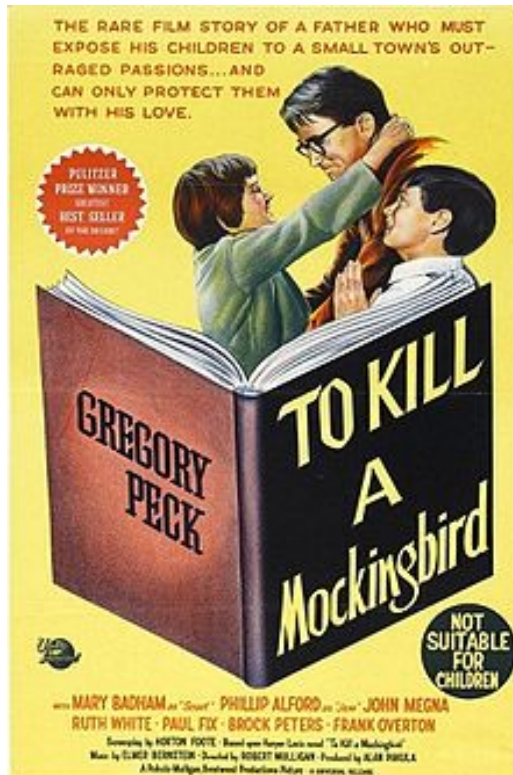


# To Kill a Mockingbird (1962)



Theatrical release poster (wikipedia)

## Tomatometer:

[All Critics](#)

# 94

Average Rating: 8.7/10

Reviews Counted: 49

Fresh: 46 | Rotten: 3

[Top Critics](#)

# 80

Average Rating: 7.9/10

Critic Reviews: 5

Fresh: 4 | Rotten: 1

No consensus yet.

[audience](#)

# 91

[liked it](#)

Average Rating: 3.8/5

User Ratings: 152,318

## Movie Info

Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning autobiographical novel was translated to film in 1962 by Horton Foote and the producer/director team of Robert Mulligan and Alan J. Pakula. Set in a small Alabama town in the 1930s, the story focuses on scrupulously honest, highly respected lawyer Atticus Finch, magnificently embodied by Gregory Peck. Finch puts his career on the line when he agrees to represent Tom Robinson (Brock Peters), a black man accused of rape. The trial and the events surrounding it are seen through the eyes of Finch's six-year-old daughter Scout (Mary Badham). While Robinson's trial gives the film its momentum, there are plenty of anecdotal occurrences before and after the court date: Scout's ever-strengthening bond with older brother Jem (Philip Alford), her friendship with precocious young Dill Harris (a character based on Lee's childhood chum Truman Capote and played by John Megna), her father's no-nonsense reactions to such life-and-death crises as a rampaging mad dog, and especially Scout's reactions to, and relationship with, Boo Radley (Robert Duvall in his movie debut), the reclusive "village idiot" who turns out to be her salvation when she is attacked by a venomous bigot. *To Kill a Mockingbird* won Academy Awards for Best Actor (Peck), Best Adapted Screenplay, and Best Art Direction. ~ Hal Erickson, Rovi

[Unrated](#), 2 hr. 10 min.

[Drama](#), [Classics](#)

Directed By: [Robert Mulligan](#)

Written By: [Horton Foote](#)

Universal International Pictures

[[www.rottentomatoes.com](http://www.rottentomatoes.com)]

# To Kill a Mockingbird (Film)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

***To Kill a Mockingbird*** is a 1962 American drama film adaptation of Harper Lee's novel of the same name, directed by Robert Mulligan. It stars Mary Badham in the role of Scout and Gregory Peck in the role of Atticus Finch.

In 1995, the film was listed in the National Film Registry. It also ranks twenty-fifth on the American Film Institute's 10th anniversary list of the greatest American movies of all time. In 2003, AFI named Atticus Finch the greatest movie hero of the 20th century.

*To Kill a Mockingbird* marks the film debuts of Robert Duvall, William Windom, and Alice Ghostley.

