

Road House (2024 film)

Road House is a 2024 American <u>action film</u> that is a remake of the 1989 film <u>Road House</u> and stars <u>Jake Gyllenhaal</u> as an ex-UFC fighter who takes a job as a bouncer at a Florida Keys road house. The film is directed by <u>Doug Liman</u>, written by Anthony Bagarozzi and <u>Chuck Mondry</u> and produced by <u>Joel Silver</u>. It also stars <u>Daniela Melchior</u>, <u>Conor McGregor</u> (in his feature film debut), J. D. Pardo, Arturo Castro and Billy Magnussen.

Road House premiered on March 8, 2024, at the opening night of the South by Southwest festival, and was released by Amazon MGM Studios via Prime Video on March 21, 2024. It received a varied reception from critics, with 43% of reviews being positive, 41% mixed, and 15% negative. [3]

Plot

Troubled former <u>UFC</u> <u>middleweight</u> fighter Elwood Dalton makes a living scamming fighters on the underground circuit. He is approached by Frankie, the owner of an unruly roadhouse in the <u>Florida Keys</u> community of Glass Key, who offers him a job as head bouncer. Initially hesitant, Dalton takes up the offer after narrowly averting a suicide attempt with a freight train that destroys his car. He takes a bus to Frankie's establishment, called simply The Road House, and befriends Charlie, a teenager who runs a bookstore with her father, Stephen.

At the Road House, Dalton fends off a motorcycle gang working for local crime boss Ben Brandt and personally drives the injured thugs to the hospital, where he meets Ellie, a doctor who tends to his injuries. Staying in Frankie's disused houseboat, Dalton mentors the other bouncers and becomes popular with the locals. After an attempt on his life by gang leader Dell, Dalton finds him lying in wait at his houseboat. He throws Dell overboard but is unable to save him from being killed and eaten by a crocodile.

Knox, a psychotic enforcer, is tasked by Brandt's incarcerated father to hunt down Dalton. After an unexpected date with Ellie, Dalton is confronted at gunpoint by Sheriff, who tells him to leave town. However, Ellie, revealed to be the sheriff's daughter, intervenes. She explains that her father is in league with Brandt, who has inherited his wealthy father's drug empire. Brandt meets Dalton at the Road House and taunts him about his past: In a UFC

Road House



Release poster

Release poster	
Directed by	Doug Liman
Screenplay by	Anthony Bagarozzi Charles Mondry
Story by	Anthony Bagarozzi Charles Mondry David Lee Henry
Based on	Road House by David Lee Henry Hilary Henkin
Produced by	Joel Silver
Starring	Jake Gyllenhaal Daniela Melchior

title fight against a friend, Dalton was overcome with rage and killed his opponent in the ring. Knox arrives with Brandt's men, and an all-out bar fight ensues, leaving Dalton badly beaten.

Frankie admits that Brandt has been buying up property to build an expensive resort, but she is the lone holdout. Dalton decides to leave town but discovers that Charlie and Stephen are in the hospital after Brandt's men burned down their bookstore. Enraged, Dalton kills one of the thugs responsible and captures a sheriff's deputy making a large delivery of Brandt's illicit cash, framing the deputy for the murder and taking the money. The sheriff soon informs Dalton that Brandt has kidnapped Ellie and will exchange her for the money.

Stealing a bomb-laden motorboat to reach Brandt's <u>catamaran</u> <u>yacht</u>, Dalton finds him with the sheriff, who tells him the kidnapping was a lie to lure Dalton aboard. However, Brandt reveals that he *is* holding Ellie hostage. Tempers flare as Knox approaches in his boat, but Dalton detonates the motorboat and finds Ellie below deck, attempting to smash a window. Fleeing the sinking yacht, Brandt recaptures Ellie while Dalton commandeers Knox's boat. Catching up to Brandt, Dalton and Ellie leap off as Brandt is launched on top of the Road House.

