GENERAL

what is the first in the walking dead series

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Introduction

When you ask the question **“what is the first in the walking dead series?”** you’re likely looking for a deeper understanding of the show’s origins, its initial narrative thrust, and the cultural moment that launched a phenomenon. The answer is both simple and rich: the first episode of The Walking Dead, titled *“Days Gone Bye,”* serves as the entry point into a post apocalyptic world where humanity’s struggle for survival is as complex as any drama on television.

In this comprehensive guide, we’ll explore the episode’s plot, characters, themes, and production details. We’ll also examine how the series’ premiere set the stage for a long running saga that has captivated millions worldwide. Whether you’re a new viewer planning to binge the show, a fan curious about its origins, or a researcher studying television history, this article will provide you with a clear, SEO friendly, and engaging overview of the very first part of The Walking Dead.

The Premise of The Walking Dead

The Walking Dead is a horror drama television series that premiered on AMC on October 31, 2010. Based on the comic book series created by Robert Kirkman, Tony Moore, and Charlie Adlard, the show follows a group of survivors in a world overrun by zombies—referred to as “walkers.” The narrative centers on their fight for survival, moral dilemmas, and the fragile bonds that hold them together.

Why the First Episode Matters

Every great television series begins with a hook that captures the audience’s attention, establishes the tone, and introduces key characters. The first episode of The Walking Dead does all of this while also setting up the overarching narrative that will unfold over multiple seasons. Understanding what makes the premiere special can deepen your appreciation for the series as a whole.

Episode Overview: “Days Gone Bye”

“Days Gone Bye” is the pilot episode of The Walking Dead and serves as the foundation for the entire franchise. It introduces viewers to the main protagonist, Rick Grimes, and his desperate search for his family in a world that has collapsed.

Key Details

- Air Date: October 31, 2010
- Runtime: 44 minutes
- Director: Frank Darabont
- Writer: Robert Kirkman
- Main Cast: Andrew Lincoln (Rick Grimes), Sarah Wayne Callies (Maggie Greene), Steven Yeun (Glenn Rhee), and many others

Plot Summary

The episode opens with a chilling scene in a deserted hospital, where a woman named Carol is left behind by a

group of survivors. The camera then cuts to a young woman—Maggie Greene—who is forced to confront the reality that her husband, her son, and her brother are all dead. The story quickly escalates into a frantic chase as Maggie is pursued by a group of walkers.

Meanwhile, in a small town, a sheriff named Rick Grimes awakens from a coma, only to find his world turned into a nightmare. He discovers that his wife, Lori, and son, Carl, are missing. Rick's journey to find his family becomes the central narrative thread, and he eventually encounters a small group of survivors led by a man named Shane.

The episode culminates in a dramatic showdown where Rick, having recovered from a bullet wound, confronts the walkers. The finale ends with a chilling revelation: the world has indeed ended, and humanity is left to fight for survival in a new, hostile reality.

Key Characters Introduced

"Days Gone Bye" introduces several pivotal characters whose arcs will shape the series. Understanding their motivations and relationships from the very beginning offers insight into the complex character dynamics that define the show.

Rick Grimes

Rick, portrayed by Andrew Lincoln, is a former sheriff's deputy who wakes up in a world overrun by walkers. His determination to find his family drives the plot and establishes him as the moral center of the group.

Maggie Greene

Maggie, played by Sarah Wayne Callies, is a resilient survivor who becomes the first major female character to be introduced. Her experience with loss and her fierce determination to protect her son, Daryl, set a tone for the series' focus on family and community.

Glenn Rhee

Glenn, portrayed by Steven Yeun, is a young, quick witted delivery boy who becomes a key member of the group. His resourcefulness and loyalty make him a fan favorite and a vital player in the show's narrative.

Shane Walsh

Shane, played by Jon Bernthal, is Rick's former partner and a complex antagonist. His character introduces early tension and moral ambiguity, hinting at the psychological challenges that will arise throughout the series.

