

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

THE FUTURE OF ENTERTAINMENT

FROM MOVIES TO VIRTUAL REALITY

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INTRODUCTION

THE CHANGING FACE OF ENTERTAINMENT

How did people entertain themselves 100 years ago? They read books or played board games. People played instruments or listened to music on record players. Hollywood was making the first full-length movies, which were black and white and silent. You could only watch them in a theater.

Movies with sound started in 1927. By the late 1920s to the early 1930s, people gathered around radios to hear actors perform stories. The first televisions went on sale in 1939. Full-color movies were common by the 1940s. Over time, TV and movie images got sharper. Color became more realistic.

Many people got their first home computers in the 1980s. Computers brought new types of games. The first computer games were simple. Players batted a ball or tried to shoot at a very simple spaceship.



In the 1930s and 1940s, family entertainment included books, games, and listening to the radio.

FACT

The first computer game was created for the 1940 World's Fair. People competed with the computer to pick up sticks. The computer won 90 percent of the games.

Over time, computers got better, smaller, and less expensive. Now they are in our phones and watches. Computer games are more complex. The internet brings us videos and games in seconds.

What might the future of entertainment hold? Futurists attempt to answer that question. **Futures studies** is the study of possible and probable future **scenarios**. This is not simply guessing. Experts in the field consider many factors. They look at history to learn from the past. They consider current beliefs people have. They ask what people want to happen. They look at what is possible now and what may be possible soon.

In entertainment, a few things have stayed the same—people like stories, music, and games. The future probably won't change that. Today we enjoy stories in the form of books, movies, TV shows, and plays. We listen to music live or on electronic devices. We can play board games, video games, and sports. In the future, there will likely be even more ways we can make and enjoy stories and games.



Who would have predicted 100 years ago that people would one day read books on computerized e-readers?

FACT

In 1948, Americans could watch TV shows from four companies on four channels. Today there are far more than 1,000 channels.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS JUST AHEAD?

Television is one form of entertainment that has changed a lot. Early TVs were small boxes that showed images in black and white. The first color TV sets were sold in 1954. They had 15-inch (38-centimeter) screens and cost more than \$1,000.

Since then, screens keep getting bigger, and their images get sharper. One new TV from Samsung is 12 feet (3.6 meters) wide. It can be made in any shape or size.

Sound has gotten better too. **Three-dimensional** (3-D) sound systems bring sound similar to that of movie theaters to your home. The speakers are aimed at different parts of the room. They can imitate a plane flying overhead. Most people don't yet have giant screens with 3-D sound systems. But every few years, screens get a little bigger, and sound gets better.

THE WALL



TV designs have changed a lot, from clunky box sets to Samsung's new customizable flat screen, "The Wall."



TUBES TO CRYSTALS

Early TVs were more than 1 foot (30 cm) thick. They were filled with tubes, wires, and speakers. These things turned the TV signal into sound and pictures. The 1990s brought flat-screen TVs that were less than 4 inches (10-cm) thick. They used liquid crystals instead of tubes.