

## BBC Television Service/BBC One<sup>[edit]</sup>

### Pre-1969<sup>[edit]</sup>

Main article: [BBC One Pre-1969 Idents](#)



The first ident, "Television Symbol", "Angel's Wings", or the "Bat's Wings" (1953–1960)



The first incarnation of the globe, introduced in 1963 (1963–1964)

The original BBC Television Service was launched on 2 November 1936 and was taken off the air at the outbreak of war in September 1939, returning in June 1945. As the only public television service in Britain, and initially in the world, there was no need for a station ident in the early days. However, with the imminent arrival of commercial television in Britain, 2 December 1953 saw the arrival of the first ident, nicknamed the "Bat's Wings". This was an elaborate mechanical contraption constructed by Abram Games, which featured a tiny spinning globe in the centre, surrounded by two spinning "eyes", with lightning flashes to either side. Unlike later idents, this was filmed, rather than live. The model was temperamental, and broke down shortly after it was filmed.<sup>[u]</sup> By the early 1960s the "Bat's Wings" had been superseded by the "BBC tv" logo within a circle, beneath which would appear a map of Britain split into the BBC's broadcast regions.

The channel's most famous emblem, the globe, appeared in its first guise on 30 September 1963. The first such ident featured the continuity announcer speaking over a rotating globe while a "BBC tv" caption would appear with the announcement, "This is BBC Television" being made.

The launch of sister channel [BBC2](#) saw the channel renamed [BBC1](#) on 20 April 1964, although the name was not changed on-screen until the introduction of the "watch-strap" globe in 1966. The reason the change was delayed was due to coverage of BBC2 being limited; BBC1 remained "BBC tv" in the meantime.

### The Noddy System Mechanical Globe (1969–1985)<sup>[edit]</sup>

Main article: [Noddy \(camera\)](#)

**Commented [B1]:** This is important because it gives the full date of the arrival of the first ever TV ident.

**Commented [B2]:** Shows how the filming of idents have changed over time.



The "mirror globe" ident, the first ident in colour (1969–1974)



The next mirror globe using BBC1 in Futura Font by [Noddy \(camera\)](#) (1974-1981)



The final mirror globe using the twin-striped BBC1 legend (1981-1985)



The device used to create the image above

On 15 November 1969, BBC1 began transmitting in colour, and introduced the first version of the "mirror globe" ident. The word "Colour", identifying this new feature, was included in the station ident, and separate, more expensive colour [television licences](#) were offered. Originally, the mirror globe had a blue logo and landmasses to enhance the clarity of the image on black and white screens. In January 1972 the BBC1 ident was revised with the "Colour" identification being italicized. On 28 December 1974 the mirror globe was altered to a much friendlier blue and

yellow on a dark blue background and the BBC1 logo was changed to Futura Bold typeface. The "Colour" identification was removed from the name. The trailers around this time changed as well to incorporate the Double striped BBC1 logo, which would later become part of the next ident in 1981 when the mirror globe was revised.

The globe was changed once last time in 1981 to the double striped BBC1 logo, sitting below a lime green and blue globe on navy blue background. Also, the globe was repainted about this time, which resulted in South Africa having a pointed tip. The idents were generated by the Nexus Orthicon Display Device (abbreviated to NODD and pronounced "noddy"), which worked by filming an image in black and white and electronically adding colour before the image was aired. This made it very easy for technical crew to manipulate the colours of the image for whatever reason (like a logo revamp). This technique was also used on the clock and schools idents, which were also filmed in black and white by the same camera and had colour added later on. The camera would be set up looking at a bank of clocks, idents, globes and breakdown captions, and the camera could be turned to look at any of these idents. The black and blue mirror globe was recreated to introduce *Life on Mars* which itself is set in the 70's.

Up until now, a mechanical clock had always accompanied the globe.<sup>[nb.1]</sup> However, when BBC2 introduced their computerised ident, the technicians started working on an electronic clock to accompany the new looks. This was completed in 1982, and the design of the clock was changed for the first time in many years. The mechanical clocks had a "polo" mint centre with points around the clock face that increased in thickness as you went around the clock. The new electronic clocks had double line markers at 12, 3, 6 and 9, with single line markers everywhere else. The new clocks also had a single centre dot.<sup>[nb.2]</sup>

## The Computer Originated World (COW) (1985–1991)<sup>[edit]</sup>

Main article: [Computer Originated World](#)



In 1985, the first computer generated BBC One ident was introduced, the "Computer Originated World" (Feb 1985–Feb 1991)

By 1985, computer graphics technology had progressed sufficiently that on 18 February the mechanical mirror globe was retired in favour of the new "Computer Originated World", or 'COW', which showed a semi-transparent blue globe with golden continents and gold "BBC1".<sup>[2]</sup> It was created by the BBC graphics and computer departments with work starting on it in 1983, following the success of the electronic BBC2 ident and the clocks.<sup>[3]</sup> The globe was originally planned to launch on 1 January 1985 but was delayed until 18 February that year by the then

**Commented [B3]:** This shows that in the past idents have had to be filmed in black and white and later (whilst editing) colour is added to it. This shows how idents have progressed hugely over the years.

