

# What a lovely decade! Here are the 10 best movies of the 2010s, from 'Lady Bird' to 'Mad Max'

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Find the holidays stressful? Try putting together a list of the best films of the 2010s.

The past decade has changed Hollywood in a multitude of ways, from streaming platforms like Netflix inserting themselves into the studio system to watching movies on every size screen imaginable. A whole new "Star Wars" trilogy came out of nowhere to galvanize the galactic faithful. And then there's the Marvel Cinematic Universe, which technically began with 2008's "Iron Man" but became an influential, money-making powerhouse in the 2010s.

So how does one pick the choice cuts? The decade was full of great films, but you won't find any Oscar best picture winners on this list. (Also, no 2019 projects since more time needs to be spent with those seeing how they measure up.) Sure, they're all of the highest quality but these movies don't just entertain, they touch the soul. Every time you come across them, toss the remote away because they're endlessly rewatchable.

That's enough preamble, though. Let's dig into the best movies of the decade, definitively ranked:

**10. (tie) 'Inside Llewyn Davis' (2013)/'Lady Bird' (2017)**

Let's start with a couple of period tales featuring characters facing issues regarding their futures: Llewyn Davis (Oscar Isaac) is a 1960s folk singer struggling to make it as a solo act and making a ton of bad decisions that aren't helping, while Lady Bird (Saoirse Ronan) is a quirky Catholic school senior circa 2002 who can't get out of Sacramento, California, and off to college in New York fast enough. Both movies offer directors at the top of their games – the Coen brothers for "Llewyn Davis," Greta Gerwig for "Lady Bird" – and artfully funny looks at two people needing major changes.

## **9. 'A Ghost Story' (2017)**

So much on the surface seems sort of goofy, from Casey Affleck wearing a sheet over himself for most of the 92-minute runtime to the camera watching intently as Rooney Mara scarfs down a chocolate pudding pie. What David Lowery's elegiac and moving drama does, though, runs much deeper, exploring aspects of love and life (and afterlife) through the story of a man who tragically dies and is forced to watch his wife and everything else move on around him while he remains as a silent phantom. Haunting and innovative, you'll never see anything else like it.

## **8. 'Inception' (2010)**

Christopher Nolan gave us one last Batman film, a cosmic journey and a World War II epic in the 2010s, though it's the super-twisty, mind-flippy, reality-bendy all-star action thriller that stands out as the most important. Leonardo DiCaprio gets to be a thief who steals from people's dreams in a flick that weaves a mystery around the film noir, heist and sci-fi genres to create a project that's trippy, visceral and astoundingly original. In an age where blockbusters tend toward the rote, you can count on Nolan for something smart.

## 7. 'How to Train Your Dragon' (2010)

Sorry to Pixar and Disney, and thanks for trying "The Hobbit" movies. This tale of a boy and his dragon laps its fellow animated and fantasy fare by combining a bunch of mythological swagger with a heartwarming, undying friendship between ride-or-die buds. With young Viking teen Hiccup (voiced by Jay Baruchel) and Toothless - who gives Baby Yoda competition in the cuteness department - the fantastic original sparked an entertaining trilogy about tolerance, empowerment and embracing your own destiny.

## 6. 'BlacKkKlansman' (2018)

Spike Lee's equally audacious and angry with the stranger-than-fiction true story of a black Colorado police officer (played by John David Washington) who infiltrated the Ku Klux Klan in the 1970s. Washington and Adam Driver prove their mettle as top thespians of their generation, and Lee finds plenty of humor and modern relevance here with a narrative of cops crusading against white supremacists. This celebration of brotherhood – and not one of hate – mirrors our own contemporary struggles with civil rights and reminds that the fight for equality is an ongoing and righteous one.

## 5. 'Captain America: The Winter Soldier' (2014)

The Marvel movie universe may have officially started in the previous decade but the 2010s is when the Avengers and pals conquered the box office and became a cinematic powerhouse with its interconnected superhero narrative. The best of the best belongs on this list and that's "Winter Soldier," an exquisitely crafted political thriller that just so happens to have Chris Evans slinging around a star-spangled shield. And before Thanos came calling, the "Captain America" sequel was the first Marvel film to be a standalone effort as well as blow up its grander world with a gut-punch plot twist.

## 4. 'Get Out' (2017)

Jordan Peele's phenomenal directorial debut turned a spotlight on scary movies' socially conscious side and introduced Peele as a modern-day Hitchcock. Starring Daniel Kaluuya as a young man who finds out the truly sinister intentions of his white girlfriend's family during a weekend getaway, "Get Out" balanced frights and humor in a satirical thriller that took on racism and made everyone, no matter the color of their skin, afraid of the Sunken Place.

### **3. 'Sing Street' (2016)**

A throwback to when people huddled around the TV screen to watch Duran Duran, John Carney's tune-filled 1980s triumph is a tribute to youthful romance, DIY creativity and finding your tribe. In this case, it's a teenage rock band formed by an Irish lad (Ferdia Walsh-Peelo) simply to impress a girl (Lucy Boynton). The coming-of-age comedy-drama features catchy tunes that boost the narrative, a love story that doubles as music-group therapy.

### **2. 'Arrival' (2016)**

The past decade catapulted Denis Villeneuve into sci-fi godhood, as he did the impossible and made an excellent "Blade Runner" sequel and lined up a new take on "Dune." But "Arrival" is his best work yet: While the absorbing drama features aliens and spaceships and invasion – plus an amazing Amy Adams – it's less an extra-terrestrial extravaganza and more of a gorgeously realized treatise on how humans struggle to communicate with each other. The mysterious creatures from outer space just give an ancient problem bold nuance.

### **1. 'Mad Max: Fury Road' (2015)**

To quote the great Tina Turner, who once entered Thunderdome: It's simply the best, better than all the rest. Director George Miller's "Fury Road" is the perfect action film, an explosive and propulsive two-hour symphony of

destruction whose real influence probably won't be truly seen until well into the next decade. But as much as the post-apocalyptic "Mad Max" leans into motion, it's also fueled by emotion - with reluctant hero Max (Tom Hardy) getting the title treatment but taking a backseat to the determined Furiosa (Charlize Theron) and her mission to save a group of women from a seriously bad dude. For film fans, it will ride eternal, shiny and chrome.

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/entertainment/movies/2019/12/26/ranked-10-best-movies-decade-get-out-mad-max/2731766001/>