable. Producer Aaron Spelling called Milano, fresh from her short-term guest appearance on *Melrose Place*, to fill the role. Major portions of the first episode were re-shot, some scenes rewritten and new scenes added to create a full one-hour debut episode titled "Something Wicca This Way Comes". Alyssa Milano is one of two main cast members (along with Holly Marie Combs) to have appeared in all of the aired episodes.

- Paige Matthews – (Rose McGowan) (Seasons 4–8) 112 episodes

Born on August 2, 1977, Paige is the youngest of the four and is the half-sister of Piper, Prue and Phoebe. She has Prue's power of telekinesis but with a twist because she is half whitelighter. She has the power to orb things to her. Prue only had to think about something to move it, Paige must reach out to it and call for it, this is known as 'tele-orbing'. She also has the Whitelighter abilities of Orbing and Glamouring (to shapeshift into a different human appearance). She finally receives the power to heal in the middle of season 8. After a secret love affair with her Whitelighter, Samuel Wilder, the Charmed Ones' mother, Patty Halliwell, gave birth to a fourth daughter. In fear of their daughter's safety and the legacy of the other sisters, the fourth daughter was orbited to a church and entrusted to the arms of a nun named Sister Agnes. She was told that the baby would be in great danger otherwise, and to be sure the baby's name begins with a "P". Sister Agnes, later in "*Charmed Again (Part 2)*", described what had happened to a troubled Paige, who was investigating her origin while being manipulated by the Source of All Evil. The nun told Paige she had come from "angels", because she had witnessed the parents appear in an orb of lights. As a baby, Paige was adopted by the Matthews family, and she grew up as an only child unaware of her magical roots. While in school, Paige often got into trouble. Her adoptive parents died in a car accident with Paige in the car. However, she closed her eyes and orbited out, which saved herself but not her parents. Paige had no memory of how she had survived, and she found out that she had orbited out of the car in the Season 4 episode "A Paige from the Past". Her personality is bold and vibrant, adding a new dynamic to the show from Season 4 onwards. Paige comes into the craft quickly, and aids in the vanquish of The Source of All Evil. She is driven to become a "full-time witch" and has a hard time finding a career. After the death of Gideon, Paige begs the Elders to keep Magic School open. They agree only if Paige becomes the headmistress and runs the school to guarantee the students' safety. Eventually, she resigns and hands the role over to her brother-in-law Leo Wyatt. Paige marries mortal parole officer Henry Mitchell, and they have twin daughters and a son, Henry Jr.

Supporting

- Leo Wyatt – (Brian Krause) (Recurring Seasons 1-2, Episode 13; Regular 2–8) 154 episodes

Leo Wyatt is the sisters' Whitelighter in the beginning, and soon becomes romantically involved with Piper but since he is a Whitelighter and Piper a witch, their relationship is rocky, with the Elders postponing their engagement until they can prove they can balance their careers and their relationship. Leo's magical promotions provide the show's portrayal of a supernatural ladder of success and struggle between career and family. His relationship with Piper is the first of many conflicts between the Halliwells and the Elders. He becomes the husband of Piper. In the later series Leo becomes an Avatar in order to save his family from the everlasting battle between good and evil, until he is made human again as a result of the Elders deciding he can no longer struggle being an Elder and Piper's husband without consequences. He is father to Wyatt

Halliwell, Chris Halliwell and Prudence Melinda Halliwell.

- Darryl Morris – (Dorian Gregory) (Seasons 1–7) 71 episodes

Morris was Trudeau's partner in Season 1 and takes over the role as the Halliwells' police connection after Trudeau's tragic death. He continues to cover up for the sisters once he learns their secret, even after the events which lead to him almost being executed through a lethal injection, if reluctantly, until his wife later forces him to move to the east coast. After almost being executed, he angrily lets it be known he wants nothing more do do with the Halliwells and refuses to talk to them, answer calls or help them get police files. However, he finds out the Charmed Ones were willing to give up their powers to save him and realizing how much good the sisters do for the community, Morris forgives them and he still considers them family.

