

BBC Culture polled 253 film critics from 52 countries to determine the funniest films ever made.



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“Why so serious?”

The Joker’s catchphrase was the most common response to BBC Culture’s poll of 177 critics last year to determine the **100 greatest films of the 21st Century**. Very few comedies made that list, apart from Wes Anderson’s confections and

a few Pixar romps. That canon of modern classics showed how very often ‘what makes us laugh’ is neglected when assessing cinematic greatness. Is shedding a tear while watching a film a more valuable emotional response than a chuckle?

It’s certainly true that the Academy Awards have routinely overlooked comedy. Of the 89 winners for best picture, only seven can really be called comedies: It Happened One Night, You Can’t Take It With You, Around the World in 80 Days, The Apartment, Tom Jones, Annie Hall, and Birdman.

Read more about BBC Culture’s 100 greatest comedies of all time:

What the critics had to say about the top 25
The full list of critics who participated – and how they voted
Why Some Like It Hot is number one
Does comedy differ from region to region?
Do men and women find different films funny?

So this year BBC Culture decided to get serious about comedy. We asked 253 film critics – 118 women and 135 men – from 52 countries and six continents a simple: “What do you think are the 10 best comedies of all time?” Films from any country made since cinema was invented were eligible, and BBC Culture did nothing to define in advance what a comedy is; we left that to each of the critics to decide. As always, we urged the experts to go with their heart and pick personal favourites, films that are part of their lives, not just the ones that meet some ideal of greatness.

And guess what? Only three of those best picture-winning comedies made the top 100. But, in a surprise, quite a few comedies made since 2000 made the cut, even if they had been overlooked in our 100 greatest films of the 21st Century list last year. The highest-ranked film of this century is Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy at number 33. Toni Erdmann is the most recent film to make the top 100, while Safety Last! is the oldest.

The results are illuminating in other ways. They show that **men and women have very similar comedic tastes**, with a few key points of divergence – women were much more inclined to vote for Clueless while guys stumped for Animal House. And there’s evidence that comedy is not universal, that what’s considered a joke in English dialogue may not survive translation, and certain regions of the world find some films funnier than critics in other regions do. In fact, if the results had just been confined to critics from the US and Canada **an entirely different film would have topped the list**. It was largely because of the critics from Europe, East Asia and Latin America that Some Like It Hot was ultimately crowned number one. But as Nicholas Barber writes, Billy Wilder’s sparking diamond of a comedy about role-playing and the fluidity of gender and identity **could not be more relevant today**. And we have **all 253 individual critics’ ballots** for you to examine here, plus **25 critics making the case for the top 25**.

We hope this list will help comedy receive the artistic consideration it deserves. Or at the very least, that it will inspire you to discover films to put a smile on your face. – Christian Blauvelt, Deputy Editor

100. (tie) The King of Comedy (Martin Scorsese, 1982)
100. The Ladies Man (Jerry Lewis, 1961)
99. The Jerk (Carl Reiner, 1979)
98. The Hangover (Todd Phillips, 2009)
97. The Music Box (James Parrott, 1932)
96. Born Yesterday (George Cukor, 1950)
95. Ghostbusters (Ivan Reitman, 1984)
94. Rushmore (Wes Anderson, 1998)
93. South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut (Trey Parker, 1999)
92. The Exterminating Angel (Luis Buñuel, 1962)
91. What's Up, Doc? (Peter Bogdanovich, 1972)
90. A New Leaf (Elaine May, 1971)
89. Daisies (Vera Chytilová, 1966)
88. Zoolander (Ben Stiller, 2001)
87. Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (Howard Hawks, 1953)
86. Kind Hearts and Coronets (Robert Hamer, 1949)
85. Amarcord (Federico Fellini, 1973)
84. Waiting for Guffman (Christopher Guest, 1996)
83. Safety Last! (Fred C Newmeyer and Sam Taylor, 1923)
82. Top Secret! (Jim Abrahams, David Zucker and Jerry Zucker, 1984)
81. There's Something About Mary (Bobby and Peter Farrelly, 1998)
80. Office Space (Mike Judge, 1999)
79. The Dinner Game (Francis Veber, 1998)

