

Luck (2022 film)

Luck is a 2022 animated fantasy comedy film directed by Peggy Holmes and co-directed by Javier Abad, from a screenplay written by Kiel Murray, and a story by Murray and the writing team of Jonathan Aibel and Glenn Berger, based on an original concept created by Rebeca Carrasco, Juan De Dios, and Julián Romero.^[3] Produced by Skydance Animation, the film features the voices of Eva Noblezada, Simon Pegg, Jane Fonda, Whoopi Goldberg, Flula Borg, Lil Rel Howery, Colin O'Donoghue, and John Ratzenberger. Set in the Land of Luck, the story follows the unluckiest person, Sam Greenfield (Noblezada), as she must unite with a talking black cat named Bob (Pegg) to turn her luck around.

The project was announced in July 2017, shortly after Skydance Animation was formed in March 2017, with Paramount Pictures distributing as the schedule for March 2021. *Luck* was subsequently green-lighted by Paramount Animation chief Mireille Soria in April 2018, with Alessandro Carloni signing on to direct the film, from a script by Aibel and Berger. The film underwent many changes during production, such as rewrites, directors, and release dates, and Holmes was later announced as the new director in January 2020, replacing Carloni. Much of the main voice cast, including Noblezada and Pegg, signed on in January 2022, following the casting of Fonda and Goldberg in February and June 2021, respectively. Production was done remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Luck premiered in Madrid on August 2, 2022, and was released on Apple TV+ and in select theaters in the United States on August 5.^[4] The film received mixed reviews from critics, with praise for the voice acting, music, and animation, but criticism for the worldbuilding and plot.

Plot

Sam Greenfield, an orphaned young woman with a life plagued by misfortune, is forced out from her foster home, much to the dismay of her younger friend Hazel, who is hoping to be adopted soon. One night, after sharing food with a black cat, Sam finds a penny she hopes to give to Hazel for her collection of lucky items that may help her get adopted. The next day, Sam notices that the penny has made her luck improve. However, she loses the penny by inadvertently flushing it down a toilet.

Luck



Official release poster

Directed by	<u>Peggy Holmes</u>
Screenplay by	Kiel Murray
Story by	<u>Jonathan Aibel</u> <u>Glenn Berger</u> Kiel Murray
Produced by	<u>John Lasseter</u> <u>David Ellison</u> Dana Goldberg David Eisenmann
Starring	<u>Eva Noblezada</u> <u>Simon Pegg</u> <u>Jane Fonda</u> <u>Whoopi Goldberg</u> <u>Flula Borg</u> <u>Lil Rel Howery</u> <u>Colin O'Donoghue</u>

While bemoaning her error, Sam encounters the cat again and says what happened, which causes the cat to berate her for losing the penny. Shocked, Sam follows the cat through a portal to the Land of Luck, where creatures like leprechauns create good luck for the people on Earth. The cat, named Bob, needs the penny for traveling purposes and will be banished if word gets out that he lost it. Bob and Sam make a deal to get another penny from the Penny depot for Hazel to use before returning it to Bob. Bob uses a button from Sam to pass off as a penny while she sneaks into the Land of Luck using clothes belonging to Bob's personal leprechaun, Gerry. Throughout the journey, Sam comes to learn that bad luck is managed underneath the Land of Luck.

Following a disaster at the Penny depot which causes Gerry to learn about Sam's identity, Gerry uses a drone to retrieve the missing penny on Earth. However, the drone gets lost in the In-Between, a space between the Good and Bad Luck lands. Sam and Bob go to the In-Between, which is managed by a unicorn named Jeff. Jeff manages the Bad Luck Apparat, a machine that keeps bad luck specks from sticking which feeds the Randomizer, another machine that sends both good and bad luck into Earth. Jeff reveals that he found the penny and has returned it to the depot. Undeterred, Sam decides to visit Babe, the dragon who manages the good luck, in hopes to get another penny. Babe tells Sam how better things would be if everyone had good luck before giving her a new penny. But Sam sacrifices her penny after Bob is caught for faking his travel penny to spare him from banishment.

Still wanting to help Hazel, Sam and Bob decide to temporarily shut down the Bad Luck Apparat to prevent bad luck from going to the Randomizer and give Hazel the luck she needs to get adopted. However, the bad luck specks start to clog Jeff's machines and destroy the good luck and bad luck stones within the Randomizer, which itself brings bad luck to the Land of Luck and Earth. Seeing Hazel did not get adopted because of this, learning that Bob is actually an unlucky English cat and having been found out as a human, Sam sulks in remorse. Bob apologizes and says that Hazel is the luckiest girl for having Sam at her side. Sam realizes things can be fixed because she remembers seeing some good luck in Bad Luck land while on her way to the In-Between.

