



Upfronts 2018: ABC to Launch 6 New Series This Fall

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Unlike NBC and Fox, which took the modest approach, ABC has announced a particularly aggressive fall 2018 primetime line-up. The alphabet net will feature six new series this fall - comedies *The Kids Are Alright* and *Single Parents*; dramas *The Rookie* and *A Million Little Things*; *Dancing With the Stars Juniors*; and talker *The Alec Baldwin Show*. The changes impact four nights of the week, excluding Monday, Thursday and Saturday.

In midseason, an additional four scripted series - dramas *The Fix*, *Grand Hotel* and *Whisky Cavalier*; and *The Goldbergs* spin-off *Schooled* - will be introduced. In total, that is 10 new series: five dramas, three comedies and two non-scripted for ABC in 2018-19.

Particularly ambitious is the return of the "TGIF" comedy brand care of the relocation of *Fresh Off the Boat* and *Speechless* in the Friday 8 p.m. hour, which will face sitcoms *Last Man Standing* and *The Cool Kids* on Fox. Those will lead into returning game show *Child Support*, hosted by Fred Savage and featuring Ricky Gervais.

Sunday, meanwhile, is a night of all non-scripted fare to compete with Sunday Night Football on NBC, including *Dancing With the Stars Juniors* at 8 p.m. out of

veteran America's Funniest Home Videos and The Alec Baldwin Show at 10 p.m. out of Shark Tank.

Returning in midseason will be American Idol and sophomore legal drama For the People, which will replace How to Get Away With Murder and keeps the night of all Shonda Rhimes-produced dramas intact. Summer 2019 will feature 13 new episodes of Marvel's Agents of SHIELD, which will take it into season six.

Current fare not returning next season includes fantasy drama Once Upon a Time and recently introduced dramas The Crossing and Deception. Sitcom The Middle concludes its nine-season run next Tuesday.

"We went into the development season placing an emphasis and a priority on family comedy, so that fact that Roseanne has resonated the way it has fits in well with the building blocks we already had in place," said ABC Entertainment President Channing Dungey at a press conference prior to unveiling the primetime schedule in New York City.

"We decided to go 'TGIF' again because we feel we have enough strong comedies to actually have comedy on three nights of the week. Our audience consistently has demonstrated to us they will take as much comedy as we can give them."

"The shows that work on broadcast tend to be the ones that families can watch together," added Dungey. And that includes comedy and alternative shows like Dancing With the Stars and American Idol."

The Reality

With Roseanne at the helm, the power and importance of the traditional linear platform has not been this visible in years, which for any broadcast network is certainly advantageous at upfront selling season.

Roseanne, of course, will be beneficial to new lead-out sitcom The Kids Are Alright, which all but guarantees sampling. And Roseanne, from a promotional standpoint, offers a solid way to showcase other new entries coming to the ABC schedule. But Roseanne, at present, has only 13 new episodes ordered for 2018-19. The network, in other words, will have to have a backup plan for midseason unless the cast agrees to additional episodes.

While re-introducing the "TGIF" brand on brand certainly sounds advantageous, let's not forget that just last year at this time the network cut its ties with Last Man Standing (and lead-out Dr. Ken) as a result of a deteriorating audience base. Both Fresh Off the Boat and Speechless are middle-level sitcoms at best and are unlikely to generate all that much interest.

Airing earlier in the week, Dancing With the Stars remains a critical ingredient

on the network's line-up, and now even more so, perhaps, given the arrival of long-delayed spin-off Dancing With the Stars Juniors on Sunday. But featuring an all- athletes edition in this current abbreviated season has been detrimental, resulting in double-digit percent losses from last fall and one year earlier.

Sitcom Modern Family, meanwhile, could also be ending next season, according to co-creators Steve Levitan and Christopher Lloyd, which only magnifies the importance of at least one of the new comedies resonating. And College Football on Saturday remains just a band-aid, with no broadcast network going to any great lengths to program the night.

No schedule in perfect, of course. Since the foundation of any successful line-up is a combination of returning hits and an ambitious slate of new series, you have to give ABC credit for trying. And you have to applaud that fictional clan called Conner for magnifying how relevant traditional TV can be at the time when it matters the most for ABC.

