5 SEASONS / 156 EPISODES / OCTOBER 1959 – JUNE 1964
Season 1: 36 Episodes Season 2: 29 Episodes Season 3: 37 Episodes
Season 4: 18 Episodes Season 5: 36 Episodes

The episodes in Seasons One through Three are 30 minutes long with commercials (24 or 25 minutes without commercials). Season Four (1962–63) consists of one-hour episodes with commercials (51 minutes without commercials). Season Five returned to the half-hour format.

Twilight Zone was off air after Season 3 but was reinstituted in the middle of the following year and replaced another show that was slotted for one-hour episodes. So TZ had to be make into one-hour episodes. When Season 3 ended, they went back to a 30-minute time slot. Many purists remember seeing the one-hour episodes and thinking it seemed like all they did was stretch a 30-minute show into a one-hour format by adding "filler" scenes (making scenes longer than they should be). Years later, in an interview with Rod Serling, he basically said that's what they did. Sounds familiar with today's shows! Too many filler scenes and commercials!

BTW … Serling has originally wanted to do the TZ as a 60-minute anthology. The first pilot "The Time Element" (or second pilot if you consider "The Happy Place" as the first) was 60-minutes long but CBS only had a 30-minute slot available for the new show when they decided to premiere it in 1959. Serling would later tell people he was glad they hadn't taken him up on his 60-minute format because he would not have been able to turn out the scripts for it. PS: Many fans consider the 4th season 60-minute format episodes some of the least appealing and interesting because they often seemed stretched out. The 30-minute format was ideal.

BEST WEBSITES FOR TWILIGHT ZONE RESEARCH

For detailed info about episodes:
https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0734599/?ref_=tt_ep_nx
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Twilight_Zone_(1959_TV_series)
https://www.twilightzonemuseum.com/
https://twilightzone.fandom.com/wiki/List_of_Twilight_Zone_(original_series)_episodes

For detailed info about Rod Serling: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rod_Serling
For info about the Rod Serling Foundation: https://rodserling.com/

978-18795-05094 The Twilight Zone Companion by Marc Scott Zicree
978-19489-86311 As I Knew Him: My Dad by Anne Serling [anneserling.com]
978-05259-35506 Serling: The Rise & Twilight of TV's Last Angry Man by Gordon Sander

QUOTES BY ROD SERLING

"There is nothing in the dark that isn't there when the lights are on."
— Rod Serling

"There is a fifth dimension beyond that which is known to man ... a dimension as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow, between science and superstition, and it lies between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge. This is the dimension of imagination."
— Rod Serling

"This highway leads to the shadowy tip of reality: you're on a through route to the land of the different, the bizarre, the unexplainable...go as far as you like on this road. Its limits are only those of mind itself. Ladies and Gentlemen, you're entering the wondrous dimension of imagination. Next stop—The Twilight Zone."
— Rod Serling

"Fantasy is the impossible made probable. Science Fiction is the improbable made possible."
— Rod Serling

ANOTHER TV SERIES BY ROD SERLING

Night Gallery, created and written by Rod Serling, is an American anthology television series that aired on NBC from December 16, 1970 to May 27, 1973 and featured stories of horror and the macabre. Old episodes are still available on YouTube TV. Rod Serling's Night Gallery is a horror anthology series that explores various genres, including fantasy, drama, crime, mystery, and comedy. While Night Gallery may not live up to the greatness of The Twilight Zone, it offers a fun glimpse into Serling's foray into classic horror tropes. Night Gallery is an American anthology television series that aired on NBC from December 16, 1970, to May 27, 1973, featuring stories of horror and the macabre. Rod Serling, who had gained fame from an earlier series, The Twilight Zone, served both as the on-air host of Night Gallery and as a major contributor of scripts, although he did not have the same control of content and tone as he had on The Twilight Zone.[3][2] Serling viewed Night Gallery as a logical extension of The Twilight Zone, but while both series shared an interest in thought-provoking dark fantasy, more of Zone's offerings were science fiction while Night Gallery focused on horrors of the supernatural.

SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE TWILIGHT ZONE

For the first few episodes, the narrative for the title sequence was originally recorded and worded as follows:

> "There is a sixth dimension beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow, and it lies between the pit of man's fears and the sunlight of his

knowledge. This is the dimension of imagination. It is an area that might be called The Twilight Zone."

Later it was re-recorded and the words were changed thusly:

"There is a fifth dimension beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space and timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow, between science and superstition, and it lies between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge. This is the dimension of imagination. It is an area we call The Twilight Zone."

THE GENESIS OF THE TWILIGHT ZONE

Hardly any viewers tuning in to the Westinghouse Desilu Playhouse that night were aware of this, but Serling had written his first version of this time-traveling tale seven years earlier. But although he considered it one of the best things he had written at that point in his short career, his agent couldn't sell it to any of the national networks. It wound up being aired in 1951 as an episode of a series called "The Storm," which could be viewed only in and around Cincinnati, where Serling then lived. Then in 1954, he produced it for NBC radio as an episode of "It Can Happen to You."

Fast forward to 1957, and Serling is then a hot property. Thanks to his Emmy-winning work on live teleplays such as "Patterns," "Requiem for a Heavyweight," and "The Comedian," he's working with CBS television to produce a series that would be known as, yes, The Twilight Zone. And he's trying to come up with a pilot episode they like, which wasn't as easy as you might think. In fact, no fewer than three other ideas had been proposed and not come to fruition for various reasons before Serling pulled "The Time Element" out of the files, expanded his 30-minute script to an hour-long script, and submitted THAT to the network as a pilot for The Twilight Zone. CBS bought it — yay! — then put it on the shelf.

No one really knows what will-be-a-hit until and unless it somehow manages to come out and … becomes a hit. So how did "The Time Element" manage to see the light of day? Because three men believed in it. Serling, Bert Granet, and Desi Arnaz.

I'm sure I don't have to tell anybody reading this who Desi Arnaz is, but Granet's job in 1958 was producing episodes of Desi's show – the aforementioned "Desilu Playhouse." So, he's always looking for scripts – hopefully good ones by top writers – and Rod Serling is certainly a top writer. Granet gets his hands on "The Time Element," and he likes it.

CBS, however, was very discouraging. As Granet later put it: "The network people and the agency people didn't like unfinished stories, like 'The Time Element', which left the audience hanging. I can't tell you how much they didn't want to do it."

Yet Granet, with the considerable clout of Desi Arnaz supporting him, prevails. But he must agree to never propose this kind of story again, and he can't use the phrase "the Twilight Zone"

anywhere in connection to it, because CBS was still in negotiations with Serling to come up with a series by that name that they both could agree on.

So, the stars finally aligned, and on November 24, 1958, "The Time Element" airs, its fill-in-the-blanks ending intact. Desi even came in at the end and offered his own explanation:

"We wonder if Pete Jenson did go back in time, or if he ever existed. My personal answer is that the doctor had seen Jenson's picture at the bar some time before and had a dream.

Viewers obviously agreed. Favorable letters poured in – more than any other Desilu Playhouse production. It was clear that audiences were ready for an adult, sophisticated treatment of fantasy and sci-fi, making Serling's job selling his vision for The Twilight Zone to CBS easier. Barely 11 months later, The Twilight Zone debuted, bringing us the story of a confused Air Force pilot named Mike Ferris. But Mike and the rest of us owe a little debt as well to Pete Jenson, who gave us our first foray, into the fifth dimension.

Desilu Studios
Founded and co-owned by Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, Desilu Studios was the production hub for the groundbreaking series I Love Lucy and other beloved television shows such as:

Ben Casy	Gomer Pyle	Lassie
Mission: Impossible	My Favorite Martian	My Three Sons
Star Trek	The Bing Crosby Show	The Danny Thomas Show
The Dick Van Dyke Show	The Joey Bishop Show	The Twilight Zone

Desilu programming boldly pushed social and cultural boundaries, and the studio innovated production processes and technologies that altered the course of entertainment history. During its peak in the late 1950s, Desilu Studios was the largest and most prolific television operation in the world.

