

America Has Chosen Their Favorite Scary Movie

Thousands of Americans have voted and chosen their favorite horror movies, franchises and subgenres.

DRAPER, UT, UNITED STATES, October 29, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Shock Horror! [CableTV.com](https://www.CableTV.com) Survey Names "Halloween" (1978) America's Favorite Scary Movie in 2025

New nationwide polling also crowns "Halloween" as the top horror franchise and confirms slasher as the leading subgenre among U.S. fans

CableTV.com released national survey results identifying Americans' current favorites across horror films, franchises, and subgenres. Based on more than 7,500 responses to CableTV.com's seasonal Thrilltarnship application survey, the 2025 analysis names John Carpenter's Halloween (1978) as the country's favorite scary movie and places the Halloween series at the top of the franchise rankings. Slasher leads the subgenre field, ahead of paranormal/supernatural and psychological horror.

The goal was to capture what's top of mind for U.S. viewers right now during the Halloween season, and the snapshot is clear. Halloween (1978) takes the crown, with Scream (1996) close behind. A Nightmare on Elm Street (1984), Friday the 13th (1980), and The Texas Chain Saw Massacre (1974) round out the top five. The rest of the top ten blends touchstones with modern favorites: The Exorcist (1973), IT (2017), Child's Play (1988), The Conjuring (2013), and The Shining (1980).



Halloween ranked #1 among all scary movies.



CableTV.com Logo

The list continues with Sinister (2012), The Evil Dead (1981), Hereditary (2018), The Silence of the Lambs (1991), Insidious (2010), Pet Sematary (1989), Poltergeist (1982), and Jaws (1975), a lineup that blends legacy fixtures with more recent crowd favorites.

The franchise board tells a similar story. Halloween ranks first, followed by Scream, A Nightmare on Elm Street, Friday the 13th, and The Texas Chainsaw Massacre. Child’s Play and The Conjuring sit close behind, with Terrifier, Saw, The Evil Dead, and Insidious also appearing among the most-cited series. The overlap between top films and top franchises helps explain the subgenre outcome: slashers dominate, while paranormal/supernatural and psychological horror remain strong.

Halloween’s staying power—nearly five decades after its debut—speaks to atmosphere, music, and an instantly recognizable antagonist. The Michael Myers mythology, reinforced by sequels and seasonal rotation, continues to define how viewers think about on-screen fear. Across the ranking, human-scale threats and mask-and-blade iconography keep the focus on tension, build, and payoff—hallmarks that make slashers easy to revisit and easy to recommend.

Rank	America's Favorite Horror Movies	America's Favorite Horror Franchises	America's Favorite Horror Subgenres
1	Halloween (1978)	Halloween	Slasher
2	Scream (1996)	Scream	Paranormal/supernatural
3	A Nightmare on Elm Street (1984)	A Nightmare on Elm Street	Psychological horror
4	Friday the 13th (1980)	Friday the 13th	Gore/body horror
5	The Texas Chain Saw Massacre (1974)	The Texas Chainsaw Massacre	Found footage
6	The Exorcist (1973)	Child's Play	—
7	IT (2017)	The Conjuring	—
8	Child's Play (1988)	Terrifier	—
9	The Conjuring (2013)	Saw	—
10	The Shining (1980)	The Evil Dead	—
11	Terrifier (2016)	Insidious	—
12	Saw (2004)	—	—
13	Sinister (2012)	—	—
14	The Evil Dead (1981)	—	—
15	Hereditary (2018)	—	—
16	The Silence of the Lambs (1991)	—	—
17	Insidious (2010)	—	—
18	Pet Sematary (1989)	—	—
19	Poltergeist (1982)	—	—
20	Jaws (1975)	—	—

List of America's Favorite Horror Movies, Franchises and Subgenres.

“

Americans appear to love Halloween so much that, in our survey, the 13-film series is also the country’s favorite horror franchise!”
Randy Harward

Scream’s second-place finish points to a taste for horror that plays fair with the audience and still pulls the rug. It’s a movie that winks at the rulebook—don’t split up, don’t say “who’s there”—while using those same rules to wind the tension tighter. The conceit welcomes newcomers with familiar beats and rewards long-time fans with in-jokes, genre trivia, and the satisfaction of spotting setups before the mask drops. Ghostface’s rotating identity keeps the mystery fresh from film to film, and the prank-call

menace—voice on the phone, knife at the door—remains simple, portable, and endlessly remixable. Regular sequels and reboots help keep the icon in circulation, so the series stays easy to recall and easy to program for group watch nights. That combination—self-awareness, clean set pieces, and a killer who can be anyone—gives Scream unusual staying power in a crowded canon.

