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TOP FILMS OF ALL TIME AT THE UK BOX OFFICE

In 2015, Star Wars: The Force Awakens became the top earning film of all time at the UK box office, while titles based on UK characters and stories continue to dominate the chart with 12 of the top 20 highest grossing films.

FACTS IN FOCUS

- Star Wars: The Force Awakens has become the highest grossing film of all time in the UK, with box office earnings of over £122 million.
- > Two other films released in 2015, SPECTRE and Jurassic World, also entered the top 20 list.
- The box office gross of Star Wars: The Force Awakens is enough to overtake Titanic for the top spot in the inflation-adjusted box office chart.
- Sequels and franchise films make up 17 of the all-time top 20 chart, whilst 10 are UK/USA collaborations.
- Four 2015 releases Legend, The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel, Shaun the Sheep the Movie and The Lady in the Van – appear in the chart of all-time top independent UK films.

TOP 20 FILMS AT THE UK BOX OFFICE, 1989-2015

Table 1 shows the top 20 highest earning films of all time at the UK box office. After three years at the top of the chart, Skyfall was overtaken by the 2015 release Star Wars: The Force Awakens, which outgrossed the most successful James Bond outing to date by almost one fifth with a take of over £122 million. Two other releases from 2015 entered the top 20. The latest 007 adventure, SPECTRE, is third in the list with earnings of £95 million and Jurassic World is 10th with £64 million.

The list is dominated by franchise movies, including four of the eight Harry Potter titles and all three Lord of the Rings films. Only three of the top 20 films are neither sequels nor franchise titles, namely Avatar (although three sequels to this film remain in pre-production), Mamma Mia! and Titanic. Ten of the top 20 films are UK/USA collaborations and 12 of the top 20 are based on stories and characters created by UK writers such as Ian Fleming, JK Rowling and JRR Tolkien and the playwright Catherine Johnson, which shows the sustained appetite for home-grown material amongst British audiences.

RANKING ALL-TIME TOP FILMS

In the absence of admissions data on individual films, top films can only be measured in terms of earnings at the box office. Inflation is a key factor affecting earnings and this needs to be borne in mind against some of the figures quoted in this report (however, some figures are adjusted for inflation). Most of this report relates to actual box office receipts from 1989 onwards (although coverage of box office figures for some high grossing films goes back to 1975), so can be categorised as all-time top films since it is unlikely that anything produced before 1989 will have earned more in nominal terms.

Table 1 Top 20 films at the UK box office, 1989-2015

	Title	Country of origin	UK box office total (£ million)	Distributor	Year of release
1	Star Wars: The Force Awakens*	UK/USA	122.3	Walt Disney	2015
2	Skyfall	UK/USA	103.2	Sony Pictures	2012
3	SPECTRE*	UK/USA	95.2	Sony Pictures	2015
4	Avatar	USA	94.0	20th Century Fox	2009
5	Titanic#	USA	80.3	20th Century Fox	1998/2012
6	Toy Story 3	USA	74.0	Walt Disney	2010
7	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2	UK/USA	73.1	Warner Bros	2011
8	Mamma Mia!	UK/USA	68.6	Universal	2008
9	Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	UK/USA	66.1	Warner Bros	2001
10	Jurassic World	USA	64.5	Universal	2015
11	Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring	NZ/USA	63.0	Entertainment	2001
12	Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King	NZ/USA	61.1	Entertainment	2003
13	Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	NZ/USA	57.6	Entertainment	2002
14	Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace [#]	USA	56.4	20th Century Fox	1999/2012
15	The Dark Knight Rises	UK/USA	56.3	Warner Bros	2012
16	Casino Royale	UK/USA/ Czech	55.6	Sony Pictures	2006
17	Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	UK/USA	54.8	Warner Bros	2002
18	Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest	USA	52.5	Walt Disney	2006
19	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1	UK/USA	52.5	Warner Bros	2010
20	The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey	NZ/USA	52.3	Warner Bros	2012
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Source: comScore, BFI RSU analysis Notes:

Figures have not been inflation adjusted.

Box office gross = cumulative total up to 21 February 2016.

* Film still on release on 21 February 2016.

The box office grosses for *Titanic* and *Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace* include the grosses from their original releases plus the grosses from their 3D re-releases in 2012.

INFLATION-ADJUSTED TOP 20 FILMS AT THE UK BOX OFFICE, 1975-2015

Table 2 shows an inflation-adjusted box office chart based on the top 20 highest grossing films released in the UK since 1975 (when coverage of leading titles begins).