- Cole Turner – (Julian McMahon) (Seasons 3–5, Guest Season 7) 57 episodes

Cole is a half-demon, half-human. He is a District Attorney (DA) and first meets and is seen on Season 3, Episode 1 where he defends a case for the Charmed Ones'. Cole and Phoebe fall in love and he later on reveals that he is Belthazor (his demon half) to Phoebe. Phoebe tells her sisters that she vanquished him, though she did not. Later on he comes back and they get married after time. He becomes the Source of All Evil and gets Phoebe pregnant. Phoebe eventually comes to her senses and vanquishes Cole for good with her sisters. Cole finds a way to come back but after an unpleasant welcoming, keeps his distance and watches secretly over Phoebe, unseen and unheard.

- Christopher Perry "Chris" Halliwell – (Drew Fuller) (Guest Seasons 5, 7 & 8, Regular Season 6) 25 episodes

Chris is Piper and Leo's second son. He came from the future to help defeat the Titans and save his elder brother Wyatt from turning evil. Originally using the alias Chris Perry, he served as the Charmed Ones' Whitelighter for most of Season 6 after Leo was promoted to Elder. Phoebe finds out Chris is actually Leo and Piper's younger son in The Legend of Sleepy Halliwell. His adult form dies at the hands of Gideon just before he is born. He later reappears twice, once in Someone to Witch Over Me and again in the series finale.

- Billie Jenkins – (Kaley Cuoco) (Season 8) 22 episodes

Billie is Paige's charge, and a student of the sisters for most of the show's final season, helping them to maintain their normal lives. At first overconfident in her abilities, her talents eventually rival those of the sisters. She spent most of the season trying to find her elder sister Christy, who had been kidnapped 15 years ago by demons. She does not know, however, that Christy has been turned evil under the demons' influence. After Christy briefly sways her to betray the Halliwells, Billie eventually sides with them in the series finale and is forced to kill her sister in self-defense.

- Andy Trudeau – (Ted King) (Season 1) 22 episodes

Trudeau is the sisters' childhood friend and Prue's love interest for years. In the episode "that 70s episode" a young Andy is seen in the manor. He serves as the sisters' initial connection to the police force once he learns of the girls' supernatural activities, as well as the first conflict between the girls' secret and normal lives. The demon Rodriguez kills Trudeau while he is trying to protect Prue in the finale of season one. Two years later, in the finale of season 3, Prue is killed by the demon Shax, and is assumingly reunited with Andy. In the unaired pilot, this character was portrayed by actor Chris Boyd.^[16]

- Dan Gordon – (Greg Vaughan) (Season 2) 18 episodes

Dan moves into the house next door with his niece, Jenny, and over time, falls in love with Piper. They date for a time. However, as much as Piper wants a normal relationship, Dan cannot take the place of Piper's first love, Leo. He later moves away, at the end of season two.

- Jenny Gordon - (Karis Paige Bryant) (Season 2) 4 episodes

Jenny moves into the house next door with her uncle, Dan. Her parents were overseas and left her in his care until she reunited with her parents later in season two.

Episodes

The series began its first season on October 7, 1998 and aired for eight years until its finale on May 21, 2006. During its eight seasons, 178 episodes were aired, making *Charmed* the longest running hour-long television series with all female leads.^[17] The series ended when its American network was shut down to merge into a new network station. Each season consists of 22 episodes with the exclusion of the fifth and sixth seasons which contain 23 episodes including their double-episode premiers and double-episode finales.