78. The Princess Bride (Rob Reiner, 1987)
77. Divorce Italian Style (Pietro Germi, 1961)
76. Design for Living (Ernst Lubitsch, 1933)
75. The Palm Beach Story (Preston Sturges, 1942)
74. Trading Places (John Landis, 1983)
73. The Nutty Professor (Jerry Lewis, 1963)
72. The Naked Gun: From the Files of Police Squad! (David Zucker, 1988)
71. The Royal Tenenbaums (Wes Anderson, 2001)
70. In the Loop (Armando Iannucci, 2009)
69. Love and Death (Woody Allen, 1975)
68. Ninotchka (Ernst Lubitsch, 1939)
67. Sons of the Desert (William A Seiter, 1933)
66. Hot Fuzz (Edgar Wright, 2007)
65. Caddyshack (Harold Ramis, 1980)
64. Step Brothers (Adam McKay, 2008)
63. Arsenic and Old Lace (Frank Capra, 1944)
62. What We Do in the Shadows (Jemaine Clement and Taika Waititi, 2014)
61. Team America: World Police (Trey Parker, 2004)
60. Shaun of the Dead (Edgar Wright, 2004)
59. Toni Erdmann (Maren Ade, 2016)
58. Zelig (Woody Allen, 1983)
57. Mean Girls (Mark Waters, 2004)
56. Broadcast News (James L Brooks, 1987)
55. Best in Show (Christopher Guest, 2000)
54. Harold and Maude (Hal Ashby, 1971)
53. The Blues Brothers (John Landis, 1980)
52. My Man Godfrey (Gregory La Cava, 1936)
51. Seven Chances (Buster Keaton, 1925)
50. Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown (Pedro Almodóvar, 1988)
49. The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie (Luis Buñuel, 1972)
48. Trouble in Paradise (Ernst Lubitsch, 1932)
47. Animal House (John Landis, 1978)
46. Pulp Fiction (Quentin Tarantino, 1994)
45. Big Deal on Madonna Street (Mario Monicelli, 1958)
44. Bridesmaids (Paul Feig, 2011)
43. M*A*S*H (Robert Altman, 1970)
42. The Awful Truth (Leo McCarey, 1937)
41. Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan (Larry Charles, 2006)
40. The Producers (Mel Brooks, 1967)
39. A Night at the Opera (Sam Wood and Edmund Goulding, 1935)
38. The Philadelphia Story (George Cukor, 1940)
37. Sullivan's Travels (Preston Sturges, 1941)
36. A Fish Called Wanda (Charles Crichton and John Cleese, 1988)
35. Singin' in the Rain (Stanley Donen and Gene Kelly, 1952)
34. Clueless (Amy Heckerling, 1995)
33. Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy (Adam McKay, 2004)
32. Raising Arizona (Joel and Ethan Coen, 1987)
31. Tootsie (Sydney Pollack, 1982)
30. Monsieur Hulot's Holiday (Jacques Tati, 1953)
29. When Harry Met Sally... (Rob Reiner, 1989)
28. It Happened One Night (Frank Capra, 1934)
27. The Apartment (Billy Wilder, 1960)
26. Mon Oncle (Jacques Tati, 1958)
25. The Gold Rush (Charlie Chaplin, 1925)
24. Withnail and I (Bruce Robinson, 1987)
23. The Party (Blake Edwards, 1968)
22. Young Frankenstein (Mel Brooks, 1974)
21. City Lights (Charlie Chaplin, 1931)
20. Blazing Saddles (Mel Brooks, 1974)
19. The Lady Eve (Preston Sturges, 1941)
18. Sherlock Jr (Buster Keaton, 1924)
17. Bringing Up Baby (Howard Hawks, 1938)
16. The Great Dictator (Charlie Chaplin, 1940)

