

# History of the bbc's idents assignment



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For this assignment I will be talking about the history of the BBC's idents throughout the years since the channel was first broadcasted and also why they changed. Station identification is the practice of radio or television stations or networks identifying themselves on air, typically by means of a call sign or brand name (sometimes known, particularly in the United States, as a " sounder" or " stinger", more generally as a station or network ident).

Over-the-air (OTA) transmitters may be required by a governmental licensing authority to identify themselves at regular intervals; this requirement can apply to any form of transmission over the radio spectrum by any means, not merely mass-media audio or video broadcasters. Non-OTA broadcasters, such as cable or pay TV networks, may also practice regular identification as a form of branding. History of the BBC ONE Idents Since the launch of the channel in 1964, BBC ONE has seen nine different incarnations of the on-screen identity. 1964 - The first ident was a continuation of the BBC-tv ident of 1963.

It featured the globe on a white background. The original ident had a BBC-tv logo. This was changed to just BBC when the channel was launched. 1966 - While the BBC 1 ident symbol remained, a " watch-strap" globe was introduced in 1964, showing the globe in the middle of a striped band. In 1968, the channel converted to colour - the globe and BBC 1 logo remained. 1969 - The first colour ident was introduced. A blue and black mechanical globe rotated while a curved mirror placed behind made up the famous image. 1972 - The globe and colour scheme remained the same, but a rounder, italic font was used for the ident introduced in 1972. 1978 - A new blue and yellow globe was introduced. The colour was added using

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electronics and a new big bold font was introduced. 1981 – A colour change was made to the globe – yellow became green. The caption also changed to a double line version (similar to the BBC 2 logo of the time). 1985 – The new rotating gold and blue BBC 1 globe was introduced. Called COW, for Computer Originated World, it was the first time that BBC 1 had abandoned mechanical models and still slides and used a completely computer generated image. 1991 – The COW globe was replaced with a new on-screen image designed by Lambie-Nairn (who worked on the Nine O'Clock News ident). The design was a swirling world of shadows and reflections. 1997 – The new style BBC ONE ident and logo was dominated by the red and yellow globe balloon. The balloon was filmed flying over 10 different British locations. BBC ONE today (Tuesday 26 March) unveiled a new, energetic and vibrant on-screen look which puts it firmly in step with contemporary life. The new channel idents explore the universal theme of rhythm, dance and movement through different activities, moods and world cultures.

From the power and grace of a Brazilian dance to the raw energy of a festival, from the high elegance of ballet to the speed and agility of basketball players, the idents bring a new feel to BBC ONE. Shot on location around the UK, the films capture stunning urban and rural backdrops and subtly use red, the channel's vibrant colour identity, to match a new on screen logo. The films will also have a common musical theme, but each individual ident will have its own arrangement of the theme to reflect the specific idents.

The original BBC Television Service launched in November 1936 and was taken off the air at the outbreak of war in September 1939, returning in June

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1946. 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. 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. On 15 November 1969, BBC1 began transmitting in colour, and introduced the first version of the “mirror globe” ident (this style was often used within Monty Python’s Flying Circus).

The inclusion of the word " colour" in the station ident could be viewed as a subtle reminder to the vast majority of viewers, still watching in black and white, to buy a colour TV set and the much more expensive colour television licence which financed the BBC. The " mirror globe" ident was revised in 1972 to use a more ornate font, from the mid-1970s to mid-1980s the BBC1 ident comprised various fonts reading ' BBC1' below variations on the mirror globe, with a deep blue background.

The idents were generated by the Nexus Orthicon Display Device, or NODD for short, 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) and meant black and white cameras could easily swing to photograph a different picture with the touch of a button. This particular ident was recreated to introduce the second series of Life on Mars.

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". It was created by the BBC graphics and computer departments with work starting on it in 1983. The globe was originally planned to launch on 1 January 1985 but was delayed until 18 February that year by the then controller of BBC One, Michael Grade, in order to make part of a new look for the channel 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 ever programme to be introduced by this new globe was Wogan, a chat show presented by Terry Wogan. The Computer Originated World was replaced on 16 February 1991 by a new ' Virtual globe', designed by the Lambie-Nairn branding agency who had first made an impact with Channel 4's original 1982 ident.

The idents which were computer generated and had no soundtrack 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. The idents were " unveiled" on that week's Going Live! , the Saturday morning magazine show on Children's BBC at the time, by Philip Schofield and Sarah Greene, although the globe already officially debuted before then.

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 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. 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 BBC Online, later [bbc. co. uk](http://bbc.co.uk) was included in all BBC One and BBC Two idents. A change in controller at BBC One saw the balloon globe icon become the shortest-lived ident package of the colour

television era. 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. 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 accused the BBC of being politically correct regarding some of the dancers involved: disabled dancers in wheelchairs on a basketball court, while fans of the globe and traditionalists were dismayed that the longstanding motif had left the BBC 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. 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 as well as kites. The first of the new idents shown was '

Kites', appearing at 10: 00 BST on 7 October. According to former channel controller Peter Fincham, the new circle motif is both a ' nod' to the channel's heritage as well as a symbol of people coming together, in the way the channel brings people together. On 2nd May 2009, the circle idents were edited with shorter video sequences and new soundtracks.