Climbing up on a causeway, Knox carjacks a pickup truck and crashes into the Road House, leading to a brutal fistfight with Dalton. When Brandt orders him to kill Dalton, Knox snaps Brandt's neck instead. He prepares to finish off Dalton with a shard of wood, but Dalton gains the upper hand and repeatedly stabs Knox into submission. The sheriff arrives, agreeing to cover up for Dalton.

	Billy Magnussen Jessica Williams Joaquim de Almeida Conor McGregor
Cinematography	Henry Braham
Edited by	Doc Crotzer
Music by	Christophe Beck
Production companies	Metro- Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures Silver Pictures
Distributed by	Amazon MGM Studios
Release dates	March 8, 2024 (<u>SXSW</u>) March 21, 2024
	(United States)
Running time	121 minutes ^[1]
Country	United States
Language	English
Budget	\$85 million ^[2]

As Frankie and Stephen begin to rebuild, Charlie says goodbye to Dalton as he waits for his bus out of town. Stephen discovers Dalton has left them the trunk of cash as the bus pulls away. In a mid-credits scene, Knox has survived and assaults the hospital staff, leaving in his gown.

Cast

- Jake Gyllenhaal as Dalton
- Daniela Melchior as Ellie
- Conor McGregor as Knox
- Billy Magnussen as Ben Brandt
- Jessica Williams as Frankie
- B.K. Cannon as Laura
- Joaquim de Almeida as Sheriff
- Austin Post as Carter
- Lukas Gage as Billy

- Dominique Columbus as Reef
- Arturo Castro as Moe
- JD Pardo as Dell
- Beau Knapp as Vince
- Hannah Lanier as Charlie
- Kevin Carroll as Stephen
- Robert Menery as Jack
- Darren Barnet as Sam
- Travis Van Winkle as Dex
- Jay Hieron as Jax "Jetway" Harris

Production

Development

In November 2013, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures began development on the film with Rob Cohen directing and Michael Stokes writing. In September 2015, Cohen and Stokes had vacated the project while mixed martial arts (MMA) fighter Ronda Rousey was cast in the lead role with filming projected to begin sometime the following year. The next month, Nick Cassavetes boarded the film as writer and director. The project was then put on hold until November 2021, when MGM began another attempt, with Jake Gyllenhaal set to star and Doug Liman to direct. The studio prioritized the film despite Gyllenhaal and Liman's individual commitments to Guy Ritchie's The Covenant and Everest. A search for a new writer began to revise a previous draft by Anthony Bagarozzi and Chuck Mondry. By August 2022, Sheldon Turner had turned in a rewrite of the script. Ultimately, Bagarozzi and Mondry received final screenplay credit, with story credit given to the duo and the original's story writer David Lee Henry.

Early on, Amazon gave Gyllenhaal and the filmmakers a choice between a \$60 million production budget and a theatrical release or an \$85 million budget and have the film go straight to streaming, and they decided on the latter. [2]

Casting

The project was officially greenlit in August 2022 by Amazon Studios, [12] which had purchased MGM five months earlier. Daniela Melchior, Billy Magnussen, Conor McGregor, Gbemisola Ikumelo, Lukas Gage, Hannah Love Lanier, Travis Van Winkle, B.K. Cannon, Arturo Castro, Dominique Columbus, Beau Knapp and Bob Menery were added to the cast alongside Gyllenhaal. Joaquim de Almeida, Darren Barnet, Kevin Carroll and J. D. Pardo were added to the cast later in the month. In June 2023, Jessica Williams revealed she has a role in the film.

Filming

Filming began in the <u>Dominican Republic</u> on August 23, 2022. [18][19] On March 3, 2023, Gyllenhaal shot a scene with former <u>Ultimate Fighting Championship</u> fighter <u>Jay Hieron</u> following the ceremonial weighins for <u>UFC 285</u> at MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada. The scene was done in front of fans

who attended the weigh-ins and included UFC president <u>Dana White</u>, play-by-play announcer <u>Jon Anik</u> and other regular UFC event personnel. A walkout scene with Gyllenhaal was filmed during an intermission in the event.

