History of Film

The history of film is the historical development of the medium known variously as cinema, motion pictures, film, or the movies.

The history of film spans over a hundred years, from the latter part of the 19th century to the present day. Motion pictures developed gradually from a carnival novelty to one of the most important tools of communication and entertainment, and mass media in the 20th century. Motion picture films have had a substantial impact on the arts, technology, and politics.

The Beginning of Cinema

Precursors of film

Plays and dances had elements common to films—scripts, sets, lighting, costumes, production, direction, actors, audiences, storyboards, and scores. They preceded film by thousands of years. Moving visual images and sounds were not recorded for replaying as in film.

Anthemius of Tralles used an early type of camera obscura in the 6th century. Light is inverted through a small hole or lens from outside, and projected onto a surface or screen, creating a projected moving image, indistinguishable from a projected high quality film to an audience, but it is not preserved in a recording.

Moving images were produced on revolving drums and disks in the 1830s with independent invention by Simon von Stampfer (Stroboscope) in Austria, Joseph Plateau (Phenakistoscope) in Belgium and William Horner (zoetrope) in Britain.

In 1877, under the sponsorship of Leland Stanford, Eadweard Muybridge successfully photographed a horse named "Sallie Gardner" in fast motion using a series of 24 stereoscopic cameras. The cameras were arranged along a track parallel to the horse's, and each of the camera shutters was controlled by a trip wire which was triggered by the horse's hooves. They were 21 inches apart to cover the 20 feet taken by the horse stride, taking pictures at one thousandth of a second.

On June 21, 1889, William Friese-Greene was issued patent no. 10131 for his 'chronophotographic' camera. It was apparently capable of taking up to ten photographs per second using perforated celluloid film.
The Silent Era

A scene from "A trip to the moon" (1902) by Georges Méliès.

In the silent era of film, marrying the image with synchronous sound was not possible for inventors and producers, since no practical method was devised until 1923. Thus, for the first thirty years of their history, movies were silent, although accompanied by live musicians and sometimes sound effects and even commentary spoken by the showman or projectionist.

Illustrated songs were a notable exception to this trend that began in 1894 in vaudeville houses and persisted as late as the late 1930s in movie theaters. In this early precursor to the music video, live performance or sound recordings were paired with hand-colored glass slides projected through stereopticons and similar devices. In this way, song narrative was illustrated through a series of slides whose changes were simultaneous with the narrative development. The main purpose of illustrated songs was to encourage sheet music sales, and they were highly successful with sales reaching into the millions for a single song. Later, with the birth of film, illustrated songs were used as filler material preceding films and during reel changes.

1990s: New special effects, independent films, and DVDs

Cinema admissions in 1995

The early 1990s saw the development of a commercially successful independent cinema in the United States. Although cinema was increasingly dominated by special-effects films such as *Terminator 2: Judgment Day* (1991), *Jurassic Park* (1993) and *Titanic* (1997), independent films like Steven Soderbergh's *sex, lies, and videotape* (1989) and Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs* (1992) had significant commercial success both at the cinema and on home video. Filmmakers associated with the Danish film movement...
Films
Third Year, Dept. of Theatre, Col. of Artistic Education 2010-2011

Dogme 95 introduced a manifesto aimed to purify filmmaking. Its first few films gained worldwide critical acclaim, after which the movement slowly faded out.

Major American studios began to create their own "independent" production companies to finance and produce non-mainstream fare. One of the most successful independents of the 1990s, Miramax Films, was bought by Disney the year before the release of Tarantino's runaway hit *Pulp Fiction* in 1994. The same year marked the beginning of film and video distribution online. Animated films aimed at family audiences also regained their popularity, with Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* (1991), *Aladdin* (1992), and *The Lion King* (1994). During 1995 the first feature length computer-animated feature, *Toy Story*, was produced by Pixar Animation Studios and released by Disney. After the success of *Toy Story*, computer animation would grow to become the dominant technique for feature length animation, which would allow competing film companies such as Dreamworks Animation and 20th Century Fox to effectively compete with Disney with successful films of their own. During the late 1990s, another cinematic transition began, from physical film stock to digital cinema technology. Meanwhile DVDs became the new standard for consumer video, replacing VHS tapes.

**2000s**

One of 150 DV cameras used by Iraqis to film *Voices of Iraq*.

