

Compare contrast of
two and a half men



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The popular television show, Two and a Half Men, has been on the air for just under a solid ten years. Even after ten years, and a complete main character change, it is still one of the most watched and beloved shows on television today. Most would argue, including myself, that the original version starring Charlie Sheen was much better than the current version, starring Ashton Kutcher.

Both are very funny and have attempted to keep to the same “womanizing” main character, though the original pulled it off with much more success. The show was originally about a “pleasure-seeking” jingle writer, Charlie Harper, his uptight brother, Alan, and Alan's growing son, Jake. Charlie's laid back life becomes complicated when his brother gets divorced and moves in, along with Jake, to Charlie's beach-front Malibu house.

The Harper brothers Charlie and Alan are almost opposites but form a great team for comedy. They have little in common except their dislike for their dull, emotionless, and dominant mother, Evelyn. Alan, a compulsively neat chiropractor and control-freak, is thrown out by his manipulative wife Judith who nevertheless gets him to pay for everything and do most jobs in the house. Charlie is a freelance jingle composer and irresistible bachelor who lives in a luxurious beach-house and rarely gets up before noon.

Charlie “temporarily” allows Alan and his son Jake, a food-obsessed, lazy school kid who constantly moves between his parents, to move in with them after Alan's separation/divorce. The sitcom revolves around their conflicting lifestyles, raising Jake (who has the competent, caring dad while having a ball with his fun-loving uncle who teaches him the fun way to live), and bantering with Evelyn and various other friends and family.

Other fairly regular characters include Charlie's cleaning lady Berta, who is the sarcastic and sharp-tongued character who merely does nothing more than insult almost every other character unfortunate enough to cross her path (while completely ignoring her actual job), and his rich, self-confessed stalker neighbor Rose who often sneaks in to spy on Charlie and induce havoc into his already screwy life. Charlie's love life is a recurring theme in his character. He is an alcoholic womanizer who has engaged in decades of frequent one-night stands, prostitutes, casual sex, and "relationships" of short duration, in stark contrast to his rother Alan's inability to bring in much female attention. Even though Charlie usually never calls any of his partners again after he had sex with them, there are a few relationships on the show that lasted longer than one night, notably his neighbor Rose, who continues to stalk him after they spent one night together, and Jake's balletteacher Mia, whom Charlie was actually in love with, and almost married in Las Vegas. He usually dated much younger women. Alan is almost the complete opposite of Charlie. He had been divorced twice over the series, and is notably seen as socially awkward with any woman he comes into contact with.

Alan is essentially a leech on Charlie's life, as he was only supposed to stay with Charlie for a short amount of time, that was ten seasons ago. Recently, though, Alan has managed to keep one person tied down and hold a steady, healthy relationship with. This person is Lyndsey MacElroy, who is actually a mother of one of Jake's stoner friends. At the end of season eight, Charlie leaves in pursuit of Rose, who he admits he loves, to Paris. At the beginning of season nine, it is revealed that Charlie died in Paris, because he "fell" in

front of a train (it is widely believed that Rose murdered him because he cheated on her, a lot).

Enter: Walden Schmidt. Now begins the more recent version of the series. Charlie Harper is dead, and Alan and Berta must now move out of the fabulous beach-house and have no idea where to go. Schmidt is introduced to the series as a billionaire internet entrepreneur who has recently been divorced and is now suicidal. After unsuccessfully attempting suicide, he turns up at Charlie Harper's beach house and decides to buy it from Charlie's brother, Alan, to whom Charlie has left the house in his will, after dying in France. Alan has to put the house up for sale as he is unable to afford the mortgage payments and property tax.

While Alan is speaking with Charlie's ashes and trying to decide where to spread them, Walden suddenly appears on the house's back deck, scaring Alan and causing him to drop the ashes on the living room floor. When Alan lets Walden in so he can use the telephone, Walden reveals he has just tried to commit suicide by drowning in the ocean. He tells Alan that he is worth \$1.3 billion, but would give it all up to reconcile with his wife Bridget, from whom he had recently separated. Walden and Alan then proceed to bond at the local bar, where Walden tells Alan that he made his money when Microsoft purchased his website. At the end of the episode Walden tells Alan that he is going to buy the house. This is fantastic news for Alan, as he now no longer has to move, Berta can be rehired, and a surrogate family has now been formed. Walden is a hopeless romantic and has had many failed relationships, ranging from divorce and breakups to rejection of marriage proposals. Walden's ex-wife describes him as "having the emotional

maturity of a 12-year-old", and she, his housekeeper Berta and his girlfriend Zoey have all described him as needy.

However, he drives a Fisker Karma as he cares about the environment, and does not believe in lending money, as it is never repaid and leads to resentment of the person to whom the money is lent; instead he prefers to just give it away. He does not like the taste of alcohol and so does not drink much. When Walden met Alan Harper, the two almost instantly formed a friendship. Walden is very generous, which Alan uses to his advantage, such as when Alan's ex-wife Judith drops off their son Jake, and Alan convinces Walden to allow Jake to stay. Despite events such as this, Alan does demonstrate genuine concern for Walden.

When Walden discovers that his imaginary childhood gorilla friend, "Magilla", was real, and was part of an experiment being conducted by his mother, he becomes very upset, as he thought of Magilla as a brother. Alan climbs a roof to console him, telling him that he knows what it's like to lose a brother. Walden knows that Alan is poor and has offered him money, but Alan refuses because he wants Walden to see him as a friend, rather than a freeloader. From this point on Alan and Jake have fully moved in and Walden considers them family, refusing to kick Alan out of the beach-house, though knowing that he is quite the leech.

While there has been much change to the popular television show over the years, it has managed to sustain a fresh comedy to most viewers and appears as if it could continue airing for the next ten years also. The show is now very different, since the introduction of Ashton Kutcher replacing Charlie Sheen as the main character. But it continues to maintain the viewers,

ratings, and new ideas that make a good show great. Comparatively, the older seasons are better than the newer, but the newer are certainly getting the job done.