Specific *Charmed* episodes are detailed in the following by-season articles:

- Charmed (season 1) • Charmed (season 3) • Charmed (season 5) • Charmed (season 7)
- Charmed (season 2) • Charmed (season 4) • Charmed (season 6) • Charmed (season 8)

Reception

Critical reception

Critical reception of *Charmed* has been generally favorable. The *Entertainment Weekly* critic Karyn L. Barr, in her retrospective review of the first season, argued that "for seven seasons, the Halliwell sisters have charmed the pants off audiences with their wonderful Wiccan ways", labelling it as a "crafty cult classic".^[18]

Magically delicious the 1st, 3rd, and even 20th time ... this supernatural Spelling series remains spellbinding thanks to its proper balance of quirky humor [and] drama...die-hard and not-so-die-hard fans will still be charmed, I'm sure.

—*Entertainment Weekly*, January 31, 2005

During the first season, *EW* writer Ken Tucker, speaking on the comparisons between *Charmed* and rival series, argued: "spike-heeled where *Buffy* is fleet-footed, *Charmed* is *Charlie's Angels* with a Ouija board". As well as the show's action sequences—describing the Halliwells as "superheroes"—he notes that the series "plays up the stars' separate-but-equal charms" and admires both its "casting and pop-culture timing".^[19] *The Guardian* agrees with Alyssa Milano's description of *Charmed* as "perfect post-feminist girl-power", praising the balance between action and emotion as the "three sibling sorceresses know mischief, but are accessibly feminine".^[20] *EW* critic Gillian Flynn states that "the charm of *Charmed* is that it knows what it is: a guilty-pleasure fantasy", and gave credit to its mythology as well as the grounded characterisations of the sisters: "they call otherworldly beings 'dude' and get peeved over wondrous inconveniences".^[21]

During the third season, PopMatters' Michael Abernethy credited it as "more enjoyable than most shows in the good vs evil genre" largely due to the strength of the performers. He also recognised the use of humour in creating "unexpected turns in stock storylines [which are] more interesting than one might expect". The monster of the week format is frequent during the early-half of the series, however Abernethy states that, despite this, "the writers tend to explore the sibling dynamics to keep the show from growing redundant".^[22] Christel Loar, also of PopMatters, agrees that "episodes go beyond the demon-of-the-week formula to tap into the relationships of the characters and their...flaws. *Charmed*...succeeded by combining sisterhood with the supernatural". She also claims that the Halliwells' struggle for normal lives, "stability, and a sense of self is one of the reasons *Charmed* strikes such a chord with its viewers".^[23] Leigh H. Edwards, during the fourth season, asserts that the show effectively "explores some big questions (free will... who is running the universe)", whilst paying attention to domestic issues including sibling rivalry, absent parents and love troubles.^[24]

Reviewing the final season, *EW*'s Aubry D'Arminio asserted "A FITTING FINALE?... There's nothing like watching our witchy sisters kick evil's tail once and for all". She also described the lack of bonus features on the DVDs as "criminal considering it was TV's longest-running [all-female lead] show".^[25] In PopMatters' conclusion of the last season, Jon Langmead argued that the series' run had many appealing elements including "smart casting", and "an

attention to relationship drama that was smarter and more nuanced than it ever received credit for":^[26]

Largely because of its Aaron Spelling-pedigree, *Charmed* rarely got notice for, more often than not, being smarter and more entertaining than much of its competition. It never got the critical nods ... but *Charmed* had plenty to offer and was often much better than it needed to be.

—PopMatters, December 4, 2007

American ratings

Charmed proved to be a success early on, with the series' premiere episode "Something Wicca This Way Comes" pulling in more than 7.7 million viewers. The show was ranked the #1 rated show on The WB network (tied with *Dawson's Creek* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*) with an average of 5.5 million viewers per episode. The show was also extremely successful during its second season with an average of 4.8 million per episode and again tying with *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* for the #2 slot; during the show's third season, it again placed second, with an average of 4.9 million viewers per episode.