Themes and Tone

The Walking Dead's first episode sets a dark, gritty tone that balances horror with human drama. Several themes are introduced early on, providing a foundation for the series' exploration of humanity in the face of catastrophe.

Survival vs. Humanity

The show juxtaposes the primal instinct to survive with the moral dilemmas that arise when society's rules no longer apply. Rick's decision to protect his family at all costs, even if it means confronting danger, exemplifies this theme.

Loss and Grief

Maggie's storyline showcases how individuals cope with loss. The episode portrays grief as a catalyst for action and a source of resilience, which becomes a recurring motif.

Hope Amidst Despair

Despite the bleak setting, the episode hints at the possibility of hope. The presence of other survivors, the discovery of a safe haven, and the determination of the characters suggest that humanity can still thrive.

Production and Direction

“Days Gone Bye” was directed by Frank Darabont, known for his work on The Shawshank Redemption and The Green Mile. His experience with character driven storytelling helped shape the episode’s narrative structure.

Filming Locations

- Georgia, USA – The primary filming location for the pilot, providing a realistic Southern U.S. backdrop.
- Harrison, Georgia – A small town that served as the setting for many of the early scenes.

Visual Style

The pilot's visual style is characterized by a muted color palette and practical effects. The use of natural lighting and minimal CGI lends authenticity to the post apocalyptic environment.

Soundtrack

The score, composed by Danny Elfman, incorporates a haunting, atmospheric tone that underscores the tension and emotional beats of the episode. The opening theme has become an iconic part of the series’ identity.

Cultural Impact of the Premiere

The first episode of The Walking Dead was not just a television event; it was a cultural phenomenon. The show’s premiere garnered over 10 million viewers in the United States, setting a record for a new series on AMC.

Audience Reception

Critics praised the pilot for its strong character development and tense storytelling. Viewers were drawn to the emotional depth and the raw portrayal of a world that had lost its order.

Influence on Television

By blending horror with deep character arcs, The Walking Dead influenced a wave of post apocalyptic and horror dramas. Series such as *Fear the Walking Dead*, *Black Sails*, and *The Last of Us* owe a debt to the narrative blueprint established by this premiere.

Merchandising and Spin offs

The success of the first episode paved the way for a wide range of merchandise, including action figures, apparel, and a popular video game series. Spin offs such as *The Walking Dead: World Beyond* and *Fear the Walking Dead* expanded the franchise’s universe.

How to Watch the First Episode Today

For viewers who want to experience the premiere in its original form or catch up on the series, there are several convenient options.

Streaming Platforms

- AMC+: The official streaming service for AMC, offering all seasons with ad free viewing.
- Hulu: Available in the United States with a subscription.
- Amazon Prime Video: Purchase or rent the entire series.

Physical Media

Season 1 is available on DVD and Blu ray, providing high quality video and bonus features such as behind the scenes footage and cast interviews.

International Availability

In many countries, the show is available on local streaming services. Check your region's streaming catalog or the official AMC website for licensing information.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the first episode of The Walking Dead? The first episode is titled "Days Gone Bye" and serves as the pilot for the series.
2. Who directed the first episode? Frank Darabont directed the pilot.
3. How many viewers watched the premiere? The premiere attracted over 10 million viewers in the U.S.
4. Where can I watch the first episode? It's available on AMC+, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, and on DVD/Blu ray.
5. What themes are introduced in the first episode? Themes of survival, loss, and hope are central to the pilot.

Conclusion

The question **"what is the first in the walking dead series?"**leads us to the pivotal episode that launched a television legacy. "Days Gone Bye" is more than a pilot; it is the cornerstone that built a world of complex characters, moral ambiguity, and relentless tension. By understanding the episode's narrative, themes, and impact, viewers can appreciate why The Walking Dead remains a touchstone in modern television. Whether you're revisiting the series or watching it for the first time, the premiere offers a powerful, immersive entry into a story that continues to resonate with audiences around the globe.

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