Here is the ABC primetime line-up this fall (with new series in caps), followed by the new series descriptions.

Monday

8:00 p.m. Dancing With the Stars

10:00 p.m. The Good Doctor

Tuesday

8:00 p.m. Roseanne

8:30 p.m. THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT

9:00 p.m. black-ish

9:30 p.m. Splitting Up Together

10:00 p.m. THE ROOKIE

Wednesday

8:00 p.m. The Goldbergs

8:30 p.m. American Housewife (new time)

9:00 p.m. Modern Family

9:30 p.m. SINGLE PARENTS

10:00 p.m. A MILLION LITTLE THINGS

Thursday

8:00 p.m. Grey's Anatomy

9:00 p.m. Station 19

10:00 p.m. How to Get Away With Murder

Friday

8:00 p.m. Fresh Off the Boat (new day and time)

8:30 p.m. Speechless (new day and time)

9:00 p.m. Child Support (new time)

10:00 p.m. 20/20

Saturday

8:00 p.m. Saturday Night Football

Sunday

7:00 p.m. America's Funniest Home Videos

8:00 p.m. DANCING WITH THE STARS JUNIORS

9:00 p.m. Shark Tank

10:00 p.m. THE ALEC BALDWIN SHOW

New Program Descriptions

Dramas

A Million Little Things

They say friendship isn't one big thing, it's a million little things; and that's true for a group of friends from Boston who bonded under unexpected circumstances. Some have achieved success, others are struggling in their careers and relationships, but all of them feel stuck in life. After one of them dies unexpectedly, it's just the wake-up call the others need to finally start living. Along the way, they discover that friends may be the one thing to save them from themselves.

A Million Little Things stars David Giuntoli as Eddie, Ron Livingston as Jon, Romany Malco as Rome, Allison Miller as Maggie, Christina Moses as Regina, Christina Ochoa as Ashley, James Roday as Gary, Stephanie Szostak as Delilah and Lizzy Greene as Sophie.

The Fix

Attorney and author Marcia Clark co-writes and executive produces a new legal drama about Maya Travis, an L.A. district attorney who suffers a devastating defeat when prosecuting an A-list actor for double murder. With her high-profile career derailed, she flees for a quieter life in Washington. Eight years later when this same celebrity is under suspicion for another murder, Maya Travis is lured back to the DA's office for another chance at justice. This legal thriller is executive produced/co-written by Clark, Liz Craft and Sarah Fain, and is from Mandeville TV and ABC Studios.

The Fix stars Robin Tunney as Maya Travis, Adam Rayner as Matthew Collier, Merrin Dungey as CJ, Breckin Meyer as Alan Wiest, Marc Blucas as Riv, Mouzam Makkar as Loni Kampoor, Alex Saxon as Gabriel Johnson, with Scott Cohen as Ezra Wolf and Adewale Akinnouye-Agbaje as Sevv Johnson.

Grand Hotel

Eva Longoria executive produces this drama set at the last family-owned hotel in multicultural Miami Beach. Charismatic Santiago Mendoza owns the hotel, while his glamorous second wife, Gigi, and their adult children enjoy the spoils of success. The hotel's loyal staff round out a contemporary, fresh take on an upstairs/downstairs story. Wealthy and beautiful guests bask in luxury, but scandals, escalating debt and explosive secrets hide beneath the picture-perfect exterior. The show is based on the Spanish series.

The series stars Demian Bichir as Santiago Mendoza, Roselyn Sanchez as Gigi Mendoza, Denyse Tontz as Alicia Mendoza, Bryan Craig as Javi Mendoza, Wendy Raquel Robinson as Mrs. P, Lincoln Younes as Danny, Shalim Ortiz as Mateo, Anne Winters as Ingrid, Chris Warren as Jason, Feliz Ramirez as Carolina and Justina Adorno as Yoli.

