

Motion Picture Association film rating system

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The Motion Picture Association film rating system is used in the United States and its territories to rate a motion picture's suitability for certain audiences based on its content. The system and the ratings applied to individual motion pictures are the responsibility of the Motion Picture Association (MPA), previously known as the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) from 1945 to 2019. The MPA rating system is a voluntary scheme that is not enforced by law; films can be exhibited without a rating, although most theaters refuse to exhibit non-rated or NC-17 rated films. Non-members of the MPA may also submit films for rating.[1] Other media, such as television programs, music and video games, are rated by other entities such as the TV Parental Guidelines, the RIAA and the ESRB, respectively.

Introduced in 1968,[2] the MPA rating system is one of various motion picture rating systems that are used to help parents decide what films are appropriate for their children. It is administered by the Classification & Ratings Administration (CARA), an independent division of the MPA.[3]

The MPA film ratings are as follows:[4]

Rating block/symbol	Meaning
	<p>G – General Audiences <i>All ages admitted.</i> Nothing that would offend parents for viewing by children.</p>
	<p>PG – Parental Guidance Suggested <i>Some material may not be suitable for children.</i> Parents urged to give "parental guidance". May contain some material parents might not like for their young children.</p>
	<p>PG-13 – Parents Strongly Cautioned <i>Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.</i> Parents are urged to be cautious. Some material may be inappropriate for pre-teenagers.</p>
	<p>R – Restricted <i>Under 17 requires accompanying parent or adult guardian.</i> Contains some adult material. Parents are urged to learn more about the film before taking their young children with them.</p>
	<p>NC-17 – Adults Only <i>No One 17 and Under Admitted.</i> Clearly adult. Children are not admitted.</p>

UNRATED FILMS may include Director's Cuts or other versions that include material that was cut to obtain a lower rating when the film was released.

*****<https://premieretheatres.com/the-truth-about-ratings/>

Who rates movies?

Parents do. Film ratings are determined by a Board of parents who are selected to represent a diversity of American parents. Their job is to reflect what they believe would be the majority view of their fellow parents in rating a film. Raters have no prior affiliation with the movie industry and are employed to work for the Classification and Rating Administration (CARA), which is independently financed.

What criteria do they use?

In conducting their work, raters consider the same factors parents might in making a judgment about a film's appropriateness for their kids, including themes and content such as language, violence, nudity, sex and drug use. All these factors are considered in context when a final rating and ratings descriptor are assigned to a film.

DETAILS OF MOVIE RATING CRITERIA - https://www.filmratings.com/Content/Downloads/rating_rules.pdf

The Classification and Rating Administration ("CARA") and the Classification and Rating Appeals Board were established by the Motion Picture Association, Inc. ("MPA") and the National Association of Theatre Owners, Inc. ("NATO") as part of a voluntary system to provide information to parents to aid them in determining the suitability of individual motion pictures for viewing by their children. CARA is operated as an independent division of MPA. The CARA Rating Board issues ratings for motion pictures exhibited and distributed in the United States.

C. CARA assigns one of the following ratings, with the following meanings, to each picture:

(1) G - General Audiences. All Ages Admitted.

A G-rated motion picture contains nothing in theme, language, nudity, sex, violence or other matters that, in the view of the Rating Board, would offend parents whose younger children view the motion picture. The G rating is not a "certificate of approval," nor does it signify a "children's" motion picture. Some snippets of language may go beyond polite conversation but they are common everyday expressions. No stronger words are present in G-rated motion pictures. Depictions of violence are minimal. No nudity, sex scenes or drug use are present in the motion picture.

(2) PG - Parental Guidance Suggested. Some Material May Not Be Suitable For Children.

A PG-rated motion picture should be investigated by parents before they let their younger children attend. The PG rating indicates, in the view of the Rating Board, that parents may consider some material unsuitable for their children, and parents should make that decision. The more mature themes in some PG-rated motion pictures may call for parental guidance. There may be some profanity and some depictions of violence or brief nudity. But these elements are not deemed so intense as to require that parents be strongly cautioned beyond the suggestion of parental guidance. There is no drug use content in a PG-rated motion picture.

(3) PG-13 - Parents Strongly Cautioned. Some Material May Be Inappropriate For Children Under 13.

A PG-13 rating is a sterner warning by the Rating Board to parents to determine whether their children under age 13 should view the motion picture, as some material might not be suited for them. A PG-13 motion picture may go beyond the PG rating in theme, violence, nudity, sensuality, language, adult activities or other elements, but does not reach the restricted R category. The theme of the motion picture by itself will not result in a rating greater than PG-13, although depictions of activities related to a mature theme may result in a restricted rating for the motion picture. Any drug use will initially require at least a PG-13 rating. More than brief nudity will require at least a PG-13 rating, but such nudity in a PG-13 rated motion picture generally will not be sexually oriented. There may be depictions of violence in a PG-13 movie, but generally not both realistic and extreme or persistent violence. A motion picture's single use of one of the harsher sexually-derived words, though only as an expletive, initially requires at least a PG-13 rating. More than one such expletive requires an R rating, as must even one of those words used in a sexual context. The Rating Board nevertheless may rate such a motion picture PG-13 if, based on a special vote by a two-thirds majority, the Raters feel that most American parents would believe that a PG-13 rating is appropriate because of the context or manner in which the words are used or because the use of those words in the motion picture is inconspicuous.

(4) R - Restricted. Children Under 17 Require Accompanying Parent or Adult Guardian.

An R-rated motion picture, in the view of the Rating Board, contains some adult material. An R-rated motion picture may include adult themes, adult activity, hard language, intense or persistent violence, sexually-oriented nudity, drug abuse or other elements, so that parents are counseled to take this rating very seriously. Children under 17 are not allowed to attend R-rated motion pictures unaccompanied by a parent or adult guardian. Parents are strongly urged to find out more about R-rated motion pictures in determining their suitability for their children. Generally, it is not appropriate for parents to bring their young children with them to R-rated motion pictures.

(5) NC-17 - No One 17 and Under Admitted.

An NC-17 rated motion picture is one that, in the view of the Rating Board, most parents would consider patently too adult for their children 17 and under. No children will be admitted. NC-17 does not mean "obscene" or "pornographic" in the common or legal meaning of those words, and should not be construed as a negative judgment in any sense. The rating simply signals that the content is appropriate only for an adult audience. An NC-17 rating can be based on violence, sex, aberrational behavior, drug abuse or any other element that most parents would consider too strong and therefore off-limits for viewing by their children.