

Queenpins

Queenpins is a 2021 American comedy film written and directed by Aron Gaudet and Gita Pullapilly. It stars Kristen Bell, Kirby Howell-Baptiste, Paul Walter Hauser, Bebe Rexha, and Vince Vaughn. Ben Stiller serves as an executive producer under his Red Hour Productions banner.

Queenpins was released in a limited theatrical release via Cinemark in the United States on September 10, 2021, by STXfilms and in the United States on Paramount+ on September 30, 2021. The film received mixed reviews from critics.

The film is loosely based on the story of Robin Ramirez, Amiko (Amy) Fountain, and Marilyn Johnson who were arrested by the Phoenix Police in 2012. The police found more than \$25 million of fake coupons in Ramirez's house and seized more than \$2 million worth of assets including 22 firearms, 21 vehicles, and a 40 feet (12 m) boat.^[2]

Plot

Dejected and frustrated suburban housewife Connie Kaminski, a three-time gold-medal-winning former Olympic racewalker, has followed the conventional life path set for her by society ever since she was young. Her sacrifices have never been appreciated and she has been overlooked by her husband Rick, an IRS senior audit specialist, her loved ones, and the rest of society. Alienated by her uninspiring existence being unemployed and having suffered a miscarriage in an attempt to conceive a child, Connie commiserates with her best friend Joanna "JoJo" Johnson, who has been unable to secure proper employment since having her identity stolen and thus lives with her mother Josephine, attempting to generate revenue by making YouTube videos while being amorously pursued by the local mailman, Earl.

After a particularly frustrating day, Connie writes a complaint letter to General Mills about the Wheaties she ate being stale, and soon, she receives a coupon for a free box of cereal. Greg Garcia, a cashier at her local A&G Family Marts store, explains to her that companies habitually respond to complaint letters by sending coupons for free items. She and JoJo then learn that the coupons originate from an Advanced Solutions

Queenpins



Theatrical release poster

Directed by	<u>Aron Gaudet</u> <u>Gita Pullapilly</u>
Written by	<u>Aron Gaudet</u> <u>Gita Pullapilly</u>
Produced by	<u>Linda McDonough</u> <u>Nicky Weinstock</u> <u>Ben Stiller</u>
Starring	<u>Kristen Bell</u> <u>Kirby Howell-Baptiste</u> <u>Paul Walter Hauser</u> <u>Bebe Rexha</u> <u>Vince Vaughn</u>
Cinematography	<u>Andrew Wehde</u>
Edited by	<u>Kayla Emter</u>
Music by	<u>Siddhartha Khosla</u>
Production companies	<u>AGC Studios</u> <u>Marquee</u> <u>Entertainment</u>

factory in Chihuahua, Mexico, deciding to travel there and collect the coupons to redistribute to other mothers and wives. They encounter married employees Alejandro and Rosa Diaz, who agree to send them the unused coupons. Afterwards, the duo begins their own website and small business "Savvy Super Saver", which helps them sell numerous coupons and generate profit. However, Ken Miller, a hapless loss prevention officer for the A&G Family Marts stores in the Southwestern United States, learns about the coupons and the losses several companies are taking, and pressures his superiors before ultimately deciding to handle the case himself.

The duo's account is frozen due to suspicious activity, so Connie realizes they need to prove their business is legitimate. They contact the hacker who stole JoJo's identity, Tempe Tina, and are taken to her secret location, where she instructs them on how to conceal their operation and secure their money, suggesting they use JoJo's cosmetics brand Back 2 Black to disguise their coupon business. After six months, they figure their money is safe to use, but soon realize they need to spend and clean it as a backup plan. Tina then contacts them and criticizes their overspending, explaining that since their money was always clean, their purchases are merely causing increasing suspicions; she further instructs them to deposit money back into the bank in small increments and to sell off all their big purchases, including sports cars, boats, planes, and guns.

Meanwhile, Ken is partnered with U.S. postal inspector Simon Kilmurry. The duo bond on their mission, with Simon sympathizing with Ken's unwavering devotion to loss prevention. They interview people from grocery stores that the ladies frequent, almost all of whom recognize Connie due to her constantly irritating coupon usage, even successfully linking her to the "Savvy Super Saver" website as she uses its slogan while shopping. The duo then interview a group of postal workers, who remember JoJo, especially because Earl is always watching her videos.