The £122 million earned by Star Wars: The Force Awakens is enough to retain its new top ranking even with inflation adjustment factored in. Its addition to the top 20 chart continues a trend from previous films in the Star Wars franchise, as the first instalment of both the original and prequel trilogies are top 20 titles with 1999's Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace (£80 million) and 1977's now re-titled Star Wars: A New Hope (£76 million) in 11th and 17th places respectively. None of the subsequent instalments in the already completed trilogies make the inflation-adjusted top 40.

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The previous inflation-adjusted top earning film was Titanic, which is now in second place with adjusted earnings of £111 million. Skyfall is in third place with £107 million and Avatar is fourth with £105 million. Another new entry in the chart is 2015's SPECTRE which takes fifth place with £95 million. Three of the four Daniel Craig era Bond films are in the inflation-adjusted top 20.

Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone is the highest placed of the three Harry Potter films in the list at number six, with inflation-adjusted earnings of £91 million. All three Lord of the Rings films make the chart with the top placed, *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring,* seventh, with earnings of £87 million.

The 2015 release *Jurassic World*, with £65 million, falls just short of the top 20 whilst 1993's original instalment *Jurassic Park* is at number 14 with an adjusted gross of £78 million. *Jaws* (1975), the oldest release in the list, is in eighth place with £82 million whilst *Grease* (1978) is 19th with £70 million.

Table 2 Top 20 highest grossing films at the UK box office, 1975-2015 (inflation adjusted¹)

	Title	Country of origin	UK box office total (£ million)	Distributor	Year of release
1	Star Wars: The Force Awakens*	UK/USA	122.3	Walt Disney	2015
2	Titanic#	USA	111.2	20th Century Fox	1998/2012
З	Skyfall	UK/USA	107.2	Sony Pictures	2012
4	Avatar	USA	104.5	20th Century Fox	2009
5	SPECTRE*	UK/USA	95.2	Sony Pictures	2015
6	Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	UK/USA	91.1	Warner Bros	2001
7	The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring	USA/NZ	86.8	Entertainment	2001
8	Jaws	USA	81.7	UIP	1975
9	Toy Story 3	USA	79.9	Walt Disney	2010
10	The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King	USA/NZ	79.8	Entertainment	2003
11	Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace [#]	USA	79.7	20th Century Fox	1999/2012
12	Mamma Mia!	UK/USA	78.9	Universal	2008
13	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2	UK/USA	77.7	Warner Bros	2011
14	Jurassic Park	USA	77.5	UIP	1993
15	The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers	USA/NZ	77.1	Entertainment	2002
16	The Full Monty	UK/USA	76.4	20th Century Fox	1997
17	Star Wars: A New Hope	USA	76.0	20th Century Fox	1977
18	Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	UK/USA	73.6	Warner Bros	2002
19	Grease	USA	69.6	UIP	1978
20	Casino Royale	UK/USA/ Czech	66.7	Sony Pictures	2006

Source: comScore, BFI RSU analysis

Notes:

 $^{\rm 1}$ The 2015 \pounds is calculated using the HMT UK GDP deflator which can be found at

https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gdp-deflators-at-market-prices-and-money-gdp-december-2015-quarterly-national-accounts. Box office gross = cumulative total up to 21 February 2016.

* Film still on release on 21 February 2016.

The box office grosses for *Titanic* and *Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace* include the grosses from their original releases plus the grosses from their 3D re-releases in 2012.

HIGHEST GROSSING FILMS OF THE YEAR AT THE UK BOX OFFICE, 2001-2015

Table 3 lists the highest grossing films of the year at the UK box office for the period 2001-2015. The record gross generated by the top earning film of 2015, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, reverses the downward trend seen in 2013 and 2014 whose highest earners, *The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies* and *Despicable Me 2*, had the two lowest takings for a top film of the year in the 15 years covered in the table. (The years 2013 and 2014 were two of only four in the period which saw a decrease in year-on-year box office totals.) There was another downward trend in box office earnings by a top film of the year between 2001 and 2007 when the top gross fell from the £66 million taken by the first Harry Potter instalment to the £50 million earned by the fifth film in the series. The half-decade between 2008 and 2012 however, saw high and record breaking box office takings for a top earning film: *Skyfall* grossed £103 million in 2012, both *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2* (2011) and Toy Story 3 (2010) earned over £73 million, *Avatar* (2009) grossed £94 million and *Mamma Mia!* (2008) took £69 million.

Nine of the 15 top earning films of the year listed in the chart are UK/USA collaborations and 10 of the 15 titles are based on stories and characters created by UK writers.