**Commented [B4]:** This shows the first ident created by the popular channel BBC1, this is important because it's the first visual representation of the channel's identity. The fact that it shows a world, suggests it is not country specific but instead gives information from all around the world.

controller of BBC One, [Michael Grade](#), in order to make part of a new look for the channel and a new evening lineup, including [Wogan](#) and [EastEnders](#), as ratings began to slide. From start-up until 6:00pm that evening, the older NODD mirror globe was used. From 7:00pm until [closedown](#) that night, the newer COW globe was used. The first programme to be introduced by this new globe was *Wogan*, a chat show presented by [Terry Wogan](#).<sup>[a]</sup> The COW globe went down well with the public, and changed the perception of the channel. Also, for the first time, Holding slides, trailers and promotions included the BBC1 golden logo, bringing the brand together. The COW globe also used the same clock face as before, with some changes.<sup>[ab]</sup><sup>[a]</sup> The colours had changed to a black background with blue counters and gold hands. The BBC1 was also included in the bottom. However, the centre dot was removed for some unknown reason, although it remained on the BBC1 Wales and Scotland clocks.

## The Computer Originated World (Virtual Globe) (1991–1997)<sup>[edit]</sup>

Main article: [BBC One 'Virtual Globe' ident](#)



The "Virtual globe", designed by the Lambie-Nairn branding agency (February 1991–October 1997)

The Computer Originated World was replaced on 16 February 1991 by a new virtual globe, designed by [Martin Lambie-Nairn](#)'s branding agency, [Lambie-Nairn](#), who had first made an impact with [Channel 4](#)'s original 1982 ident. The idents were computer generated and were played from modified Laserdisc players and had no soundtrack. The ident consisted of a figure "1" inside a rotating transparent globe surrounded by a swirling smokey atmosphere above the BBC's corporate logo – the bold italic letters B B C within three rhomboids, above blue red and green flashes.<sup>[a]</sup> The globe doesn't look instantly like one, but land masses can be seen in the globe and their shadows can be seen on the background of the ident. The idents were "unveiled" on that week's *Going Live!*, the Saturday morning magazine show on [Children's BBC](#) at the time, by [Phillip Schofield](#) and [Sarah Greene](#), although the globe already officially debuted before then. There was also a new clock that accompanied the new look which used GNAT (Generated Network Analogue Time). This clock mimicked the movement of an analogue clock, as the minute hand moved every second. The counters on the clock also changed, with alternating dashes and dots. The clock had no reference that it was BBC1, instead it had the BBC logo below the clock. The clock was modified in 1992 to a smaller size, so that the clock was the same size as the virtual globe ident.

## The Balloon (1997–2002)<sup>[edit]</sup>

**Commented [B5]:** Shows that the audience were impressed with the ident and it gave a true perception of the channel.

**Commented [B6]:** This shows that the idents were created using computer graphics.

Main article: [BBC One 'Balloon' idents](#)



The balloon over [Cley next the Sea](#) (1997–2002)

On 4 October 1997 the globe was dramatically updated when it left the computer to take the form of a [hot-air balloon](#) filmed over various landmarks throughout the UK (and occasionally appearing in other countries e.g. [over Sydney Harbour during the 2000 Summer Olympics](#)). The idents featured the new name of the channel: BBC One, renaming which continued across the rest of the BBC's channels, and also featured the new BBC corporate logo. The original set of idents were recorded on location, however in later versions the balloon was digitally added onto the location footage, as this was cheaper than filming the real balloon many times. Over the next two and a half years, no fewer than 59 different variations of the BBC One balloon ident were produced. From June 2000, the [URL](#) of the BBC's website, then known as BBC Online, was included in all BBC One and BBC Two idents. The globe idents also saw the introduction of Widescreen, including the first widescreen idents.

