

top 50 tv theme songs uk

Top 50 TV Theme Songs UK: The Ultimate Playlist of Iconic Openers

When it comes to television, few elements leave a lasting impression quite like the opening theme song. In the UK, some of the most memorable TV theme tunes have become ingrained in popular culture, instantly recognizable and often associated with the shows they introduce. Whether you're a nostalgic viewer reminiscing about childhood favorites or a new fan discovering classic series, exploring the **top 50 TV theme songs UK** offers a fascinating journey through musical history and television legacy. From catchy tunes to heartfelt ballads, this list celebrates the most iconic and beloved theme songs that have defined UK television over the decades.

Why TV Theme Songs Matter

TV theme songs serve multiple purposes: they set the tone of the show, build anticipation, and create a sense of familiarity and emotional connection for viewers. An unforgettable theme can elevate a show's identity, making it instantly recognizable and enhancing viewer engagement. In the UK, many theme songs have transcended their original context, becoming cultural touchstones that evoke nostalgia and pride.

The Criteria for the Top 50 TV Theme Songs UK

To compile this list, several factors were considered:

- **Cultural Impact:** Has the song become iconic or widely recognized?
- **Memorability:** Is the tune catchy and easy to sing along with?
- **Longevity:** Has the song stood the test of time?
- **Association with the Show:** How well does the song represent the series' theme and tone?
- **Musical Quality:** Is the composition well-crafted and memorable?

Now, let's dive into the top 50 TV theme songs that have left an indelible mark on UK television history.

Top 50 TV Theme Songs UK

1. "Doctor Who" – Ron Grainer / Delia Derbyshire & Others

The quintessential sci-fi theme, recognized worldwide, with its iconic whirling soundscape.

2. "Only Fools and Horses" – John Sullivan & John Sullivan (Theme by John Sullivan)

A lively, upbeat tune that captures the humor and heart of the Trotters' adventures.

3. "EastEnders" – Simon May

A poignant piano-driven melody that has become synonymous with London's East End.

4. "Coronation Street" – Tony Warren & Eric Spear

The instantly recognizable tune that introduces Britain's longest-running soap.

5. "The Great British Bake Off" – Marc Ellison & The London Contemporary Orchestra

A warm, uplifting piece that evokes a cozy, communal atmosphere.

6. "The Office UK" – The Scrantones

A quirky, upbeat theme that reflects the show's dry humor and workplace satire.

7. "Blackadder" – Howard Goodall

A whimsical and humorous theme that perfectly matches the show's satirical tone.

8. "Absolutely Fabulous" – Pet Shop Boys

A catchy synth-pop tune with a sassy attitude, representing the show's bold humor.

9. "The Benny Hill Show" – Tony Hockley

A lively, humorous melody that complements the slapstick comedy.

10. "Dad's Army" – Dennis Wilson & David Croft

A nostalgic, military-style tune that captures the show's wartime setting.

11. "Fawlty Towers" – Dennis Wilson & Raymond Scott

A comedic theme with a lively, chaotic feel, mirroring Basil Fawlty's antics.

12. "Downton Abbey" – John Lunn

A regal, elegant melody that sets the tone for the period drama.

13. "The Avengers" – Laurie Johnson

A vibrant, jazz-inspired theme that epitomizes 1960s spy glamour.

14. "Absolutely Fabulous" – Pet Shop Boys

A stand-out synth-pop theme that became a cultural icon.

15. "Hollyoaks" – David Morgan

A lively pop tune that appeals to a younger audience.

16. "The Sweeney" – Harry South

A gritty, energetic jazz piece embodying London's police drama.

17. "Taggart" – Craig Armstrong

A haunting, atmospheric tune reflective of Glasgow's gritty crime stories.

18. "Call the Midwife" – Maurizio Malagnini

A warm, melodic piece evoking nostalgia and compassion.

19. "Vera" – Ben Bartlett

A suspenseful and atmospheric theme matching the detective series.

20. "The Bill" – Charlie Mole

A memorable police procedural theme with a steady rhythm.

21. "QI" – John Lloyd & David Tyler (Theme by Bill Bailey)

A quirky, whimsical tune matching the show's clever humor.

22. "The Great British Menu" – Colin Towns

An elegant, orchestral piece celebrating British cuisine.

23. "Peep Show" – Jenna Lee & Daniel Pemberton

A jazzy, slightly offbeat tune reflecting the show's dark humor.

24. "The Crystal Maze" – Ed Tudor-Pole & The Crystal Maze Theme

A lively, adventurous tune inspiring excitement.

25. "Young Doctors" – Tony Hingley

An upbeat, energetic theme capturing the medical drama's lively pace.

26. "MasterChef UK" – Bill Conti & others

A sophisticated, inspiring orchestral piece.

27. "The League of Gentlemen" – Joby Talbot

A quirky, slightly unsettling theme suited to the dark humor.

28. "Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway" – Ed

Sheeran & others

A fun, energetic tune perfect for entertainment.

29. "QI" – John Lloyd & David Tyler (Theme by Bill Bailey)

A whimsical and clever tune matching the show's tone.

30. "Gogglebox" – Channel 4

A laid-back, catchy tune that captures the essence of viewers watching TV.

31. "The Big Breakfast" – Pete Shelley

An upbeat, lively theme that heralded the early morning show.

32. "The Generation Game" – The Generation Game Theme

A cheerful, family-friendly tune.

33. "Ready Steady Cook" – The Wurzels

A fun, folk-inspired tune matching the show's lively vibe.

34. "The Jeremy Kyle Show" – Theme music by various artists

A straightforward, attention-grabbing tune.

35. "The Chase" – Marc Sylvan

A tense, dramatic theme fitting the quiz show's suspense.

36. "Celebrity Gogglebox" – Channel 4

A relaxed, humorous tune reflecting the show's casual tone.

37. "The Apprentice UK" – The Who's "Baba O'Riley" (used in promos)

An energetic rock anthem associated with ambition and competition.

38. "Countryfile" – John Lunn

A pastoral, uplifting melody evoking the British countryside.

39. "Pointless" – Marc Sylvan

A simple, catchy theme that emphasizes the quiz's cleverness.

40. "This Morning" – Various themes over the years

A friendly, welcoming tune that has evolved with the show.

41. "Antiques Roadshow" – Traditional orchestral theme

A refined, timeless melody.

42. "The Jonathan Ross Show" – Theme by various artists

A jazzy, upbeat tune suited for celebrity interviews.

43. "The Graham Norton Show" – Theme by David Arnold

A lively, energetic opening matching the show's lively atmosphere.

44. "The Great British Bake Off" – Marc Ellison

A heartwarming tune that's become synonymous with baking and camaraderie.

45. "QI" – Bill Bailey's quirky compositions

A playful, clever theme aligned with the show's humor.

46. "The Repair Shop" – Alexi Cranell

A gentle, restorative melody fitting the restorative nature of the series.

47. "Pointless" – Marc Sylvan

A minimalistic yet catchy tune that emphasizes the show's cleverness.

48. "The Chase" – Marc Sylvan

A tense, rhythmic theme that builds suspense.

49. "MasterChef UK" – Various orchestral themes over the years

A sophisticated, inspiring musical backdrop.

50. "Blue Peter" – Theme by David Hendricks

A cheerful, iconic tune reflecting childhood and creativity.