

## The Top 10 Doctor Who Episodes BBC America pole taken in 2013

At the time of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, there were an incredible 738 individual episodes of *Doctor Who*, making up a total 239 different stories. Unsurprisingly, then, over those five decades the fandom as a whole has tended to find it difficult to pin down exactly which is the undisputed “best episode.” The show means so many different things to so many different people, that the concept of a favorite episode can vary wildly depending on what a particular viewer actually looks for in the show. As such, while *Doctor Who Magazine* readers voted “The Caves of Androzani” as their number one story back in 2009, for the superfans polled in 2013 it didn’t even make the top 10. That’s not to say it isn’t highly-regarded—just that the range of choices were so varied that the tiniest margins could bump an episode up or down the list. Indeed, as many as 87 different episodes were nominated somewhere in the top fives of our jury.

### **10: *Inferno (classic Who)***

This eight part serial is the one time the classic series dabbled with the concept of alternative timelines, in this 1970 Third Doctor story by Don Houghton, it was such a definitive take that it proved difficult to return to this theme.

### **\*9: *The Empty Child/The Doctor Dances (“Everybody Lives!”)***

This two part episode holds a special place in the hearts of fans since it allows the ninth Doctor, so damaged by his experiences in the Time War, to actually glow with delight. In addition the story was the introduction of the iconic Captain Jack Harkness. It is hard to top this story for wit and delight.

### **8: *The Eleventh Hour (“fish fingers and custard”)***

Airing a mere four months after the departure of the phenomenally successful David Tennant, perhaps its greatest achievement was in taking so little time to make viewers stop missing the Tenth Doctor so very much. It didn’t try to top Tennant or completely turn against the new *Who* of the past few series. It was fun, self-contained, and brought a charm and fantasy that set the tone for Smith’s tenure.”

### **7: *Genesis of the Daleks (Classic Who)***

Routinely heralded as the classic series' finest hour (well, three hours), this Fourth Doctor tale from 1975 is arguably responsible for the Daleks' popularity continuing into successive decades. The tinpot terrors' original creator Terry Nation decided to go back and tell the story of their creation, in the process creating another villain whose name would echo through the ages: Davros, memorably played by Michael Wisher. The story was the closest exploration yet of Nation's underlying theme of the Daleks as a parallel to the Nazis, and placed the Doctor in a greater moral quandary than he'd ever faced before: could committing genocide by preventing the Daleks' creation ever serve a justifiable greater good?

### **6: *The End of Time ("I don't want to go.")***

After a four-year run that saw *Doctor Who* soar to unprecedented heights of popularity, just how was Russell T. Davies ever going to give David Tennant an adequate send-off? The answer was this two-part finale, broadcast over Christmas and New Year 2009, in which the outgoing showrunner threw everything plus the kitchen sink at the screen in a manner that exceeded even his usual standards: the resurrection of the Master, the return of the Time Lords, and touching farewells to every one of the Tenth Doctor's companions. And yet the Doctor survived it all, only to give up his Tenth life to save just one man.

### **5: *The Doctor's Wife: (Doctor "You never take me where I want to go!" TARDIS as Idris "No, but I always take you where you need to be.")***

Here was the story you could tell Neil Gaiman had been itching to tell his entire *Who*-watching life: the tale of what happens when the Doctor's favorite toy, oldest friend, life-long home and—yes, essentially—his "wife", comes to life and is able to hold a conversation with him. The sparky interplay between Matt Smith and an absolutely spellbinding Suranne Jones as Idris, the TARDIS made human, is a delight to behold, and it's rare to see something or someone that can make the Doctor feel the way his companions feel about him.

### **4: *City of Death (Classic Who)***

The most-watched *Doctor Who* story ever broadcast— is also one of its most idiosyncratic. Written by the legendary sci-fi author Douglas Adams, it's a ridiculously entertaining romp that takes the Fourth Doctor and companion Romana on an adventure through Paris. With its whimsical tone, it's one of the biggest influences on the revived series.

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**\*3: The Girl in the Fireplace**

*(“One may tolerate a world of demons for the sake of an angel.”)*

Despite what some would have you believe, romance and emotion have been part of *Doctor Who*’s genetic makeup since the very beginning. It took New Who, however, to really explore the concept of the Doctor falling in love in its most heartbreaking fashion. This 2006 episode is a story that places the concept of time travel right at its core. It shows that the Doctor—despite his alien origins, his magic box and his sonic screwdriver—is really just a man.”

**2: Human Nature/The Family of Blood (“ He’s like fire and ice . . .”)**

The Doctor changes into a human and falls in love, and suddenly has a future, which he then has to give up in order to save the day. It’s a story only *Doctor Who* could tell without being utterly preposterous. . . . and it is wonderful.

**\*1: Blink (“Don’t blink! Blink and you’re dead!”)**

Considered a “Doctor Light” episode, it was a time-bending curio that only features the Doctor for a few minutes—and most of those on a television screen—instead focusing on a young woman named Sally and her friend’s brother Larry as they attempt to solve the mystery at an old house. Winning Moffat his third Hugo award in a row, it became an instant fan-favorite. “Blink is essentially everything that is great about *Doctor Who* rolled into one. It’s clever, funny, scary and filled with great characters and writing.”

**Two 2016 English poles of the top 10 episodes  
From “New Who”**

**The Telegraph poll**

- 10: The Day of the Doctor**
- 9: Vincent and the Doctor**
- 8: The Waters of Mars
- 7: School Reunion
- 6: Dalek
- 5: Silence in the Library/+
- 4: Human Nature/+
- 3: Stolen Earth/+
- 2: The Empty Child/+**

**Radio Times poll**

- 10 : The End of Time (5.37%)
- 9: Silence in the Library/ + (6.09%)
- 8: Bad Wolf/Parting of The Ways (7.01%)
- 7: The Girl in the Fireplace (8.51%)**
- 6: Army of Ghosts/Doomsday (8.61%)
- 5: Empty child/ **Doctor Dances (9.99%)**
- 4: The Day of the Doctor (13.28%)**
- 3: The Stolen Earth/ + (13.3%)
- 2: Vincent & The Doctor (13.7%)**

**1: Blink**

**1: Blink (14.3%)**