The documentary film also rose as a commercial genre for perhaps the first time, with the success of films such as *March of the Penguins* and Michael Moore's *Bowling for Columbine* and *Fahrenheit 9/11*. A new genre was created with Martin Kunert and Eric Manes' *Voices of Iraq*, when 150 inexpensive DV cameras were distributed across Iraq, transforming ordinary people into collaborative filmmakers. The success of *Gladiator* lead to a revival of interest in epic cinema, and *Moulin Rouge!* renewed interest in musical cinema. Home theatre systems became increasingly sophisticated, as did some of the special edition DVDs designed to be shown on them. *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy was released on DVD in both the theatrical version and in a special extended version intended only for home cinema audiences.

There is a growing problem of digital distribution to be overcome with regards to expiration of copyrights, content security, and enforcing copyright. There is higher compression for films, and Moore's law allows for increasingly cheaper technology.
More films were also being released simultaneously to IMAX cinema, the first was in 2002's Disney animation *Treasure Planet*; and the first live action was in 2003's *The Matrix Revolutions* and a re-release of *The Matrix Reloaded*. Later in the decade, *The Dark Knight* was the first major feature film to have been at least partially shot in IMAX technology.

There has been an increasing globalization of cinema during this decade, with foreign-language films gaining popularity in English-speaking markets. Examples of such films include *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (Mandarin), *Amelie* (French), *Lagaan* (Hindi), *Spirited Away* (Japanese), *City of God* (Portuguese), *The Passion of the Christ* (Aramaic), *Apocalypto* (Mayan), *Slumdog Millionaire* (a third in Hindi), and Inglourious Basterds (multiple languages).

Recently there has been a revival in 3D film popularity the first being James Cameron's *Ghosts of the Abyss* which was released as the first full-length 3-D IMAX feature filmed with the Reality Camera System. This camera system used the latest HD video cameras, not film, and was built for Cameron by Emmy nominated Director of Photography Vince Pace, to his specifications. The same camera system was used to film *Spy Kids 3D: Game Over* (2003), *Aliens of the Deep IMAX* (2005), and *The Adventures of Sharkboy and Lavagirl in 3-D* (2005).

As of 2010, 3D movies are gaining increasing popularity. After James Cameron's 3D movie *Avatar* became the highest-grossing film of all time, many other movies have followed suit and been released in 3D.

**Introduction of computer generated imagery (CGI)**

A recent and profound innovation in special effects has been the development of computer generated imagery, or CGI, which has changed nearly every aspect of motion picture special effects. Digital compositing allows far more control and creative freedom than optical compositing, and does not degrade the image like analogue (optical) processes. Digital imagery has enabled technicians to create detailed models, matte "paintings," and even fully realized characters with the malleability of computer software.

The most spectacular use of CGI has been the creation of photographically realistic images of fantasy creations. Images could be created in a computer using the techniques of animated cartoons or model animation. In 1993, stop-motion animators working on the realistic dinosaurs of Steven Spielberg's *Jurassic Park* were retrained in the use of computer input devices. By 1995, films such as *Toy Story* underscored that the distinction between live-action films and animated films was no longer clear. Other landmark examples include a character made up of broken pieces of a stained-glass window in *Young Sherlock Holmes*, a shapeshifting character in *Willow*, a tentacle of water in *The*
Abyss, the T-1000 Terminator in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*, hordes of armies of robots and fantastic creatures in the *Star Wars prequel trilogy* and *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy and the planet Pandora in *Avatar*.

**Filmmaking**

A film being made in *Warsaw*, Bracka street
"Filmmaker" redirects here. For the magazine, see [Filmmaker (magazine)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filmmaker_(magazine)).

**Filmmaking** (often referred to in an academic context as **film production**) is the process of making a **film**, from an initial story idea or commission, through scriptwriting, shooting, editing, directing and distribution to an audience. Typically, it involves a large number of people, and takes from a few months to several years to complete. Filmmaking takes place all over the world in a huge range of economic, social, and political contexts, and using a variety of technologies and techniques. Technically, the art and science of recording images to film differs significantly from that of recording images to video. Thus, by definition, a "filmmaker" captures images on film, and not video.

**Stages**

Film production occurs in five stages:[1]

- **Development**—The **script** is written and drafted into a workable **blueprint** for a film.
- **Pre-production**—Preparations are made for the shoot, in which cast and crew are hired, locations are selected, and sets are built.
- **Production**—The raw elements for the finished film are recorded.
• **Post-Production**—The film is edited; production sound (dialogue) is concurrently (but separately) edited, music tracks (and songs) are composed, performed and recorded, if a film is sought to have a score; sound effects are designed and recorded; and any other computer-graphic 'visual' effects are digitally added, all sound elements are mixed into "stems" then the stems are mixed then married to picture and the film is fully completed ("locked").

• **Sales and distribution**—The film is screened for potential buyers (distributors), is picked up by a distributor and reaches its cinema and/or home media audience.