## Rhythm & Movement (2002–2006) [\[edit\]](#)

Main article: [BBC One 'Rhythm & Movement' idents](#)



The "Capoeira" and other idents are predecessor of the current ident, "Circles". It marked the departure of the globe that was used as BBC One's symbol for over 39 years. (2002–2006)

A change in controller at BBC One saw the balloon globe icon become the shortest-lived ident package of the colour television era. The new controller, Lorraine Heggessey, made no secret of her hate for the Balloon idents, as she believed them to be slow, dull and boring and believed that they said nothing about a channel. Because of this opinion, she ordered a review of the current branding. Because of this review, after 39 years, the globe style was replaced on 29 March 2002 by new idents featuring a new multicultural theme. The relaunch also saw a new logo for the channel based upon that of BBC Two, though the logo was instead the BBC logo and the word "ONE" below it within a red box. The box style later became a common style for the BBC's channels.

**Commented [B7]:** This shows how idents are changed to fit certain events. For example BBC used their ident to show how the countries unite during the Olympics by showing the current hot air balloon idea but changing the background to different places over the world.

The new idents were collaboratively called the ['Rhythm and Movement' idents](#) and featured dancers at various locations dancing to different musical styles. These proved to be hugely unpopular; some viewers accused the BBC of being overtly politically correct, as one of the idents involved disabled dancers in wheelchairs, while other viewers were dismayed that the longstanding globe motif had been abandoned after 39 years. This was also the first new presentation package not to include a clock though one had been designed — it had become difficult to transmit the time accurately, given the delay introduced by satellites and digital transmission.

### **Circles (2006–present)**[\[edit\]](#)

*Main article:* [BBC One 'Circle' idents](#)



The circle idents were introduced on 7 October 2006.

After four years, the idents were replaced themselves by [a new set](#) introduced on 7 October 2006, abandoning the overtly red colour scheme yet retaining the colour slightly less obviously as the main colour. The relaunch brought about a new channel logo once more with the box replaced in favour of a lowercase name, effectively appearing as "bbc one".

A circle motif now features as the main theme of the idents, while the content is much more diverse than previous: swimming [hippos](#), motorcycle stunt riders, children playing "[ring a roses](#)", lit windows, surfers, football players, the moon, kites, and a red arc circling the logo.<sup>[a]</sup> The first of the new idents shown was 'Kites', appearing at 9:58 BST on 7 October. According to former channel controller [Peter Fincham](#), the new circle motif is both a link to the classic globe icon used since 1963, and a 'nod' to the channel's heritage, as well as a symbol of unity, in the way the channel brings people together. The "Moon" and "Windows" idents were dropped in July 2008. On 2 May 2009, the circle idents were edited with shorter video sequences and new soundtracks (except "Hippos" and "Surfers").

As of 2016, this is the longest time [BBC One](#) has ever stayed with one era of idents without changing.

### **BBC Choice/BBC Three**[\[edit\]](#)

*Main article:* [BBC Three idents](#)

#### **BBC Choice**[\[edit\]](#)

**Commented [B8]:** This shows that when the TV ident lost the idea of the world, the audience did not like the change to the usual idents.

**Commented [B9]:** This shows that the channel listened to the audience's opinion on the ident involving wheelchairs, and changed it once again but to the idea of circles – which does show a similarity to the original world ident.



A former BBC Choice ident

[BBC Choice](#) was launched in 1998 as part of the [BBC's](#) aim of expanding into Digital TV. BBC Choice started out as being the home for programmes that would complement those being shown on BBC One and BBC Two. As a result of this, Lambie-Nairn - the branding agency who designed all the BBC Choice looks - used three different objects which all shared a common theme or word.

In July 2000, [BBC Choice's](#) remit was altered by the BBC to be aimed towards the young adult audience, and as a result the idents were changed. The new package featured one of the heart shapes at the centre of a brightly coloured screen, from which other heart shapes may form with different background colours inside.

In mid-2001, later on in the channel's life, the channel adopted the 3 orange boxes that would become infamous with the channel. These three orange boxes would be seen moving around an initially green, becoming blue a few months into the look, background.

At the time of the closure of [BBC Choice](#), and the adoption of [BBC Three](#), the idents were adapted once more. At first, the familiar orange boxes could be seen being demolished by a [wrecking ball](#) in the final months, and come December 2002, the whole identity was changed to a [building site](#), complete with two builders.

### **BBC Three**[\[edit\]](#)



One of the channel's "blobs"



One of the channel's idents from 2008-2013

**Commented [B10]:** BBC three changed their idents so they could be specifically appealing to their target audience of young adults. They used brighter colours because this appeals to younger people, they did this because the shows shown on the channel are most likely to interest young adults.



