

## Drive-ins: The Motion Picture of the Past

Drive-in movie theater: a term only ever uttered by parents explaining their distant childhood memories. These charming, early versions of our modern theaters were a staple of the past. According to Reid, the first drive-in was constructed in 1933 by Richard Hollingshead in Camden, New Jersey. The theaters were desirable because of their comfort, trouble-free, and welcoming qualities. However, today they have almost been forgotten; only 100 public drive-ins remain in the U.S, compared to the 4,000 at its peak. Drive-in movies are a relic of the past, but as time goes on, new technology has replaced the drive-in and left it behind.

Family friendly and convenient, drive-in movie theaters were a huge hit in the 1950s (Reid). All someone had to do to go was buy a ticket and just...drive in! Due to their rise in popularity, drive-ins were easily accessible to almost everyone, making it extremely easy to go to a movie at any time. Drive-ins were also inexpensive and offered people who arrived early options of other amusing activities to do (Shaw-Smith). No wonder drive-ins were a hit! It was a fun outing for all ages. The kids could watch the movie and be with their friends, and their parents could eat and relax in the comfort of their car. Drive-ins had their time in the limelight, but old technology usually gets replaced.

The discovery of the TV arose and became popular around the time drive-ins reached their highest peak. Easy to use and accommodating, the television became popular due to many combined factors (Shaw-Smith). Ultimately, someone could use a TV whenever they wanted and not have to share the space with others. The flexibility of having a TV in your own house came with many advantages drive-ins didn't have. At home, there were no distractions from other people, loud cars, other movies, and chilly weather. In addition, people didn't have to go anywhere to watch a movie. Instead of watching from a car, they could watch from the great luxury of their own home. TVs were just one step ahead of the drive-in and solved most flaws

that came with the drive-in movie theater. This drew many away from the now “old fashioned” theaters, due to the fact that they could get instant entertainment right in their living room. Thus beginning the decline of the concept.

Modern, cutting edge indoor movie theaters also caught the attention of many; therefore gaining popularity. These theaters were more technologically advanced and had more affordable ticket prices (Capps). Without any disturbances or interruptions, people could relax on a comfortable chair and watch a movie. Reid writes that traditional theaters had better picture quality, and they showed newer, up-to-date movies instead of the second run movies shown at drive-ins. Also, indoor movie theaters took up significantly less space than the drive-in movie theater. Families no longer needed to bring their cars which took up a lot of space, and theaters began to show more movies at once. Drive-ins started to become obsolete as the theater became more advanced. Movie theaters had new movies and quality that wasn't achievable at drive-ins or even on your TV at home. All technologies seem to “retire” as they reach their older years. Just like in life, the new generation of technology comes around to take their ancestors' place.

Although drive-ins were once very popular, TVs and contemporary theaters seemed like better options to most people who strived for the best cinematic experience possible. Today, drive-ins are almost completely dead and just a distant memory. The TV and theater are just some of the many technologies that improve upon the dying ones. Now, the few remaining drive-ins are used for the “vintage” experience, not necessarily for quality entertainment. So the next time your parents yammer on about drive-ins, remember that you might be doing the same thing one day extolling the virtues of the once super hip iPhone 7.

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