Season	Season premiere	Season finale	TV season	Viewer rank (#)	Network rank (#)	Viewers (in millions)
1	October 7, 1998	May 26, 1999	1998–1999	118 ^[27]	1	5.5
2	September 30, 1999	May 18, 2000	1999–2000	120 ^[28]	2	4.8
3	October 5, 2000	May 17, 2001	2000–2001	117 ^[29]	2	4.9
4	October 4, 2001	May 16, 2002	2001–2002	129 ^[30]	6	4.2
5	September 22, 2002	May 11, 2003	2002–2003	128 ^[31]	4	4.5
6	September 28, 2003	May 16, 2004	2003–2004	154 ^[32]	5	4.3
7	September 12, 2004	May 22, 2005	2004–2005	132 ^[33]	7	3.5
8	September 25, 2005	May 21, 2006	2005–2006	132 ^[34]	1	3.6
1–8	October 7, 1998	May 21, 2006	1998–2006	128	4	4.4

Awards and accolades

Charmed has gathered several awards and nominations.^[35] The series was nominated for four Saturn Awards during its run, including Best Network Television Series for its first season and two nominations for lead actress Shannen Doherty. Rose McGowan won a Family Television Award in 2005 for Favorite Sister, whilst co-star Alyssa Milano has been nominated for a Kids' Choice Award and Teen Choice Award. McGowan, after having also appeared in feature film *Grindhouse*, also won a Spike Award for Femme Fatale in 2007. *Charmed* won two ASCAP Awards for its music composers, Tim Truman and Jay Gruska, and has received recognition for its young actors, having been nominated for five Young Artist Awards, with guest star Alex Black winning once for his role in the fourth season episode "Lost and Bound". The series has also received further nominations from the International Horror Guild, TV Guide Awards, Teen Choice Awards, amongst others.

NAACP Image Awards, which honors African Americans, nominated Janice Cooke Leonard for an Outstanding Directing in a Dramatic Series award in 2006. *Charmed* has also been acknowledged abroad, having been nominated for a Spanish TP de Oro and having won a Cable Guide Award in the United Kingdom for Favorite Sci-Fi/Fantasy Series in 2001. Executive producer Aaron Spelling has also won several awards for his contribution to television, including a BAFTA for Excellence in Television, and a Producers Guild of America Lifetime Achievement Award.^[36]

In 2006, Spelling Television and series producer Brad Kern declared *Charmed* as the longest running hour-long series in television history featuring all female leads.^[4] [37] [38] [39] [40] The record applies only to hour-long television series with *multiple* female leads (*The Facts Of Life* being the longest running 30-minute show with all-female leads, and *Murder She Wrote* being the longest running hour-long show but with a singular female lead).^[4] Kern stated "It's a remarkable accomplishment... It's something we're all immensely proud of",^[4] whilst lead actress Rose McGowan described it as "a huge achievement".^[38]

In 2000, Cult TV Awards placed *Charmed* within its top 100 cult television series of the century at number forty-four.^[41] In 2007, AOL Television ranked each Charmed One within its top fifteen of the greatest witches in television history—Paige twelfth, Prue ninth, Phoebe seventh and Piper third.^[42] In 2008, the girls again appeared on AOL TV Squad's list of the 20 Top TV Witches, but Paige had moved to thirteenth, Prue had moved to tenth, and Phoebe and Piper remained at seventh and third respectively.^[43] Despite its longevity, a loyal following and critical acclaim, some of the stars of the show have claimed it was never promoted very extensively by The WB (especially in comparison to *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, which ran on the same network for five years). Just before the series finale, Combs said that they'd "never been treated that well" by The WB, and McGowan said that the network considered them its "ugly stepchild."^[44]

Distribution

Multimedia

Online

TNT has released full episodes of *Charmed* for viewing with their "DramaVision" video player on the network website.^[45] As of February 14, 2009, the new TheWB.com website (Web streaming successor to Warner Brothers or "The WB") TheWB.com did not offer the shows.

