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# The Fall Guy (2024 film)

*The Fall Guy* is a 2024 American action comedy film directed by David Leitch and written by Drew Pearce, loosely based on the 1980s TV series of the same title. The plot follows a stuntman (Ryan Gosling) working on his ex-girlfriend's (Emily Blunt) directorial debut action film, only to find himself involved in a conspiracy surrounding the film's lead actor (Aaron Taylor-Johnson). The cast also features Hannah Waddingham, Teresa Palmer, Stephanie Hsu, and Winston Duke.

*The Fall Guy* premiered at SXSW on March 12, 2024, and was released in the United States on May 3, by Universal Pictures. The film received positive reviews from critics and grossed \$129 million worldwide. It also set a Guinness World Record for the most cannon rolls performed in a car.

## Plot

Colt Seavers, a Hollywood stunt performer, works as the stunt double for famous action star Tom Ryder. However, he is severely injured during a stunt gone wrong and he abandons his career and his girlfriend Jody Moreno, a camerawoman.

Eighteen months later, Colt, now a valet for a small Mexican restaurant, is contacted by Gail Meyer, Tom's film producer. She tells him that Jody is directing her first film, a science fiction epic titled *Metalstorm*, and wants Colt to join the production in Sydney. After arriving on set, Colt learns that Jody never asked for him and is still angry about their breakup, with the movie being a less-than-subtle attempt at airing her grievances at Colt.

Gail reveals that Tom has disappeared after getting into trouble with drug dealers, and she wants Colt to find him before his absence causes the already overbudget film's cancellation. Not wanting Jody's directorial debut ruined, Colt starts to track down Tom. He first goes to Tom's apartment where he is 'attacked' by Tom's girlfriend Iggy. She gives him a lead, so he visits a nightclub, where he meets drug dealer Doone, who tricks Colt into drinking a cocktail laced with hallucinogenic drugs. After getting into a fight with the drug dealer's goons, he visits Tom's hotel room where he finds a dead body in a bathtub full of ice. When Colt returns with the police, he finds the body has disappeared.

| The Fall Guy   |  |
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| Theatrical release poster  |  |
| Directed by  | <u>David Leitch</u>  |
| Written by   | <u>Drew Pearce</u>   |
| Based on   | <u>The Fall Guy</u> by <u>Glen A. Larson</u>   |
| Produced by  | <u>Kelly McCormick</u><br><u>David Leitch</u><br><u>Ryan Gosling</u><br><u>Guymon Casady</u>   |
| Starring   | <u>Ryan Gosling</u><br><u>Emily Blunt</u><br><u>Aaron Taylor-Johnson</u><br><u>Hannah Waddingham</u><br><u>Teresa Palmer</u><br><u>Stephanie Hsu</u> |

Meanwhile, as production of *Metalstorm* continues, Colt and Jody begin to rekindle their relationship until Gail abruptly informs him that he must return to the United States. Instead, he continues looking for Tom by tracking down his PA Alma Milan. They are both attacked by people looking for a phone belonging to Tom in Alma's possession. Colt defeats them after an extended chase through Sydney, involving a rubbish truck. He and his longtime friend Dan Tucker, the stunt coordinator on *Metalstorm*, unlock the phone at Tom's apartment. They discover a video of an intoxicated Tom accidentally killing his previous stuntman Henry. The henchmen attack Colt and Dan, destroying the phone with shotgun pellets.

Dan escapes, but Colt is captured and brought face-to-face with Tom, who has been hiding out on a yacht on Gail's instructions. He reveals that Gail is framing Colt for the crime using deepfake technology to replace Tom's face with Colt's on the incriminating video. Tom also reveals that he orchestrated Colt's "accident." Henry's body is discovered and the doctored video is released on news media, while Gail tries to convince Jody that Colt is guilty. Colt escapes and is presumed dead after a boat chase, though he swims to safety.

The next day, Tom arrives at the *Metalstorm* set with his goons and the production continues. Colt secretly returns to the set and convinces Jody of his innocence. Together, they trick Tom into participating in a stunt sequence and into confessing while he is wired with a lav mike. The rest of the crew, led by Dan, hold off his goons. Gail steals the recording at gunpoint and tries to escape in a helicopter with Tom, but Jody helps Colt leap onto the helicopter in mid-air. He retrieves the recording and falls onto a crash mat prepared by Dan, while the helicopter crashes with Gail and Tom in it. Tom later accidentally blows himself up with stunt pyrotechnics.

*Metalstorm*'s trailer premieres at San Diego Comic-Con, with Jason Momoa replacing Tom as the lead, and the film eventually becomes a box-office hit. Colt gets exonerated, and he and Jody get back together.