## Plot

The film's young protagonists, Jean Louise "Scout" Finch (Mary Badham) and her brother Jem (Phillip Alford), live in the fictional town of Maycomb, Alabama, during the 1930s. The story covers three years, during which Scout and Jem undergo changes in their lives. They begin as innocent children, who spend their days happily playing games with each other and spying on Arthur "Boo" Radley (Robert Duvall), who has not been seen for many years by anybody as a result of never leaving his house and about whom many wicked rumors circulate. Their father, Atticus (Gregory Peck), is a town lawyer and has a strong belief that all people are to be treated fairly, to turn the other cheek, and to stand for what you believe. He also allows his children to call him by his first name. Through their father's work as a lawyer, Scout and Jem begin to learn of the racism and evil prevalent in their town, and mature painfully and quickly as they are exposed to it.

The kids follow Atticus to watch a rape trial, in which an innocent black man, Tom Robinson, is wrongfully found guilty of raping Mayella Ewell, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Among Atticus' chief arguments, he points out that Tom is crippled in his left arm, and that the

supposed rapist would have had to make extensive use of his left hand to have carried out the crime as it was being described by the teenage "victim" and her father. Atticus also brings to light the alarmingly unusual and suspicious fact that the girl had not even been examined by a doctor to check for signs of rape after the supposed assault. Atticus earnestly pleads to the jury for them to cast aside their prejudices against blacks and instead to focus on the evidence of Tom's obvious innocence. Tom is doomed, however, when he takes the stand in his own defense and reveals that he felt pity for the victim due to her circumstances.

Atticus arrives home to find out that Tom has been killed in an attempt to escape from jail. Atticus is subsequently vilified by some of the locals for his having defended a black man, and the whole town is in quite a stir over the matter for a good while. After a few months, things appear to have settled down, and Scout goes to an Autumn Harvest pageant with Jem. On their way home that night, Scout and Jem are attacked by the vengeful Bob Ewell, the drunkard father (and the real assailant) of the girl whom Tom Robinson had been falsely accused of molesting. Mr. Ewell slashes at Scout with a knife, but the chicken-wire framework of her pageant costume protects her from the blade. During the struggle, Jem is knocked unconscious and his arm is broken. But then Bob Ewell is overpowered and killed by a tall dark figure who suddenly appears on the scene. Scout sees the whole thing from a small view hole in her ham costume, which she is still wearing.

Jem is carried home by this mysterious man, who turns out to be the previously mentioned Arthur "Boo" Radley. Afterwards it is revealed that Boo — in caring appreciation for Scout's and Jem's not having taunted and shunned him the way other townspeople had done — had for a long time assumed the role of the children's guardian angel, often secretly watching over and following a distance behind Scout and Jem when they were out at night, to help them and protect them from harm. The film ends with Scout considering the past three years' events from Boo's point of view, and with Atticus watching over the sleeping Jem.

## Cast

- Gregory Peck as Atticus Finch
- Mary Badham as Jean Louise "Scout" Finch
- Phillip Alford as Jeremy Atticus "Jem" Finch
- Robert Duvall as Arthur "Boo" Radley
- John Megna as Charles Baker "Dill" Harris
- Alice Ghostley as Stephanie Crawford
- Brock Peters as Tom Robinson
- Frank Overton as Sheriff Heck Tate
- Rosemary Murphy as Maude "Maudie" Atkinson
- Ruth White as Mrs. Dubose
- Estelle Evans as Calpurnia
- Richard Hale as Nathan Radley
- James K Anderson as Robert E. Lee "Bob" Ewell
- Collin Wilcox as Mayella Violet Ewell
- William Windom as Mr. Gilmer, District Attorney
- Paul Fix as Judge John Taylor
- Bill Walker as Reverend Sykes
- David Crawford as David Robinson
- Dan White as Mob leader (*uncredited*)
- Crahan Denton as Walter Cunningham, Sr.
- Steven Charles Condit as Walter Cunningham, Jr. (*uncredited*)
- Kim Hamilton as Helen Robinson (*uncredited*)
- Jester Hairston as Spence Robinson, Tom Robinson's father (*uncredited*)
- Kim Stanley as adult Jean Louise "Scout" Finch (*voice only, narrator — uncredited*)

## Soundtrack

*All music composed by Elmer Bernstein; A re-recording has been performed by the Royal Scottish National Orchestra conducted by the composer.*