The Rookie

Starting over isn't easy, especially for small-town guy John Nolan who, after a life-altering incident, is pursuing his dream of being an LAPD officer. As the force's oldest rookie, he's met with skepticism from some higher-ups who see him as just a walking midlife crisis. If he can't keep up with the young cops and the criminals, he'll be risking lives including his own. But if he can use his life experience, determination and sense of humor to give him an edge, he may just become a success in this new chapter of his life.

The series stars Nathan Fillion as John Nolan, Alyssa Diaz as Angela Lopez,

Richard T. Jones as Sergeant Wade Grey, Titus Makin as Jackson West, Mercedes Mason as Captain Zoe Andersen, Melissa O'Neil as Lucy Chen, Afton Williamson as Talia Bishop and Eric Winter as Tim Bradford.

Whiskey Cavalier

Whiskey Cavalier is a high-octane, hour-long action dramedy that follows the adventures of tough but tender FBI super-agent Will Chase (codename: "Whiskey Cavalier"), played by Scott Foley. Following an emotional breakup, Chase is assigned to work with badass CIA operative Francesca "Frankie" Trowbridge (codename: "Fiery Tribune"), played by Lauren Cohan. Together, they lead an inter-agency team of flawed, funny and heroic spies who periodically save the world (and each other) while navigating the rocky roads of friendship, romance and office politics. The series is from writer/executive producer Dave Hemingson and executive producer Bill Lawrence with Warner Bros. Television.

The series stars Scott Foley as Will Chase, Lauren Cohan as Francesca "Frankie" Trowbridge, Ana Ortiz as Susan Sampson, Tyler James Williams as Edgar Standish and Vir Das as Jai Datta.

Comedy

The Kids Are Alright

Set in the 1970s, this ensemble comedy follows a traditional Irish-Catholic family, the Clearys, as they navigate big and small changes during one of America's most turbulent decades. In a working-class neighborhood outside Los Angeles, Mike and Peggy raise eight boisterous boys who live out their days with little supervision. The household is turned upside down when oldest son Lawrence returns home and announces he's quitting the seminary to go off and "save the world." Times are changing and this family will never be the same. There are 10 people, three bedrooms, one bathroom and everyone in it for themselves.

The series stars Michael Cudlitz as Mike Cleary, Mary McCormack as Peggy Cleary, Sam Straley as Lawrence, Caleb Martin Foote as Eddie, Sawyer Barth as Frank, Christopher Paul Richards as Joey, Jack Gore as Timmy, Andy Walken as William and Santino Barnard as Pat.

Schooled

This spinoff of The Goldbergs will be set in 1990-something and follow the teachers of William Penn Academy - led by Tim Meadows (Principal Glascott), Bryan Callen (Coach Mellor) and AJ Michalka (Lainey Lewis) - who, despite their eccentricities and crazy personal lives, are heroes to their students.

The story is by Marc Firek and Adam F. Goldberg in partnership with Sony

Pictures Television and ABC Studios. Goldberg, Firek and Doug Robinson executive producers.

Single Parents

This ensemble comedy follows a group of single parents as they lean on each other to help raise their 7-year-old kids and maintain some kind of personal lives outside of parenthood. The series begins when the group meets Will, a 30-something guy who's been so focused on raising his daughter that he's lost sight of who he is as a man. When the other single parents see just how far down the rabbit hole of PTA, parenting and princesses Will has gone, they band together to get him out in the dating world and make him realize that being a great parent doesn't mean sacrificing everything about your own identity.

The series stars Taran Killam as Will, Leighton Meester as Angie, Kimrie Lewis as Poppy, Jake Choi as Miggy, Marlow Barkley as Sophie, Tyler Wladis as Graham, Devin Trey Campbell as Rory, Grace Hazelett as Emma, Sadie Hazelett as Amy and Brad Garrett as Douglas.

Non-Scripted

Dancing With the Stars Juniors

Featuring both child celebrities as well as celebrities' children, this spin-off from Dancing with the Stars will pair its contestants with professional junior ballroom dancers. The duos will compete weekly to perform choreographed routines for a panel of judges.

The Alec Baldwin Show

Previewed in March, the one-hour show will showcase Baldwin's in-depth conversations with compelling personalities.