One of the channel's idents from 2013-2016



One of the latest idents, introduced in January 2016

The young-adult oriented [BBC Three](#) was launched on 9 February 2003, as the successor to [BBC Choice](#). The official launch night revealed the towering three-dimensional figure "THREE" populated by small [computer generated](#) "blobs", given voices from the [BBC Sound Archive](#). The channel logo featured a large slanted Three, below the BBC logo inside a box.

In 2008, BBC Three controller Danny Cohen unveiled a new brand for the channel, created by [Red Bee Media](#), and designed to emphasise its new focus on cross-platform programming. The idents were introduced on 12 February 2008. The BBC logo is viewed as a pipe with pink liquid passing through it, spelling out the 'three'.<sup>[15]</sup> These pipes, or pools of liquid are present in most of the idents, as are large objects that appeal to the young adult audience, or features technology such as television screens.

The new idents and presentation style were introduced on 1 October 2013, retaining the logo from 2008. The idents follow the theme of "discovery", and were designed by Claire Powell at Red Bee Media.<sup>[15]</sup> The soundtrack for the idents was composed by Chris Branch and Tom Haines at Brains & Hunch.<sup>[16]</sup> In 2016, the logo was changed to two pillars and an exclamation mark to promote its move to online only.

## CBBC<sup>[edit]</sup>

Main article: [CBBC idents](#)



Original Children's BBC logo, generated by the BBC Micro Computer.

**Commented [B11]:** This once again shows how BBC three alter their idents to become age specific.

**Commented [B12]:** This shows that idents can be used to give a message to viewers. BBC changed their logo from what usually is seen during idents to one which showed a pause sign – to send the message that this channel was now only available online.



[Shaun the Sheep](#) and [Timmy](#) appearing in one of the idents introduced in September 2007.

[CBBC](#) was originally launched as Children's BBC in September 1985 as a strand of programming for children aged 6–13. The first idents consisted of Children's on top of a large BBC in a similar style to a rushed scribble, generated live on air by a [BBC Micro](#) computer.

However, 2 years after launch, the idents were replaced by an animated sequence of the letters spelling out Children's with an outline of an object corresponding to that letter. This was replaced by a computer generated sequence in 1990.

**Commented [B13]:** They used animation of letters to attract children to the channel.

In 1991, the BBC corporate revamp meant that Children's BBC was given a makeover. The result was a logo centred on a stylised Children's with a corporate BBC logo at the bottom of the screen. In 1994, the Children's BBC idents changed in style; many featured cartoons or computer generated graphics where the stylised Children's and the BBC corporate logo would feature somewhere.

Children's BBC was officially renamed CBBC in October 1997, with the production of appropriate idents. The idents all had a yellow background, and black subjects and often in the cartoon style.

When CBBC was given its own channel on the digital terrestrial platform on 11 February 2002, the CBBC "blob" ident was created. These animated 'bugs' were designed by Lambie-Nairn, and were always green in colour. The blob was later refreshed and given a 3D appearance in 2005.

**Commented [B14]:** CBBC has used "cartoons" which signifies the type of programs shown on this channel and also interests the younger audience of children as they are able to interact with the cartoons in the idents.

CBBC relaunched again in the autumn of 2007, with a new logo revolving around the letters of CBBC, each in a different style. A new set of idents followed these up, revolving around scenes including each of the 4 letters before coming together at the end. These scenes could involve cartoon figures, or stars of current CBBC programmes. In 2010 the logo was updated to look more 3D. These idents were changed on 13 September 2014.

**Commented [B15]:** Cartoons from the actual programs are being used in the idents, this is especially appealing to children as it allows them to feel more connected to the characters they see in TV programs.

## [CBeebies/CBBC](#)<sup>[edit]</sup>

*Main article:* [CBBC idents](#)

[CBeebies](#) was launched on the same day as the CBBC Channel: 11 February 2002, with an original age range of pre-school children only. Following changes within the [BBC Children's](#) department, this changed to ages up to 6, with CBBC targeting ages 8 to 12.

The idents for the channel, designed by Lambie-Nairn, are the same as at launch and consist of yellow blobs, the opposite to the green blobs launched with the CBBC Channel with a much younger feel, as befits the target audience. The yellow blobs were also seen in BBC Kids' current idents. They directly oppose the CBBC blobs, as these blobs are gentle in their actions and to look at, whereas the green CBBC blobs looked more outgoing and violent - one of the CBBC idents at the time involved karate.

**Commented [B16]:** This shows how the channels have thought about which character's should be used for which age range. The fact they have identified the green blobs as sometimes being violent has prevented them from using it on the younger children's channel. This is a good example of how channels adapt their idents around the target audience.