1. "Main Title" 3:21
2. "Remember Mama" 1:08
3. "Atticus Accepts The Case - Roll in the Tire" 2:06
4. "Creepy Caper - Peek-A-Boo" 4:10
5. "Ewell's Hatred" 3:33
6. "Jem's Discovery" 3:47
7. "Tree Treasure" 4:23
8. "Lynch Mob" 3:04
9. "Guilty Verdict" 3:10
10. "Ewell Regret It" 2:11
11. "Footsteps in the Dark" 2:07
12. "Assault in the Shadows" 2:28

13. "Boo Who" 3:00

14. "End Title" 3:25

## Critical response

Gregory Peck's performance became synonymous with the role and character of Atticus Finch. Alan J. Pakula remembered hearing from Peck when he was first approached with the role: "He called back immediately. No maybes. [...] I must say the man and the character he played were not unlike." Peck later said in an interview that he was drawn to the role because the book reminded him of growing up in La Jolla, California. "Hardly a day passes that I don't think how lucky I was to be cast in that film," Peck said in a 1997 interview. "I recently sat at a dinner next to a woman who saw it when she was 14 years old, and she said it changed her life. I hear things like that all the time."

The 1962 softcover edition of the novel opens with the following: "The Southern town of Maycomb, Alabama reminds me of the California town I grew up in. The characters of the novel are like people I knew as a boy. I think perhaps the great appeal of the novel is that it reminds readers everywhere of a person or a town they have known. It is to me a universal story - moving, passionate and told with great humor and tenderness. Gregory Peck"

Upon Peck's death in 2003, Brock Peters, who played Tom Robinson in the film version, quoted Harper Lee at Peck's eulogy, saying, "Atticus Finch gave him an opportunity to play himself." Peters concluded his eulogy stating, "To my friend Gregory Peck, to my friend Atticus Finch, vaya con Dios." Peters remembered the role of Tom Robinson when he recalled, "It certainly is one of my proudest achievements in life, one of the happiest participations in film or theater I have experienced." Peters remained friends not only with Peck but with Mary Badham throughout his life.

## Awards and honors

In 1995, *To Kill a Mockingbird* was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant." It is also Robert Duvall's big-screen debut, as the misunderstood recluse Boo Radley.

Duvall was cast on the recommendation of screenwriter Horton Foote, who met him at Neighborhood Playhouse in New York City where Duvall starred in a 1957 production of Foote's play, *The Midnight Caller*.

The American Film Institute named Atticus Finch the greatest movie hero of the 20th century. Additionally, the AFI ranked the movie second on their *100 Years... 100 Cheers* list, behind *It's a Wonderful Life*. The film was ranked number 34 on AFI's list of the 100 greatest movies of all time, but moved up to number 25 on the 10th Anniversary list. In June 2008, the AFI revealed its "Ten top Ten"—the best ten films in ten "classic" American film genres—after polling over 1,500 people from the creative community. *To Kill a Mockingbird* was acknowledged as the best film in the courtroom drama genre.

In 2007, Hamilton was honored by the Harlem community for her part in the movie. She is the last surviving African-American adult who had a speaking part in the movie. When told of the award, she said, "I think it is terrific. I'm very pleased and very surprised."

### **Academy Awards**

The film won three Academy Awards out of the eight for which it was nominated:

- Academy Award for Best Actor — Gregory Peck
- Academy Award for Best Art Direction - Set Decoration, Black-and-White — (Henry Bumstead, Alexander Golitzen, and Oliver Emert)
- Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay - Horton Foote

Other nominations were for Best Picture (Producer, Alan J. Pakula), Best Director (Robert Mulligan), Best Cinematography, Black-and-White (Russell Harlan), Best Actress in a Supporting Role (Mary Badham), and Best Music, Score — Substantially Original (Elmer Bernstein)

### **Golden Globe Awards**

- Golden Globe Award for Best Actor - Motion Picture Drama — Gregory Peck
- Golden Globe Award for Best Original Score

— Motion Picture — Elmer Bernstein

- Golden Globe Award for Best Film Promoting International Understanding — *To Kill a Mockingbird*

### **Cannes Film Festival**

The film was selected for the 1963 Cannes Film Festival in feature film category, winning the Gary Cooper Award.