Table 3 Highest grossing films of the year at the UK box office, 2001-2015

Year	Highest grossing film	Country of origin	UK box office total (£ million)	UK box office total (2015 £ million¹)
2001	Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	UK/USA	66.1	91.1
2002	Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	UK/USA	54.8	73.7
2003	The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King	USA/NZ	61.1	79.9
2004	Shrek 2	USA	48.2	61.3
2005	Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	UK/USA	49.2	60.8
2006	Casino Royale	UK/USA/Cze	55.6	66.7
2007	Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix	UK/USA	49.9	58.2
2008	Mamma Mia!	UK/USA	68.6	77.7
2009	Avatar	USA	94.0	104.4
2010	Toy Story 3	USA	74.0	79.7
2011	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2	UK/USA	73.1	77.2
2012	Skyfall	UK/USA	103.2	106.9
2013	Despicable Me 2	USA	47.5	48.4
2014	The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies	USA/NZ	41.2	41.2
2015	Star Wars: The Force Awakens*	UK/USA	122.3	122.3

Source: comScore, BFI RSU analysis

Notes:

¹ See note to Table 2.

Box office gross = cumulative total up to 21 February 2016.

* Film still on release on 21 February 2016.

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TOP 20 UK QUALIFYING FILMS AT THE UK BOX OFFICE, 1989-2015

The list of the all-time top 20 UK films is dominated by US studio-backed features but two independent films, *The King's Speech* and *The Inbetweeners Movie*, are at numbers 19 and 20 in the list (Table 4). There were three new entries to the list in 2015, including *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* in the number one spot and *SPECTRE* at number three. The addition of the most recent James Bond film means all of the films to star Daniel Craig appear in the top 20. With takings of £48 million the third highest earning UK qualifying film of 2015, *Avengers: Age of Ultron*, appears in the list at number 17. The top 20 is dominated by the Harry Potter franchise with all eight films appearing in the list. The final film in the series, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2*, is the highest ranked at number four.

Table 4 Top 20 UK qualifying films at the UK box office, 1989-2015

	Title	Country of origin	UK box office total (£ million)	Distributor	Year of release
1	Star Wars: The Force Awakens*	UK/USA	122.3	Walt Disney	2015
2	Skyfall	UK/USA	103.2	Sony Pictures	2012
З	SPECTRE*	UK/USA	95.2	Sony Pictures	2015
4	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2	UK/USA	73.1	Warner Bros	2011
5	Mamma Mia!	UK/USA	68.6	Universal	2008
6	Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone	UK/USA	66.1	Warner Bros	2001
7	The Dark Knight Rises	UK/USA	56.3	Warner Bros	2012
8	Casino Royale	UK/USA/ Czech	55.6	Sony Pictures	2006
9	Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	UK/USA	54.8	Warner Bros	2002
10	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1	UK/USA	52.5	Warner Bros	2010
11	The Full Monty	UK/USA	52.2	20th Century Fox	1997
12	Quantum of Solace	UK/USA	51.2	Sony Pictures	2008
13	Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince	UK/USA	50.7	Warner Bros	2009
14	Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix	UK/USA	49.9	Warner Bros	2007
15	Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire	UK/USA	49.2	Warner Bros	2005
16	The Dark Knight	UK/USA	49.1	Warner Bros	2008
17	Avengers: Age of Ultron	UK/USA	48.3	Walt Disney	2015
18	Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban	UK/USA	46.1	Warner Bros	2004
19	The King's Speech	UK	45.7	Momentum	2011
20	The Inbetweeners Movie	UK	45.0	Entertainment	2011

Source: comScore, BFI RSU analysis

Notes:

Figures have not been inflation adjusted.

Box office gross = cumulative total up to 21 February 2016.

* Film still on release on 21 February 2016.

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TOP 20 INDEPENDENT UK FILMS AT THE UK BOX OFFICE, 1988-2015

Table 5 lists the top 20 all-time highest earning independent UK films (that is, made without US major studio involvement) at the UK box office between 1988-2015. The top two titles are both 2011 releases: *The King's Speech* and *The Inbetweeners Movie* each earned more than £45 million. There are three other films with grosses of more than £30 million, two from 2014 (*Paddington* and *The Inbetweeners 2*) and one from 2009 (*Slumdog Millionaire*).

Four releases from 2015 appear in the list. *Legend* is in ninth place with takings of £18.4 million, *The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* is 11th with £16 million, *Shaun the Sheep the Movie* is 13th with £13.8 million and *The Lady in the Van* is 14th with £13 million.