After their 1960 divorce, in 1962 Lucille Ball bought Desi Arnaz's interest in the company and became the first woman to preside over a Hollywood studio. Her leadership successfully steered Desilu Studios into the evolving media landscape of the 1960s. In the late 1970's, Desilu became part of Paramount Studios.

The Lucy & Desi Museum and National Comedy Center, located in Jamestown NY, celebrates Desilu's industry-changing approach to television production and the incredible behind-the-scenes story of Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz's visionary leadership. Jamestown is where Lucy was born and raised until she left for NYC when she was 15 to study drama and modeling. The Museum is about 75 miles southwest of Buffalo near the PA border.

What the Audience Liked About the Show:
Perhaps the most important element of The Twilight Zone is that each episode turns on an essential truth about humanity. People can be prideful or judgmental, but that comes with a cost.

Awareness is good, but paranoia is destructive. Coming out of the same era as The Addams Family, The Mary Tyler Moore Show and other upbeat sitcoms, The Twilight Zone was shockingly dour because of its message that people do adhere to the better aspects of their nature, but not all the time. This realism still resonates with viewers to this day. There was always something just a little bit off in each episode. Something not natural or normal that compelled viewers to pay attention and guess where the story was going to take them. And there was always a sense of apprehension that was both disturbing and mesmerizing at the same time. The Twilight Zone challenged societal norms through sci-fi tales, tackling themes like racism and xenophobia. Rod Serling's groundbreaking shows balanced horror and social commentary, paving the way for future genre storytelling. And everywhere you look, there are people basically trying to present something which is too good to be true, and The Twilight Zone told us very early, be wary of anything that's too good to be true. If it looks too good, it probably is too good. Which still holds true today.

Why the Name:
The name for the TV show 'The Twilight Zone' comes from the phrase "twilight zone", which has scientific roots and has been used to describe the difference between reality and fantasy. The phrase originated in the early 1900s. "The Twilight Zone is actually a term Serling borrowed from the U.S. military. Serling, who served as a U.S. Army paratrooper in World War II, an experience that marked many of the stories he went on to write, knew it referred to the moment a plane comes down and cannot view the horizon. It is still an actual term used by U.S. Air Force pilots when crossing the day and night sides above the world. Rod Serling had heard of this phrase and liked how it sounded — so he used it. Today the term "twilight zone" refers to a state of mind between reality and fantasy, or a vague uncertain condition or state.

While it has been almost 70 years since the debut of The Twilight Zone, its scariest stories still hold up today. Here they are based on IMDB

10 "The Masks" (S-5, Ep-25)	5 "The New Exhibit" (S-4, Ep-13)
9 "Nightmare at 20,000 Feet" (S-5, Ep-5)	4 "The After Hours" (S-1, Ep-34)
8 "You Drive" (S-5, Ep-14)	3 "Night Call" (S-5, Ep-19)
7 "Nightmare as A Child" (S-1, Ep-29)	2 "The Dummy" (S-3, Ep-33)
6 "Nothing in the Dark" (S-3, Ep-16)	1 "Living Doll" (S-5, Ep-6)

And the Twelve Best Episodes as Rated by Fandom

12 "A Stop at Willoughby" (S-1, Ep-30)	6 "Living Doll" (S-5, Ep-6)
11 "The Shelter" (S-3, Ep-3)	5 "Time Enough at Last" (S-1, Ep-8)
10 "The Obsolete Man" (S-2, Ep-29)	4 "The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street" (S-1, Ep-22)
9 "The Masks" (S-5, Ep-25)	3 "To Serve Man" (S-3, E-24)
8 "It's a Good Life" (S-3, Ep-8)	2 "Nightmare at 20,000 Feet" (S-5, E-3)
7 "Will the Real Martian Please Stand Up?" (S-2, Ep-28)	1 "Eye of the Beholder" (S-2, Ep-6)