## Cast

- Ryan Gosling as Colt Seavers, a seasoned action stuntman<sup>[9]</sup>
- Emily Blunt as Jody Moreno, Colt's ex-girlfriend and a first-time director<sup>[9]</sup>
- Aaron Taylor-Johnson as Tom Ryder, a famous action film star<sup>[10]</sup>
- Hannah Waddingham as Gail Meyer, the producer of Jody's movie<sup>[11]</sup>
- Teresa Palmer as Iggy Starr, Tom's girlfriend and co-star<sup>[12]</sup>
- Stephanie Hsu as Alma Milan, Tom's personal assistant<sup>[13]</sup>
- Winston Duke as Dan Tucker, Colt's best friend and stunt coordinator<sup>[10][14]</sup>
- Ben Knight appears as Dressler, Tom's bodyguard

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
|                             | <u>Winston Duke</u>   |
| <b>Cinematography</b>       | <u>Jonathan Sela</u>  |
| <b>Edited by</b>            | <u>Elísabet</u><br><u>Ronaldsdóttir</u>                                 |
| <b>Music by</b>             | <u>Dominic Lewis</u>  |
| <b>Production companies</b> | <u>87North</u><br><u>Productions</u><br><br>Entertainment<br>360        |
| <b>Distributed by</b>       | <u>Universal</u><br><u>Pictures</u>                                     |
| <b>Release dates</b>        | March 12, 2024<br>( <u>SXSW</u> )<br><br>May 3, 2024<br>(United States) |
| <b>Running time</b>         | 126 minutes <sup>[1]</sup>  |
| <b>Country</b>              | United States   |
| <b>Language</b>             | English   |
| <b>Budget</b>               | \$130–135<br>million <sup>[a]</sup>                                     |
| <b>Box office</b>           | \$129.4<br>million <sup>[8][2]</sup>                                    |

Additionally, Lee Majors and Heather Thomas, who starred as Colt and Jody respectively in the original television series, have cameo appearances in the film as prop crew members dressed as police officers in a mid-credit scene,<sup>[15]</sup> while Jason Momoa appears as himself (uncredited).<sup>[16]</sup>

## Production

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### Development

In July 2010, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that a film based on the 1980s series *The Fall Guy* was in development. DreamWorks Pictures had teamed up with producers Walter F. Parkes and Laurie MacDonald on the project,<sup>[17]</sup> and Martin Campbell was in talks to direct the film.<sup>[18]</sup> DreamWorks, through the Walt Disney Studios' Touchstone Pictures distribution label, was to release the film in North America, Latin America, Russia, Australia, and Asia, while Mister Smith Entertainment would have handled sales in the remaining territories. In September 2013, Dwayne Johnson was in negotiations to play the title role and McG was in talks to direct.<sup>[19]</sup>

In September 2020, Ryan Gosling, director David Leitch, and writer Drew Pearce were said to be working on an "unnamed stuntman film" that had been picked up by Universal Pictures.<sup>[20]</sup> In May 2022, it was confirmed this project was a film adaptation of *The Fall Guy*. Loosely based on the TV series, the film is produced by Universal with Leitch's 87North Productions and Gosling's Entertainment 360, with Leitch and Kelly McCormick producing alongside Gosling and Guymon Casady. Pearce is also an executive producer, as is Geoff Shaevitz.<sup>[21][10]</sup> *Variety* reported that the Australian Government and the New South Wales state authorities added funds to the production up to A\$30 million and A\$14.5 million respectively, with Paul Fletcher, Australia's Federal Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, estimating a boom to the local economy, over 1,000 Australian cast and crew, and more than 3,015 Australian film extras.<sup>[22][23]</sup>

Emily Blunt was cast in August 2022.<sup>[24]</sup> Aaron Taylor-Johnson and Stephanie Hsu joined in October,<sup>[25][13]</sup> and Winston Duke, Hannah Waddingham and Teresa Palmer were cast the following month.<sup>[14][11][12]</sup>

Gosling and Blunt said that they took inspiration from Leitch and his producer wife, Kelly McCormick, for the romantic relationship between their characters.<sup>[26][27]</sup> Blunt's role was originally a makeup artist, and it was rewritten to be a first-time director before she received a draft of the script.<sup>[28]</sup> Blunt had some input on the character, stating that "We all kind of built her together, because I think, maybe in the original script, she was quite severe, and that sort of tough director"; she thought it was more interesting to see someone who is "in a situation where they're way over their head".<sup>[28]</sup> For the character, Blunt took some inspiration from director Greta Gerwig and several other people she had met.<sup>[28][29]</sup>

### Filming

Principal photography began in October 2022 in Sydney, Australia,<sup>[30]</sup> at the Disney Studios Australia in Moore Park, Sydney.<sup>[31]</sup> In January 2023, the Sydney Harbour Bridge was closed for several daytime hours for filming of scenes involving Gosling.<sup>[32][33]</sup> *Variety* and *The Hollywood Reporter* reported that the film had a production budget of \$130 million.<sup>[6][7]</sup> *Deadline Hollywood* also stated its \$130 million production cost after Australian tax credits, though added that "some have heard the production cost was even higher at \$150 [million]".<sup>[4]</sup>

The film used practical stunts, with highly choreographed action sequences. Leitch stated, "It was a love letter to stunts. We knew we had to be authentic in that world."<sup>[34]</sup> It broke a Guinness World Record for the most cannon rolls in a car, with eight and a half rolls performed by stunt driver Logan Holladay.<sup>[35][36]</sup> Cannon rolls are performed by firing a cannon-like device into the ground from a moving vehicle.

