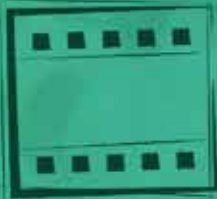




Age Ratings You Trust



## Our Guidelines

All our age rating decisions are made using our Guidelines. These help decide if a film or video should be rated U, PG, 12A/12 or if it is more suitable for older audiences and should be rated 15 or even 18.

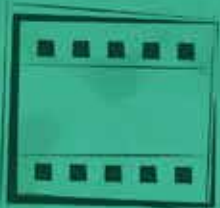
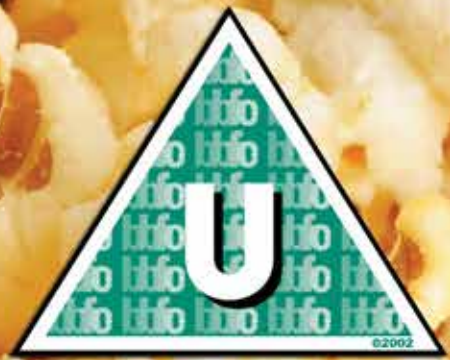
The Guidelines are based on the law in the UK and a survey of what the public thinks.

Every four years we ask parents, teenagers, teachers, and the general public, how they think we should rate films and what they think is suitable for each age group. The latest version of the Guidelines was published in 2014.





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## U - Suitable for All

Different children are upset by different things, so it is sometimes difficult to say what might upset a particular child. However, U films should be suitable for audiences aged four and over. If there is any violence or threat in a U film, it should be over quickly and the film should tell children that everything will turn out okay. Films and DVDs for children should make clear to them the difference between right and wrong.

## General

Nothing in any film or DVD should break the law. Compliance Officers sometimes suggest films are given a higher rating or even cut if there is anything which could be harmful. With films aimed at very young children, Examiners must think carefully about what those children know about, and what might scare, confuse or upset them.

Films and DVDs should be about subjects which are generally suitable for younger audiences. The tone of a work, how it makes an audience feel, is very important. At U, Examiners think carefully about how even very young children might react to different scenes, how they are filmed, and the lasting impression the film gives the people watching it.



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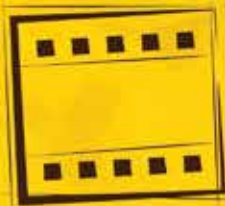


## Age Rating Issues

- **Dangerous Behaviour** - There should be no dangerous behaviour that can be easily copied by young children.
- **Discrimination** - There may be no language or behaviour shown that would offend a person's religion, colour, gender, sexuality or disability, unless the film or DVD teaches it to be wrong.
- **Drugs** - Drugs should not be mentioned, unless the film or DVD teaches that drugs are dangerous.
- **Language** - At the most there may be occasional very mild bad language.
- **Nudity** - There can be occasional glimpses of people who have no clothes on, as long as they are not linked to romantic activities.
- **Sex and relationships** - Only mild romantic behaviour (eg kissing) is allowed.
- **Threat** - Scary moments should be over quickly and not be too frightening. Nothing should disturb young viewers, and scenes where characters are in danger should be short. The end of the storyline of the film or DVD should tell children that everything is okay.
- **Violence** - Violence should be very mild. Some mild violence which is funny or animated, eg in a cartoon aimed at very young children, may be allowed.
- **Weapons** - There should be no focus on weapons that are realistic or easy to get hold of.



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## PG - Parental Guidance

Can be viewed by all ages, but some scenes may be unsuitable for young children.

Children of any age may watch a PG rated film or DVD, with or without an adult. A PG film should not worry a child aged eight or older so BBFC Compliance Officers are thinking of eight year olds when they decide about the rating and how strong the issues are. A PG tells parents that the content of the film may upset younger or more sensitive children.

## General

Nothing in any film or DVD should break the law. Compliance Officers sometimes suggest films are given a higher rating or even cut if there is anything which could be harmful.

Films and DVDs at PG may be about more grown up topics like crime, racism, bullying or violence in the home but there must be nothing which suggests these are acceptable things. The tone of a work, how it makes an audience feel, is very important. At PG, Compliance Officers do think about what children of around eight might know about already, what might scare or upset them, and how they might react to different sorts of characters and scenes. The lasting impression the film gives the people watching it is still very important at PG, even if children of around eight are used to more complicated or intense stories than much younger children.