International syndication

Other countries where *Charmed* airs include the following:

International syndication

Country / Region	Name	Television Network	Dubbing / Subtitles
 Albania	<i>Shtrigat</i> (English: " <i>The Witches</i> ")	Digitalb	Albanian subtitles
 Argentina	<i>Charmed</i>	Sony Entertainment Television ^[46]	Spanish subtitles
 Austria	<i>Charmed – Zauberhafte Hexen</i> (English: " <i>Charmed – Magical Witches</i> ")	ORF1 ^[47] ProSieben Austria ^[48]	German
 Australia	<i>Charmed</i>	Sci Fi, ^[49] Austar, Foxtel, ^[50] Channel Ten, Fox Classics	None
 Belgium	<i>Charmed</i>	2BE ^[51]	Dutch subtitles
 Bosnia and Herzegovina	<i>Čini</i> (English: " <i>Spells</i> ")	Pink BH	Bosnian subtitles
 Brazil	<i>Charmed</i> (Liv and Sony Entertainment Television), <i>Jovens Bruxas</i> (English: " <i>Young Witches</i> ") (Band)	Sony Entertainment Television, ^[52] People+Arts, ^[53] Band	Portuguese subtitles (Liv and Sony Entertainment Television), Portuguese dubbing (Band)
 Brunei	<i>Charmed</i>	RTB TV3	None

	Bulgaria	<i>Чародейките</i> (English: "Charmed")	Diema ^[54]	Bulgarian
	Croatia	<i>Čarobnice</i> (English: "Sorceresses")	Nova TV	Croatian subtitles
	Cyprus	<i>Ot mágissoes tov Σαν Φρανσίσκο</i> (English: "The Witches of San Francisco")	Sigma TV ^[55]	Greek subtitles
	Czech Republic	<i>Čarodějky</i> (English: "Charmed")	Prima TV, Nova TV	Czech dubbing
	Denmark	<i>Heksene fra Warren Manor</i> (English: "The Witches from Warren Manor")	TV3 ^[56]	Danish subtitles
	Estonia	<i>Võluvägi</i> (English: "Witchcraft")	Kanal 11	Estonian subtitles
	Finland	<i>Siskoni on Noita</i> (English: "My Sister Is A Witch")	Nelonen	Finnish subtitles
	France	<i>Charmed</i>	Métropole 6, ^[57] Téva, W9.	French
	Germany	<i>Charmed – Zauberhafte Hexen</i> (English: "Charmed – Magical Witches")	ProSieben, ^[58] Kabel Eins, Sixx	German dubbing
	Greece	<i>Ot Mágissoes</i> (English: "The Witches")	Star Channel ^[59]	Greek subtitles
	Hong Kong	聖女魔咒	TVB Pearl	Chinese subtitles
	Hong Kong	<i>Charmed</i>	STAR TV World	None
	Hungary	<i>Bűbájos Boszorkák</i> (English: "Charming Witches")	TV2	Hungarian
	Iceland	<i>Heillanornir</i> (English: "Charming Witches")	SkjárEinn	Icelandic subtitles
	Indonesia	<i>Charmed</i>	JakTV	None
	Ireland	<i>Charmed</i>	TV3	None
	Israel	מְכֻשֶּׁפֶת (English: "Enchanted")	Channel 3	Hebrew subtitles
	Italy	<i>Streghe</i> (English: "Witches")	Fox, ^[60] Rai Due	Italian dubbing
Latin America	Latin America	<i>Charmed</i>	Sony Entertainment Television ^[61]	Spanish subtitles
	Lithuania	<i>San Francisko Raganos</i> (English: "Witches of San Francisco")	LNK, ^[62] TV1	Lithuanian dubbing
	Macedonia	Волшебнички (English: "Witches")	A1 ^[63]	Macedonian subtitles
	Malaysia	<i>Charmed</i>	TV3	None
	Mauritius	<i>Charmed</i>	McB 1	French
	Malta	<i>Charmed</i>	Living TV ^[64]	None
	Mexico	<i>Hechiceras</i> (English: "Witches")	XHGC 5	Spanish
	Netherlands	<i>Charmed</i>	NET 5 ^[65]	Dutch subtitles
	New Zealand	<i>Charmed</i>	Terrestrial: TV3 (first run) Cable: BOX (re-runs) Cable: Vibe (re-runs)	None
	Norway	<i>Charmed</i> (English:)	TV3 ^[66]	Norwegian subtitles
	Pakistan	<i>Charmed</i>	Star World	None
	Philippines	<i>Charmed</i>	Velvet, AXN Beyond	N/A
	Poland	<i>Czarodziejki</i> (English: "Witches")	Hallmark, Polsat ^[67] [68]	Polish