Table 5 Top 20 independent UK films at the UK box office, 1988-2015

	Title	Country of origin	UK box office total (£ million)	Distributor	Year of release
1	The King's Speech	UK	45.7	Momentum	2011
2	The Inbetweeners Movie	UK	45.0	Entertainment	2011
3	Paddington	UK/Fra	37.9	StudioCanal	2014
4	The Inbetweeners 2	UK	33.4	Entertainment	2014
5	Slumdog Millionaire	UK	31.7	Pathé	2009
6	Four Weddings and a Funeral	UK	27.8	Carlton	1994
7	The Woman in Black	UK/USA/Swe#	21.3	Momentum	2012
8	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	UK/USA/Ind#	20.4	20th Century Fox	2012
9	Legend	UK/Fra/USA	18.4	StudioCanal	2015
10	The Imitation Game	UK/USA#	16.4	StudioCanal	2014
11	The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	UK/USA#	16.0	20th Century Fox	2015
12	Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy	UK/Fra/Ger	14.2	StudioCanal	2011
13	Shaun the Sheep the Movie	UK/Fra	13.8	StudioCanal	2015
14	The Lady in the Van*	UK/USA#	13.0	Sony Pictures	2015
15	Trainspotting	UK	12.4	PolyGram	1996
16	Gosford Park	UK/USA#	12.3	Entertainment	2002
17	St Trinian's	UK	12.3	Entertainment	2007
18	A Fish Called Wanda	UK/USA#	12.0	UIP	1988
19	StreetDance 3D	UK/Ger/Ita	11.8	Vertigo Films	2010
20	Kick-Ass	UK/USA#	11.8	Universal	2010

Source: Source: comScore, BFI RSU analysis

Notes:

Figures have not been inflation adjusted.

Box office gross = cumulative total up to 21 February 2016.

* Film still on release on 21 February 2016.

Film made with independent (non-studio) US support or with the independent arm of a US studio.

INFLATION-ADJUSTED TOP 20 INDEPENDENT UK FILMS AT THE UK BOX OFFICE, 1979-2015

Table 6 shows an inflation-adjusted box office chart based on the top 20 highest grossing independent UK films released at the UK box office since 1979 (when coverage of leading titles begins).

The two leading titles from the previous table, the 2011 releases *The King's Speech* and *The Inbetweeners* Movie, retain their first and second places in the inflation-adjusted chart with grosses of £48.3 million and £47.5 million respectively. *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994) is in third place with £44.3 million, *Paddington* (2014) is fourth with £37.9 million and *Slumdog Millionaire* (2009) is fifth with £35.2 million.

Five films released before 1990 appear in the top 20, with A Fish Called Wanda (1988) leading the pack in seventh place with an inflation-adjusted £25.6 million. The oldest release is Monty Python's Life of Brian (1979) which is in eighth place with £23.9 million. Shirley Valentine (1989) is in ninth place with £22.8 million, Gandhi (1982) is 10th with £22.3 million and Flash Gordon (1980) is 12th with £21.7 million.

Two releases from 2015 make the chart. Legend is in 15th place with £18.4 million and The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel is 18th with £16 million.

Table 6 Top 20 highest grossing independent UK films at the UK box office, 1979-2015 (inflation adjusted¹)

	Title	Country of origin	UK box office total (£ million)	Distributor	Year of release
1	The King's Speech	UK	48.3	Momentum	2011
2	The Inbetweeners Movie	UK	47.5	Entertainment	2011
З	Four Weddings and a Funeral	UK	44.3	Carlton	1994
4	Paddington	UK/Fra	37.9	StudioCanal	2014
5	Slumdog Millionaire	UK	35.2	Pathé	2009
6	The Inbetweeners 2	UK	33.4	Entertainment	2014
7	A Fish Called Wanda	UK/USA#	25.6	UIP	1988
8	Monty Python's Life of Brian	UK	23.9	UIP	1979
9	Shirley Valentine	UK	22.8	UIP	1989
10	Gandhi	UK/Ind	22.3	Sony Pictures	1982
11	The Woman in Black	UK/USA/Swe [#]	22.2	Momentum	2012
12	Flash Gordon	UK	21.7	EMI	1980
13	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	UK/USA/Ind#	21.2	20th Century Fox	2012
14	Trainspotting	UK	18.6	PolyGram	1996
15	Legend	UK/Fra/USA#	18.4	StudioCanal	2015
16	Gosford Park	UK/USA#	16.6	Entertainment	2002
17	The Imitation Game	UK/USA#	16.4	StudioCanal	2014
18	The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	UK/USA#	16.0	20th Century Fox	2015
19	Bend it Like Beckham	UK/Ger	15.5	Lionsgate	2002
20	Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy	UK/Fra/Ger	15.0	StudioCanal	2011

Source: comScore, BFI RSU analysis

Notes:

 $^{\rm 1}$ The 2015 £ is calculated using the HMT UK GDP deflator which can be found at

https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gdp-deflators-at-market-prices-and-money-gdp-december-2015-quarterly-national-accounts. # Film made with independent (non-studio) US support or with the independent arm of a US studio.



Research & Statistics Unit 21 Stephen Street, London W1T 1LN bfi.org.uk/statistics