In Bad Luck, they find it in a tiki bar where the bartender, a root monster named Rootie, who is Bob's old friend, gives them a jar of good luck they have been using. They take it to Babe to forge new good and bad luck stones. However, while creating a bad luck stone, Babe makes two good luck stones, wanting to create a world with only good luck. Before she can place them, Sam tells Babe people need bad luck as much as good luck. Realizing her mistake, she allows Sam to place the bad luck stone, and good luck is restored to normal, where Sam sees Hazel getting adopted by a new family. Bob is offered to keep his job at the Land of Luck, but decides he wants to live with Sam.

	<u>John Ratzenberger</u>
Cinematography	Thomas Leavitt Ferran Llàcer Álvarez (camera) Eduardo Suazo (lighting)
Edited by	William J. Caparella
Music by	<u>John Debney</u>
Production company	<u>Skydance Animation</u>
Distributed by	<u>Apple TV+</u>
Release dates	August 2, 2022 (Spain) August 5, 2022 (United States)
Running time	105 minutes ^[1]
Countries	Spain United States
Language	English
Budget	\$140 million+ ^[2]

One year later, on Earth, Hazel's family spends time with Sam and Bob, who have accepted their bad luck.

Voice cast

- [Eva Noblezada](#) as Sam Greenfield, an unlucky human who discovers the Land of Luck and must unite with magical creatures there to turn her luck around^[5]
- [Simon Pegg](#) as Bob, an unlucky anthropomorphic, short haired [black cat](#) with a [Scottish accent](#) who becomes Sam's partner for the journey^[5]
- [Jane Fonda](#) as Babe, a female [dragon](#) who acts as the exuberant CEO of Good Luck and undisputed luckiest ancient being in all the land^[6]
- [Whoopi Goldberg](#) as The Captain, a [leprechaun](#) who acts as the Land of Luck's head of security^[7]
- [Flula Borg](#) as Jeff, a German-accented [unicorn](#) who works as the facilities engineer maintaining the luck distributing machine^[5]
- [Lil Rel Howery](#) as Marvin, Sam's upbeat boss who runs an arts and crafts shop^[5]
- [Colin O'Donoghue](#) as Gerry, a leprechaun who works with Bob^[5]
- [John Ratzenberger](#) as Rootie, a [root monster](#) who runs a [tiki bar](#) and the self-appointed Mayor of Bad Luck^[5]
- [Grey DeLisle](#) as Mrs. Rivera, Saoirse, the Penny Depot boss and additional voices
- [Suzy Nakamura](#) as a social worker
- [Kwaku Fortune](#) as Gael
- [Adelynn Spoon](#) as Hazel, Sam's best friend and roommate at the Summerland Home For Girls^[5]
- [Kari Wahlgren](#) as Hazel's adoptive mother and Aine
- [Nick Thurston](#) as Hazel's adoptive father
 - Thurston also voices a nosy cat
- [Chris Edgerly](#) as a typing Bunny
- [Moe Irvin](#) as Phil the Pig Foreman
- [Fred Tatasciore](#) as Quinn, Fred and additional voices

Production

Development

In March 2017, [Skydance Media](#) formed a multi-year partnership with [Madrid-based](#) animation studio [Ilion Animation Studios](#), forming an animation division called [Skydance Animation](#).^[8] In July, it announced *Luck*.^[9] It would be distributed by [Paramount Pictures](#) as part of their deal with Skydance Media and was given a release date of March 19, 2021.^[10] In April 2018, *Luck* was greenlit by then-[Paramount Animation](#) chief [Mireille Soria](#),^[11] and [Alessandro Carloni](#) signed on to direct the film, from a script by [Jonathan Aibel](#) and [Glenn Berger](#) based on an original concept by Rebeca Carrasco, Juan De Dios and Julián Romero.^{[12][13]} *Luck* had been in development at Ilion before forming its deal with Skydance. Skydance Animation hired former Pixar Animation Studios and [Walt Disney Animation Studios](#) CCO [John Lasseter](#) in late January 2019, as Head of Animation.^{[14][15]}

Following Lasseter's hiring, Soria announced that Paramount Animation would no longer work with Skydance Animation.^[16] *Luck* was still going to be released by Paramount Pictures without Paramount Animation^[17] until Apple TV+ acquired the distribution rights to it in December 2020.^[18] Apple Original Films would replace Paramount as a production company.^[19] On January 14, 2020, Carloni was replaced by Peggy Holmes, who had previously directed *Secret of the Wings* (2012) and *The Pirate Fairy* (2014) for Lasseter, as the film's director.^[20] Kiel Murray, screenwriter for *Cars* (2006) and *Cars 3* (2017), was also hired to rewrite the screenplay, turning it into a workplace fantasy comedy similar to *Monsters, Inc.* through Aibel and Berger were still credited for the story co-written by Murray.^{[21][6]}

