

A QUESTION OF QUIZZES

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dock10

Following the huge success of the *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire* specials earlier this year, ITV has announced the return of the series that will once again be filmed in The Studios at dock10. Since the earliest days of television, audiences have been captivated by quiz shows and they have become phenomenally popular. Along with *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*, dock10 is also home to *Mastermind*, *A Question Of Sport*, *University Challenge* and *Countdown*, as well as *The Question Jury*, *The 100K Drop*, and the popular spinoff *8 Out Of 10 Cats Does Countdown*. In fact, there is rarely a week when a quiz not being made here.

The very first television quiz Spelling Bee, was created in 1938, barely a year after the BBC began regular broadcasts. Despite a less than glitzy format that saw contestants spelling words against the clock, Spelling Bee proved very popular and the quiz show was born.

Quizzes have become a firm favourite of TV programming with an array of exciting formats emerging over the decades. And with all quiz shows built around the basic challenge of answering questions correctly, for eighty years audiences have been shouting answers at the screen, while contestants defend their mistakes with the all too true statement: "It's a lot easier at home!"

Here are some fun facts about five iconic quiz shows made at dock10.

1 ***Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*** is the most successful UK format export, licensed to at least 107 territories around the world. There have been five £1,000,000 winners and twice contestants have suffered the greatest loss on a UK game show - losing £218,000 on a £250,000 question. They still went home with £32,000 though!

2 ***Countdown*** is based on a French quiz show format *Des Chiffres et Des Lettres* (Numbers and Letters) and was the very first programme to be broadcast on Channel 4. It is credited with more episodes than any other quiz show—nearly 7,000 (and counting)! It doesn't happen often, but when someone discovers a nine-letter word in one of the normal letters games, they receive double points and the whole set flashes!

3 On ***University Challenge***, the teams actually sit side by side with a split screen giving the appearance of a tiered set. *University Challenge* claims to be the longest running quiz show in the world, though *A Question of Sport* also has a claim depending on how it is measured. Jeremy Paxman has a pile of 'easy' starter questions to help the action going if the teams are floundering. The highest ever score was 520 points by University College, Oxford in 1987.

4 ***A Question Of Sport*** was first recorded in 1970 in an old Methodist church in Dickinson Road, Manchester - then the BBC's North West studios. Sports stars often say they know they have 'made it' when they are invited to appear, with Steve Davis racking up the most with 18 guest appearances. For the 700th edition of the show, a compilation of Mystery Guests was shown as a special round, but embarrassingly footballer Ally McCoist failed to recognise himself from a clip some years previous.

5 ***Mastermind's*** intimidating format was based on its creator's experience of being interrogated by the Gestapo in World War II. The original black leather chair was kidnapped twice by students but was finally presented to Magnus Magnusson when he retired after a record breaking 25 years as a television quiz show host. The highest *Mastermind* score is 41 points, set by Kevin Ashman in 1995, and the highest score for a specialist subject belongs to Jesse Honey who scored 23 out of 23 on "Flags of the World".

Quiz shows filmed at dock10 include: *A Question of Sport*, *Mastermind*, *Benchmark*, *University Challenge*, *You against the nation*, *The Boss*, *100k Drop*, *Who wants to be a millionaire*, *Ejector Seat*, *Countdown*, *Cats does Countdown*, *Impossible*, *Alphabetical*, *Britain's Brightest Family* *The Code*, *Win you wish list*, *Price is right*, *In it to win it*, *Who dares wins*, *Corrie Vs Emmerdale*.

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