A Nightmare on Elm Street and Friday the 13th, at third and fourth, demonstrate the appeal of

simple premises sharpened by unforgettable villains. Freddy Krueger and Jason Voorhees continue to anchor expectations around setting, escalation, and ritual—key ingredients for group watch nights and annual marathons. The Texas Chain Saw Massacre, in fifth, trades polish for grit, using documentary-style immediacy to intensify dread.

Titles in the middle of the ranking show the breadth of what horror can be. The Exorcist remains possession cinema's reference point. IT channels a well-known novel into contemporary blockbuster horror. Child's Play reframes the killer-figure trope through the lens of the uncanny toy. The Conjuring organizes a broader universe around case-file storytelling. The Shining leans on psychological unease and exacting craft. Sinister taps into cursed-media lore and home-shot aesthetics, while The Evil Dead showcases kinetic, practical-effects mayhem that bridges splatter and the supernatural. Hereditary brings domestic grief into dialogue with occult horror; The Silence of the Lambs demonstrates how psychological terror can cross into awards territory without losing its bite. Insidious highlights haunted-space narratives built for set-piece jolts. Pet Sematary and Poltergeist turn ordinary suburban life into a staging ground for the uncanny. And Jaws—often classed as a thriller—reminds readers how monster-movie tension helped invent the summer event template. Together, these films show how possession, hauntings, cursed objects, and predatory threats cycle through new styles without losing their draw.

Subgenre results track with those patterns. Slasher leads, backed by the prominence of related films and franchises. Paranormal/supernatural and psychological horror follow, signaling a parallel appetite for mood, pacing, and character focus. Gore/body horror and found footage appear further down the list—vivid niches that surge when the right title breaks through. The overall takeaway: mainstream engagement remains anchored in slashers, with room for other modes to spike as new releases and reappraisals surface.

Films such as The Evil Dead and Hereditary trace a line from practical-effects bravado to modern, slow-burn dread, while category straddlers such as The Silence of the Lambs and Jaws demonstrate permeability between thriller and horror. The result is an audience-driven canon that respects theatrical milestones and embraces streaming-era discoveries.

The franchise results reinforce that view by spotlighting worlds built to endure. Halloween benefits from a central figure who doubles as a seasonal emblem. Scream stays current by reflecting how viewers read the genre. A Nightmare on Elm Street and Friday the 13th keep their momentum through mythic contours and episodic flexibility. The Texas Chainsaw Massacre retains tactile menace that directors continue to reinterpret. Familiarity, reboots, and character-led marketing remain reliable engines of attention. Beyond those leaders, Child's Play demonstrates how a singular voice—equal parts menace and mordant humor—can sustain reinvention across formats, while The Conjuring organizes its appeal around case files that branch into satellites without losing a central tone. Saw exemplifies the puzzle-box model in which ritual structure and moral calculus invite ongoing speculation, and Insidious shows how haunted-house frameworks evolve through new settings and family configurations. The Evil Dead underscores the draw of kinetic craft, from practical effects to cabin-in-the-woods containment that travels well to fresh casts and eras. Terrifier's rise illustrates how niche

intensity can graduate to broader awareness when an antagonist's silhouette and staging become instantly legible. Across these series, IP shorthand—masks, glove blades, chainsaws, doll faces, audio motifs—does much of the connective work, making recognition immediate in feeds, thumbnails, and trailer cuts. Anthology tendencies, rotating ensembles, and periodic continuity resets provide on-ramps for newcomers while rewarding long-time followers with callbacks and lore. Together, these traits explain why perennial franchises occupy the top tier: each offers a stable grammar of fear that can be tuned to contemporary tastes without breaking the brand.

Methodology

The analysis reflects more than 7,500 survey responses associated with CableTV.com's 2025 Thrillternship application. Mentions of individual films, franchises, and iconic characters were counted to determine film and franchise rankings. Subgenre rankings were determined by mentions, frequency of appearance, and the popularity of films within each category. Because responses were collected in connection with a seasonal audience engagement initiative, results are intended to capture current fan sentiment around horror titles and modes rather than to project box-office forecasts or demographic segmentations.

The holidays are just around the corner and CableTV is coming together with DIRECTV for something big! If you like holiday movies, money, Christmas cheer and cozy blankets - follow us online and on social. An official announcement is coming soon!

Read the full 2025 survey results, including the ranked lists of America's favorite horror movies, franchises, and subgenres at CableTV.com: <https://www.cabletv.com/horror/horror-movie-survey>

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