After gathering sufficient evidence, Simon and Ken finally get agents to arrest the pair. While JoJo is released on bail, Rick visits Connie only so he can admonish her, having been informed by Simon that she and JoJo have defrauded over 240 companies of tens of millions of dollars. Having had enough of his lack of support, she declares that she wants a divorce. Though the pair face forty-years-to-life, the companies that they victimized clandestinely press the courts for leniency to avoid bad press, resulting in ten days suspended imprisonment plus one year of probation for JoJo and eleven months incarceration (parole eligible in eight) for Connie. Though most of their fraudulent earnings have been confiscated, the pair have hundreds of thousands of dollars from their illegal activities stashed away, and JoJo starts a relationship with Earl and relocates to Montenegro, where the pair can immediately restart the scam upon Connie's release since the country does not extradite suspects. It is also revealed that Connie, after numerous unsuccessful attempts to conceive following her miscarriage, is finally pregnant through in vitro fertilization.

	<u>Red Hour Productions</u>
Distributed by	<u>STXfilms</u> <u>Paramount+</u> (through <u>Showtime</u>)
Release date	September 10, 2021 (United States)
Running time	110 minutes
Country	United States
Language	English
Budget	\$6.7 million ^[1]
Box office	\$1.2 million

Cast

- Kristen Bell as Connie Kaminski
- Kirby Howell-Baptiste as Joanna "JoJo" Johnson
- Paul Walter Hauser as Ken Miller

- [Vince Vaughn](#) as Simon Kilmurry
- [Joel McHale](#) as Rick Kaminski
- [Bebe Rexha](#) as Tempe Tina
- [Dayo Okeniyi](#) as Earl
- [Greta Oglesby](#) as Josephine "Mama Josie" Johnson, JoJo's mother
- [Jack McBrayer](#) as Agent Park
- [Michael Masini](#) as Agent Harris
- [Annie Mumolo](#) as Crystal
- [Stephen Root](#) as Agent Flanagan
- [Paul Rust](#) as Albert Anderson
- [Timm Sharp](#) as the gun dealer
- [Eduardo Franco](#) as Greg Garcia, the cashier

In addition, the scenes involving the gun sale include short appearances by co-director and co-writer Aron Gaudet's brother Nick as a barista, as well as actor and director [Nick Cassavetes](#) as Captain Pain, the leader of the group buying the guns.

Production

In May 2019, it was announced [Kristen Bell](#) and [Leslie Jones](#) had joined the cast of the film, with [Aron Gaudet](#) and [Gita Pullapilly](#) directing from a screenplay they wrote.^[3] In July 2020, it was announced [Paul Walter Hauser](#) and [Vince Vaughn](#) had joined the cast of the film.^[4] In September 2020, [Kirby Howell-Baptiste](#) joined the cast of the film, replacing Jones, with [Ben Stiller](#) joining as an executive producer under his [Red Hour Productions](#) banner, with [STX Entertainment](#) set to distribute.^[5] In October 2020, [Bebe Rexha](#) joined the cast of the film.^[6] In December 2020, [Dayo Okeniyi](#), [Joel McHale](#), [Nick Cassavetes](#), [Michael Masini](#), [Paul Rust](#), [Eduardo Franco](#), [Marc Evan Jackson](#), [Lidia Porto](#), [Greta Oglesby](#), [Jack McBrayer](#) and [Annie Mumolo](#) joined the cast of the film.^[7]

Principal photography began in October 2020, during the [COVID-19 pandemic](#).^[8]

Release

In June 2021, Showtime and Paramount+ acquired U.S. pay TV and streaming rights to the film for about \$20 million.^[1] It was released on September 10, 2021.^[9]

Reception




Box office

Other box office grosses include Russia (\$326,012), Ukraine (\$221,109), Netherlands (\$200,244), United Arab Emirates (\$123,281), Hungary (\$88,609), Croatia (\$41,810), Lithuania (\$18,354), Iceland (\$11,774), South Africa (\$5,900) and Portugal (\$5,501).^[10]

Critical reception

On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, the film holds an approval rating of 47% based on 62 reviews with an average rating of 5.40/10. The site's critics consensus reads: "Lowbrow humor and inconsistent storytelling undercut *Queenpins*' talented cast, making this coupon-clipping comedy a disappointingly poor bargain."^[11] On Metacritic, the film has a weighted average score of 45 out of 100, based on 20 critics, indicating "mixed or average reviews".^[12] Hauser's performance as fraud specialist Ken Miller received praise from critics who praised his onscreen chemistry with Vaughn while noting that the film established him as a comedic actor after his breakthrough role in 2019's *Richard Jewell*.^[13]

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External links

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 - *Queenpins* (<https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/queenpins>) at Rotten Tomatoes
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