## Music

*The Fall Guy*'s score was composed by Dominic Lewis.<sup>[37]</sup> The film incorporates songs by AC/DC, Taylor Swift, Kiss, the Darkness, Phil Collins, and Blake Shelton's cover of "Unknown Stuntman", the theme song of the series originally performed by Lee Majors.<sup>[38][39]</sup>

## Post-production

Elísabet Ronaldsdóttir was on set during production, returning to Los Angeles for post-production. Sound was conducted by Frankie Montano, Jon Taylor and the team at Universal StudioPost. Visual effects studios Rising Sun Pictures, Framestore, Cinesite, Crafty Apes, Opsis and Day for Nite were involved. The bulk of VFX work was in the creation of *Metalstorm*, wire and safety removal and cleanup. DI was led by colorist Dave Hussey at Company 3.<sup>[40]</sup>

## Release

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### Theatrical

*The Fall Guy* had its world premiere at SXSW on March 12, 2024.<sup>[41]</sup> It was released in Australia and New Zealand on April 24,<sup>[42]</sup> in the United Kingdom on May 2, and in the United States the following day.<sup>[43][44]</sup> Universal screened *The Fall Guy* at its CinemaCon panel on April 8.<sup>[45]</sup>

### Home media

The film was released digitally on May 21, alongside an extended cut version with 20 minutes of additional footage.<sup>[46]</sup>

## Reception

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### Box office

As of May 21, 2024, *The Fall Guy* has grossed \$64.8 million in the United States and Canada and \$64.5 million in other territories, for a worldwide total of \$129.4 million.<sup>[8][2]</sup>

In the United States and Canada, *The Fall Guy* was released alongside Tarot, and was projected to gross \$30–\$35 million from 4,002 theaters in its opening weekend, with some rival studios estimating it could reach \$40 million.<sup>[6][7]</sup> The film made \$10.5 million on its first day, including \$3.15 million from preview screenings. It went on to underperform, but nevertheless top the box office, debuting at \$27.7 million.<sup>[4]</sup> In

its second weekend the film made \$13.7 million (a drop of 51%), finishing second behind newcomer *Kingdom of the Planet of the Apes*.<sup>[47]</sup> It then made \$8.9 million in its third weekend, finishing in fourth.<sup>[48]</sup>

## Critical response

*The Fall Guy* received positive reviews after its SXSW premiere.<sup>[49][50][51]</sup> On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 82% of 319 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 7.2/10. The website's consensus reads: "With action, comedy, romance, and a pair of marvelously matched stars, *The Fall Guy* might be the rare mainstream movie with something to entertain everyone."<sup>[52]</sup> Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, assigned the film a score of 73 out of 100, based on 57 critics, indicating "generally favorable" reviews.<sup>[53]</sup> Audiences polled by CinemaScore gave the film an average grade of "A−" on an A+ to F scale, while those polled at PostTrak gave it a 90% overall positive score.<sup>[4]</sup>

Writing for RogerEbert.com, Brian Tallerico said that *The Fall Guy* "feels like a pushback against all the CGI-heavy, character-less, humorless blockbusters that have been coming off the content production line" and provides audiences "with what too often feels like a secondary concern in big movies lately: fun".<sup>[54]</sup> *IGN* called the film a "self-reflexive love letter to Hollywood stunt work", and praised Gosling and Blunt's performances and chemistry.<sup>[55]</sup>

Oliver Jones notes at *Observer*, "Rather than indict Hollywood's worst instincts, the film instead echoes them. The action we see Jody undertake as a director is hashing out her relationship grievances with Cole [*sic*] over megaphone in front of her crew. We later discover that her favorite movies are *Notting Hill* and *Love, Actually*, though she likes them less since her breakup with Cole [*sic*]. If *The Fall Guy* reflects how Hollywood views women directors, it's little surprise there are so few of them."<sup>[56]</sup>

## Notes

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- a. Reported production costs for *The Fall Guy* ranged from as low as \$125 million<sup>[2][3]</sup> to as high as \$150 million,<sup>[4][5]</sup> with a majority of trade publications listing the budget at \$130 million.<sup>[6][7]</sup>

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## External links

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- [Official website](https://www.thefallguymovie.com/) (<https://www.thefallguymovie.com/>)
  - *The Fall Guy* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1684562/>) at [IMDb](#)
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