15. Monty Python and the Holy Grail (Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones, 1975)
14. His Girl Friday (Howard Hawks, 1940)
13. To Be or Not To Be (Ernst Lubitsch, 1942)
12. Modern Times (Charlie Chaplin, 1936)
11. The Big Lebowski (Joel and Ethan Coen, 1998)
10. The General (Clyde Bruckman and Buster Keaton, 1926)
9. This Is Spinal Tap (Rob Reiner, 1984)
8. Playtime (Jacques Tati, 1967)
7. Airplane! (Jim Abrahams, David Zucker and Jerry Zucker, 1980)
6. Life of Brian (Terry Jones, 1979)
5. Duck Soup (Leo McCarey, 1933)
4. Groundhog Day (Harold Ramis, 1993)
3. Annie Hall (Woody Allen, 1977)
2. Dr Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb (Stanley Kubrick, 1964)
1. Some Like It Hot (Billy Wilder, 1959)

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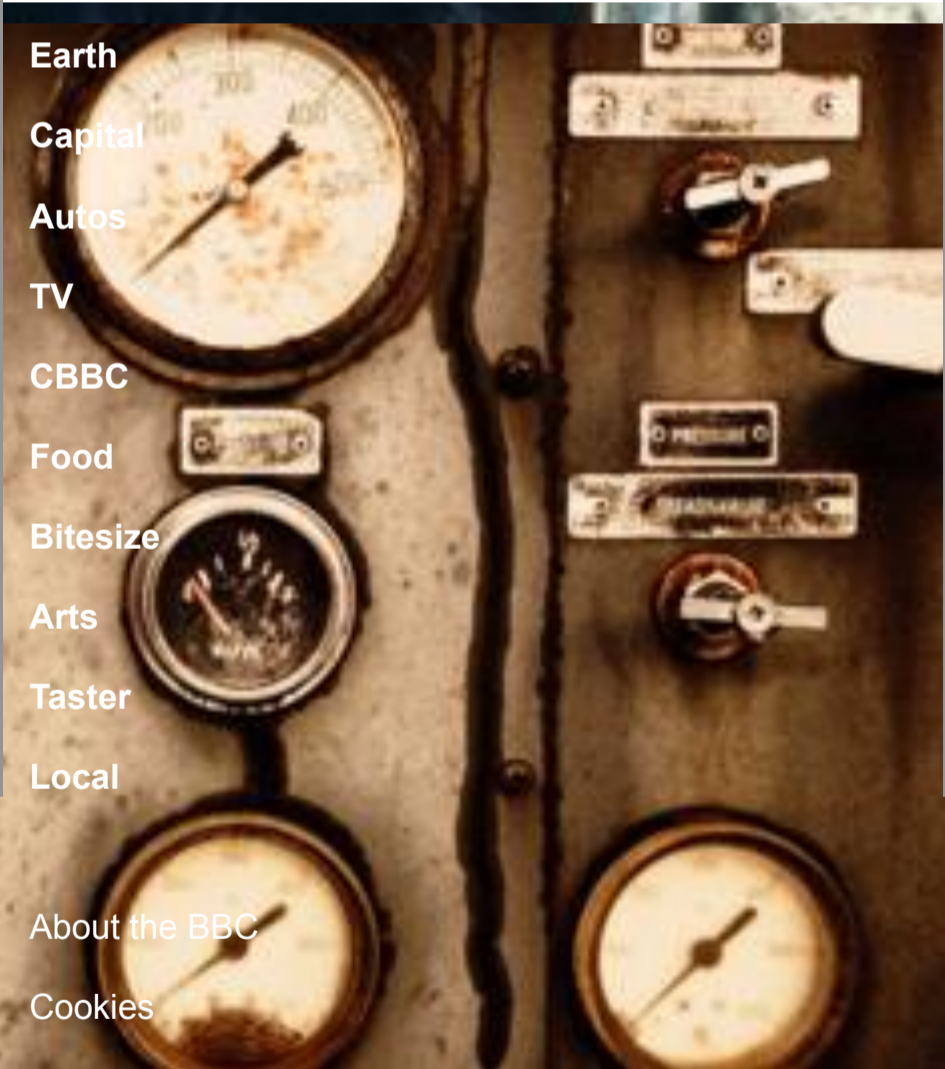


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