Portugal	<i>As Feiticeiras</i> (English: "The Witches")	AXN ^[69]	Portuguese subtitles
Puerto Rico	<i>Charmed</i> <i>Hechiceras</i> (English: "Sorcerers") – (2009–2010)	TNT (Seasons 1–8) WAPA (Seasons 1–8)	Spanish traductions
Russia	<i>Зачарованные</i> (Zacharovannyie Russian pronunciation: [zətər'rovənnijə], "Charmed")	STS	Russian dubbing
Singapore	<i>Charmed</i>	MediaCorp TV Channel 5	Chinese subtitles
Serbia	<i>Čari</i> (English: "Charms")	Fox	Serbian subtitles
Slovakia	<i>Čarodejnice</i> (English: "Witches")	Markíza ^[70]	Slovak dubbing
Slovenia	<i>Čaravnice</i> (English: "Witches")	Kanal A	Slovene
South Africa	<i>Charmed</i>	M-Net Series, SABC 3, SABC 1	None
Spain	<i>Embrujadas</i> (English: "Bewitched")	Telecinco (first running), Cuatro (re-running), Cosmopolitan ^[71]	Spanish dubbing
Sweden	<i>Förhåxad</i> (English: "Bewitched")	TV3	Swedish subtitles
Switzerland	<i>Charmed – Zauberhafte Hexen</i> (English: "Charmed – Magical Witches")	ProSieben Schweiz, SF2 ^[72]	German
Taiwan	<i>聖女魔咒</i> (English: "Divine Girls & Magical Spells")	Taiwan Television	Chinese subtitles
Thailand	N/A	True Series ^[73]	Thai subtitles
Turkey	<i>Charmed</i>	DiziMax ^[74]	Turkish
Saudi Arabia	<i>Charmed</i>	MBC 4 ^[75]	Arabic subtitles
Ukraine	<i>Всі жінки відьми</i> (Vsi zhinky vidmy), English: "All Women Are Witches")	1+1	Ukrainian dubbing
United Kingdom	<i>Charmed</i>	Terrestrial: Five (seasons 1–7), Channel 4 (season 8) Cable: Trouble, Living TV, ^[64] E4, CBS Drama	None
Vietnam	<i>Phép Thuật</i> (English: "Magic")	Terrestrial: VTV1, VTV3 Cable: VCTV7	Vietnamese dubbing

Spin-offs

Mermaid

Charmed's executive producers Brad Kern, Aaron Spelling and E. Duke Vincent developed a one-hour pilot episode for The WB Television Network in early 2005, entitled *Mermaid*. It was written by Kern and filmed in Miami during *Charmed's* seventh season, at the same time as "Something Wicca This Way Goes?".^[76] ^[77]

As work progressed on the fifth season's double-episode premier, "A Witch's Tail", the theme of mermaids was recognized to have potential for its own series,^[78] even though the episode was never meant to be a backdoor pilot for a television spin-off.