Music

<u>Volker Bertelmann</u> was to compose the film's score, [22] but in January 2024 it was announced that he had left the project, with Christophe Beck replacing him. [23]

Release

Road House premiered at South by Southwest on March 8, 2024, as the opening night film, and was released in the United States via streaming on Prime Video by Amazon MGM Studios on March 21, 2024. It is the first film to be released as part of the centennial anniversary celebration of the founding of MGM, with a "100th anniversary" variant of its 2021 logo unveiled at the start of the film. The film got a special theatrical release at 17 cinemas operated by the Army & Air Force Exchange Service on March 16, 2024. Liman wrote an editorial piece in *Deadline Hollywood* criticizing Amazon for bypassing a wide theatrical release after they purchased MGM, and announced a \$1 billion investment to release 12–15 films a year theatrically. He wrote that he would not attend the film's premiere at SXSW in protest. Gyllenhaal responded by stating that while he sympathized with Liman's views, Amazon made it clear that it would have a streaming release for the film. Liman ultimately attended the SXSW premiere. Do February 27, 2024, hoping to block the film's release, R. Lance Hill, screenwriter of the original 1989 version, sued MGM and Amazon, claiming copyright infringement and accusing the studio of using AI-generated voices of the actors to complete the project during the 2023 SAG-AFTRA strike.

Reception

On the <u>review aggregator</u> website <u>Rotten Tomatoes</u>, 60% of 195 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 5.6/10. The website's consensus reads: "*Road House* updates a cult classic for a new generation, happily replicating the original's emphasis on cheesy brawn over narrative brains." <u>Metacritic</u>, which uses a <u>weighted average</u>, assigned the film a score of 57 out of 100, based on 46 critics, indicating "mixed or average" reviews. [3]

Owen Gleiberman of <u>Variety</u> gave the film a positive review, writing "If the first <u>Road House</u> was a better <u>Chuck Norris</u> movie, the new one is something more uncanny—it's like a <u>Jason Statham</u> movie directed by <u>Jonathan Demme</u>". He also thought it could have been "a decisive hit" if it had been theatrically released. Christian Zilko of <u>IndieWire</u> gave it a B- grade, with praise for Gyllenhaal and McGregor's performances. He ended his review with, "All in all, this *Road House* is a fitting update to its predecessor's legacy. Not because it's better, or even because it's all that similar, but because it moves with the same unselfconscious stupidity that fueled so many of the '80s blockbusters we remember so fondly". [32]

Chris Wasser of the <u>Irish Independent</u> gave the film two stars. He criticised the story, the performances of Jake Gyllenhaal and Conor McGregor, the direction of <u>Doug Liman</u>, and the fight sequences. [33]

Brian Tallerico of <u>RogerEbert.com</u> gave the film a score of two out of four stars. He criticized the extensive use of CGI for fight sequences. He wrote "Punches and their reactions look like cut scenes in a video game far too often, especially a long bar brawl and a boat sequence in the end that have CGI so janky that I wonder if the reason that Prime didn't want this on a big screen was because people would be less likely to

notice on a small screen". [34] Rocco T. Thompson of <u>Slant Magazine</u> wrote that "any excitement evaporates as it becomes abundantly clear that the well-choreographed match-ups have been accentuated with unfortunate instances of CGI, undercutting the immersion of the action". He gave it a score of one and a half out of four. [35] <u>Kevin Maher of The Times</u> awarded the movie two stars out of five, writing that "Jake Gyllenhaal is embarrassingly outshone by the mixed martial artist Conor McGregor in this pointless remake of the Eighties movie with Patrick Swayze." [36]

Sequel

In March 2024, Gyllenhaal expressed interest in reprising his starring role and developing a sequel. By May of the same year, a sequel was officially announced to be in development with Gyllenhaal reprising the lead role. The CEO of Amazon MGM named Jennifer Salke stated that work on the project is ongoing.

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