One of the core inspirations when researching the myths about *luck* is the main character Sam, having her in foster care to find her forever family.^[22] The main inspiration for Sam and her unluckyness came from television shows such as *I Love Lucy* and *The Carol Burnett Show*, along with other inspiration from *Charlie Chaplin*, *Buster Keaton* and *Donald O'Connor*. In researching luck, workers at Skydance Animation discovered how obsessed people are with the concept, along with some interesting reversals, including how it became random by good and bad luck. For example, black cats are considered good luck in Scotland, which led them to create Bob. By the end of the film, he is revealed to be English as black cats are considered bad luck in England. The land of Luck was designed by production designer Fred Warner to explain both sides being put of a coin.^[23]

Casting

In April 2019, *Emma Thompson* was hired to voice a character in the film, but left the project after Lasseter was hired.^[24] In February 2021, *Jane Fonda* was cast as The Dragon,^[6] and in June, *Whoopi Goldberg* was cast as The Captain.^[7] Other cast members were announced in January 2022, including *Eva Noblezada*, *Simon Pegg*, *Flula Borg*, *Lil Rel Howery*, *Colin O'Donoghue*, *John Ratzenberger* and *Adelynn Spoon*.^[5]

Animation

Animation was provided by *Skydance Animation Madrid* (formerly Ilion Animation Studios) and was also made in Los Angeles and Connecticut. Portions of *production* were done remotely during the *COVID-19 pandemic*.^[25]

Music

Tanya Donelly and *Mt. Joy* were originally attached to compose the score for the film, while William J. Caparella served as lead editor.^[26] However, on November 15, 2021, it was announced that composer *John Debney* replaced them as composer.^[27] Noblezada did a cover of "*Lucky Star*" with additional vocals by Alana Da Fonseca, for the film's soundtrack by *Milan Records*.

Release

Luck was released to *Apple TV+* and in select theaters in the United States on August 5, 2022.^{[5][28]} The film was originally set to be released in theaters on March 19, 2021 by *Paramount Pictures*, but was delayed to February 18, 2022.^{[10][17][29]} On May 8, 2020, Skydance Animation president Holly Edwards revealed

that the rough cut would have test screenings late in the summer of 2020.^[25] On December 16, 2020, Apple TV+ secured the distribution rights to the film, with it retaining the February date, before getting delayed to its current release date.^{[30][31][5]}

Reception

Critical response

On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 48% of 96 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 5.3/10. The website's consensus reads: "*Luck* is inoffensive enough as an animated babysitter, but there are far more original—and entertaining—options for its target audience."^[32] Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, assigned the film a score of 48 out of 100, based on 21 critics, indicating "mixed or average" reviews.^[33]

Peter Bradshaw from *The Guardian* rated the film two stars out of five, describing the script as "utterly zingless and contorted" and writing, "Everything about this robotically made movie looks derivative and contrived; the videogame aesthetic is dull and the quirky high concept plays like a pound-shop knockoff of *Inside Out* and *Soul*."^[34] John Anderson of *The Wall Street Journal* wrote, "The bigger problem is there are too many ideas, and fantastical solutions to manufactured problems, most of which feel as if they're being made up as the movie goes along."^[35] IndieWire's David Ehrlich gave it a D+ grade, calling it "is a terrible idea for a movie, executed poorly, and by someone who used to know better. The best thing I can say about the finished product is that, unlike most forms of bad luck, this one is wonderfully easy to avoid altogether."^[36]

The Sydney Morning Herald's Paul Byrnes gave the film 3/5 stars, writing, "It has lively physical humour and appealing characters. The Scottish cat is a laugh, and the overall voice cast is distinguished, with Jane Fonda and Whoopi Goldberg in significant roles... But at 106 minutes, it's at least 15 minutes too long, with a complicated story that should have been smoothed out in development."^[37] *The Daily Telegraph*'s Robbie Collin gave it 4/5 stars, calling it "a funny, imaginative, beautifully rendered coming-of-age parable, with strong overtones of *Monsters, Inc.* and *Inside Out*."^[38]

Accolades

Award	Date of Ceremony	Category	Recipient(s)	Result	Ref.
<u>Hollywood Music in Media Awards</u>	<u>November 16, 2022</u>	Original Score — Animated Film (Luck)	John Debney	Nominated	^[39]
<u>Annie Awards</u>	<u>February 25, 2023</u>	<u>Outstanding Achievement for Character Design in an Animated Feature Production</u>	Massimiliano Narciso	Nominated	^[40]

Short film

On March 17, 2023, in celebration of St. Patrick's Day, Apple TV+ released a short film titled *Bad Luck Spot!*, directed by Matt Youngberg. It shows the Hazmat bunnies trying to get rid of a single bad luck crystal.^[41]

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External links

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