The series plot^[79] ^[80] is centred on a mermaid, Nikki, who is rescued by a young man when she washes ashore in Miami. Her savior, Matt Johnson, is a lawyer living with a roommate and engaged to the daughter of his boss. Initially, he is in utter disbelief of Nikki's nature, until it is proven true. According to the series mythology, mermaids

are a race of creatures whose evolution took place underwater. The mermaids originate from a sunken city and have supernatural abilities, including superhuman strength and agility, as well as being able to see in the dark, read emotions and have a connection with other sea creatures. However, another race of creatures who began their existence underwater, but have since adapted onto dry land, include Luger who is hunting Nikki. Nikki, meanwhile, attempts to enact a normal life by working as a waitress at a local restaurant while living with Matt and his roommate. She begins assisting Matt in his attempts to help people: as the villainous Luger assesses, mermaids are drawn to protecting the innocent, it's "in their blood".

During the casting process, Kern "looked in London and New York and New Zealand, Hollywood, Florida, Melbourne and Sydney" and, after interviewing around 300 people, discovered "a fresh new face" in Australian Nathalie Kelley who played the lead role of Nikki. Geoff Stults was then cast as Matt, and Roger Daltrey as principal antagonist Eric Luger.^[81] Brandon Quinn, who later went on to play Homeland Security Agent Murphy in *Charmed*'s eighth season, played Matt's "goofy best friend" in *Mermaid*.^[82] He spoke of his roles in both series:

[In *Mermaid*] I was the party man...in the pilot, I had no job; I was a permanent bachelor. And when Brad [Kern] told me about [Agent Murphy], he was, like, 'He's a Homeland Security agent, he's 180 degrees opposite from what you played in my pilot this year, but I really think you could do it.' And I was, like, 'Wow, thanks for trusting me with Agent Murphy.'

Additionally cast in main roles were Ana Ortiz^[83] (who went on to star in *Ugly Betty*) and Beatrice Rosen^[84] who, along with Quinn, developed a recurring role in *Charmed*'s eighth season as Maya Holmes, an innocent whose image Piper Halliwell inadvertently uses as her false identity 'Jenny Bennett'.

The pilot was considered to have a good chance of being picked up, but when The WB and UPN merged into The CW, the resulting network passed on the show. Speaking on the failure of the series to be picked up, Kern also revealed that the studio *20th Century Fox/Fox Entertainment Group* "decided at the last second to cut the budget in half", which resulted in the number of shooting days to be reduced, thus decreasing the quality of the pilot in being able to "sell" the concept".^[85]

Comic books

On March 15, 2010, Zenescope Entertainment announced that it had acquired the rights, from Fox Consumer Products, to publish comic books and graphic novels based on *Charmed*.^[86] ^[87] ^[88] Author Paul Ruditis was hired as lead writer of the project with Zenescope's Raven Gregory co-authoring with him for the first three issues. Dave Hoover was hired to do the interior artwork while David Seidman was hired as the series' main cover artist however many other artists will contribute various variant covers for the series.

The new series takes place roughly "a year and a half" after "Forever Charmed", to allow time for "Piper, Phoebe, and Paige time to have some of those kids we all saw in the flash-forwards during the series finale." Because "Forever Charmed" provided a "serene happy ending for the characters, not a great set up for continuing their story", Raven and Ruditis "address that on page one of issue one and then shake things up a bit." Familiar characters will appear in the first few issues, but the writers wish to try and strike a balance that does not alienate potential new reader.^[89] In the first issue we see that each sister is now living happily with their husbands and has entered into motherhood and while magic still plays a role in their lives, they are currently demon free and perusing other endeavours. Piper is hoping to finally open her own restaurant while Phoebe is preparing to return to work as an advice columnist after giving birth to her first daughter, Prue. Paige is still working as a whitelighter but is balancing that job with being a mother of two twin girls. However, the Charmed Ones must soon face up to the fact that their normal happy lives are about to be disturbed by the forces of evil when they discover that all of their past innocents are in danger.

The comic became an instant success with the first issue has sold out of its initial 17,000 copy print run in under three weeks and has mostly received mixed to positive reviews from critics and fans.

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