# F1 Fans May Have Activated an Apple TV Free Trial to Access Early Season Races

*Samba analysis shows steep viewership decline, but new engaged fans watching for longer periods of time*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, August 25, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Formula 1's U.S. viewership is down in its first season on Apple TV following a network switch, according to the latest data from Samba, the global leader in media intelligence

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> *Samba's vice president of measurement science Alyson Sprague*

As reported in USA TODAY, household viewership reach for eight of nine F1 races has declined since the 2025 season, when F1 was broadcast on ESPN. Some races, including the Miami Grand Prix and Monaco Grand Prix, saw viewership decline by more than 65%.

Early season races in Australia (-4%) and China (-1%) saw small declines, while viewership for the Japanese Grand Prix held steady viewership year-over-year. This indicates that F1 fans may have begun a new subscription and then cancelled.

"One hypothesis our team has for this finding is that F1 fans may have activated an Apple TV free trial to be able to access the F1 race," Samba's vice president of measurement science Alyson Sprague said to USA TODAY. "But that they didn't find enough value in the trial to continue on as a paid customer."

While overall F1 viewership is down, there are positive signs. Apple TV is pulling in new F1 fans, not just recycling ESPN's old audience, as 61% of 2026 viewers watched none of these races in 2025, and 30% hadn't used Apple TV at all in the second half of 2025.

This suggests that the move to Apple TV has expanded F1's fan base and garnered interest from new audiences. These viewers are also more engaged, watching almost twice as long and across more races (2.6 vs. 1.9) than the 2025 audience.

Read the full story in USA TODAY:
https://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/motor/formula1/2026/08/22/formula-1-viewership-apple-tv-espn/91379790007/

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