Age Ratings You Trust



## Age Rating Issues

- **Dangerous Behaviour** - There should be no detail of fighting techniques or other harmful and dangerous activities that children might easily copy. Anti-social behaviour should not be emphasised or shown as attractive.
- **Discrimination** - There may be no language or behaviour shown that would offend a person's religion, colour, gender, sexuality or disability, unless the film or DVD teaches it to be wrong, or it is presented within a film that is educational or showing historical scenes. Discrimination by a character who is seen as a hero by the audience is also unlikely to be allowed. Sometimes very old films that include discriminatory words or behaviour used in a way that is no longer acceptable may be passed at PG, but parents will be warned in the BBFCinsight.
- **Drugs** - There should be no mention of illegal drugs or drug taking unless the film carries an anti-drug message or children are unlikely to understand the reference.
- **Language** - Only mild bad language is allowed at PG. Aggressive or frequent mild language may mean a film is passed 12A.
- **Nudity** - Some nudity is allowed, but not if it is linked to romantic activities.
- **Sex and Relationships** - Sex can be mentioned, suggested or joked about, but only discreetly.
- **Threat** - Frightening scenes should not be too long or scary. Scary scenes which are part of a fantasy film may be treated less strictly.
- **Violence** - There can be stronger violence than at U, but without detail (like blood and injury). Violence which takes place in a comedy, fantasy, or historical film may be treated less strictly.
- **Weapons** - There should be no focus on weapons that are realistic or easy to get hold of. Weapons should not be made to look attractive.



Age Ratings You Trust

## The 12 and 12A age ratings

The 12A rating is only used for films shown in cinemas. Films rated 12A are generally not suitable for children aged under 12. However, people younger than 12 may see a 12A as long as they are taken to the cinema by an adult. When this happens, the adult must take responsibility for the younger child watching the film. We recommend adults read BBFCinsight to check the content and issues in 12A films before they take younger children to see them.

The 12 rating is only found on videos and DVDs. No one younger than 12 may rent or buy a 12 rated video or DVD.

We use exactly the same rules to rate films at 12A as we use to rate videos and DVDs at 12.

## General

Nothing in any film or DVD should break the law. Compliance Officers sometimes suggest films are given a higher rating or even cut if there is anything which could be harmful. This is true at all the age ratings.

The tone of a work, how it makes an audience feel, is very important even for the 12 categories. Compliance Officers have to think about what 12 year olds will know from school and their friends, what they understand about the world, and what concerns them the most. If a film is especially upsetting, or has a mature theme or adult tone, it may not be suitable at 12 or 12A.

Grown-up themes are allowed at 12A. The lasting impression the film gives the people watching it is important too. Viewers of 12 and over can often cope with more complicated storylines and difficult ideas than younger children watching U and PG films. These might be heroes who do bad things, upsetting events, or themes that aren't always easy to talk about.

Compliance Officers only recommend a 12 or 12A if they think 12 year olds would be fine to watch them. If they think a film or DVD is suitable for younger children (e.g. 10 and 11 year olds) then they recommend those films for PG.



Age Ratings You Trust



## Age Rating Issues

- **Dangerous behaviour** - Dangerous behaviour that children might copy should not be shown as attractive or glamorous. Anti-social behaviour should not be encouraged or shown as acceptable.
- **Discrimination** - The film or DVD as a whole must not approve of language or behaviour that would offend a person's religion, colour, gender, sexuality or disability. Aggressive use of this type of language and behaviour is unacceptable unless it is clearly disapproved of.
- **Drugs** - Any misuse of drugs must be infrequent and should not be shown as glamorous, or attractive, or teach viewers how to take drugs.
- **Language** - Moderate language is allowed. Strong language (e.g. 'f\*\*\*') may be allowed, depending on how it is used, how often it is used, and the tone and feel of the whole film.
- **Nudity** - Nudity is allowed, but it must be brief and discreet if there is any suggestion of sex.
- **Sex** - Short sex scenes can be suggested, but not shown in lots of detail. Sex references may reflect what 12 year olds are likely to have heard about from school, but there should be nothing unsuitable for young teenagers. Frequent rude sex references may not be allowed.
- **Threat** - There can be some threat at 12A, including scary scenes which are intense or last a while.
- **Violence** - Moderate violence is allowed but must not dwell on injuries or blood. Sexual violence may only be implied or briefly and discreetly indicated.
- **Weapons** - Easily accessible weapons should not be shown as glamorous.



Age Ratings You Trust



## **15 – for 15 year-olds and over**

No one younger than 15 can go and see a 15 rated film in the cinema. No one younger than 15 may rent or buy a 15 rated video, DVD or download.

### **General / Age rating issues at 15**

15 rated films, videos and downloads can contain strong material including strong swearing, strong horror and strong violence. More information about 15 rated films is available for parents on our public website.



## **18 – for adults only**

Films, videos and downloads rated 18 are not suitable for children.

No one younger than 18 can go and see an 18 rated film in the cinema. No one younger than 18 may rent or buy an 18 rated video, DVD or download.

### **General / Age rating issues at 18**

18 rated films, videos and downloads can contain very strong material which is only suitable for adults. This can include very strong language, horror, and violence. More information about 18 rated films is available for parents on our public website.