

Barbie (film)

Barbie is a 2023 American fantasy comedy film directed by Greta Gerwig from a screenplay she wrote with Noah Baumbach. Based on the eponymous fashion dolls by Mattel, it is the first live-action Barbie film after numerous computer-animated films and specials. The film stars Margot Robbie as the titular character and Ryan Gosling as Ken, and follows the pair on a journey of self-discovery following an existential crisis. It features a supporting cast that includes America Ferrera, Kate McKinnon, Issa Rae, Rhea Perlman, and Will Ferrell.

A live-action Barbie film was announced in September 2009 by Universal Pictures with Laurence Mark producing. Development began in April 2014, when Sony Pictures acquired the film rights. Following multiple writer and director changes and the casting of Amy Schumer and later Anne Hathaway as Barbie, the rights were transferred to Warner Bros. Pictures in October 2018. Robbie was cast in 2019, after Gal Gadot turned down the role due to scheduling conflicts, and Gerwig was announced as director and co-writer with Baumbach in 2020. The rest of the cast was announced in early 2022, with principal photography occurring primarily at Warner Bros. Studios, Leavesden, in England and at the Venice Beach Skatepark in Los Angeles from March to July of that year.

Barbie premiered at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles on July 9, 2023, and was released in the United States on July 21, by Warner Bros. Pictures. Its simultaneous release with Universal's *Oppenheimer* led to the "Barbenheimer" cultural phenomenon, which encouraged audiences to see both films as a double feature. The film received critical acclaim and has grossed over \$1.404 billion, becoming the highest-grossing film of 2023 as well as the highest-grossing film by a solo female director, the highest-grossing film ever released by Warner Bros., and the 14th highest-grossing film of all time.

Plot

Stereotypical Barbie ("Barbie") and fellow dolls reside in Barbieland; a matriarchal society with different variations of Barbies, Kens, and a group of discontinued models, who are treated like outcasts due to their unconventional traits. While the Kens spend their days playing at the beach, considering it as their profession, the Barbies hold prestigious jobs such as doctors, lawyers, and politicians. Beach Ken ("Ken") is only happy when he is with Barbie and seeks a closer relationship, but Barbie rebuffs him in favor of other activities and female friendships.

One evening at a dance party, Barbie is suddenly stricken with worries about mortality. Overnight, she develops bad breath, cellulite, and flat feet, disrupting her usual routines the next day. Weird Barbie, an outcast due to her disfigurement, tells her she must find the child playing with her in the real world to cure her afflictions. Ken stows away in her convertible to join her, to which Barbie reluctantly agrees.

Arriving at Venice Beach, Barbie punches a man for groping her, leading to her and Ken's brief arrest. Alarmed by their presence, Mattel's CEO orders their recapture. Barbie tracks down her owner, a tween girl named Sasha, who criticizes her for encouraging unrealistic beauty standards. Distraught, Barbie discovers that Gloria, a Mattel employee and Sasha's mother, inadvertently catalyzed her existential crisis after Gloria began playing with Sasha's old Barbie toys in a similar state. Mattel attempts to put Barbie in a toy box for remanufacturing, but she escapes with Gloria and Sasha's help and the three travel to Barbieland with Mattel executives in pursuit.

Meanwhile, Ken learns about the patriarchal system and feels respected for the first time. Returning to Barbieland, he persuades the other Kens to take over, and the Barbies are indoctrinated into submissive roles, such as agreeable girlfriends, housewives, and maids. Barbie arrives and

unsuccessfully tries to convince Ken and the Barbies to return to the way things were. She becomes depressed, but Gloria gives an inspirational speech about society's conflicting expectations of women, restoring Barbie's self-confidence.

With the assistance of Sasha, Weird Barbie, Allan, and the discontinued dolls, Gloria convinces the Barbies to free themselves from subordination. The Barbies manipulate the Kens into fighting amongst themselves, distracting them from enshrining male superiority into Barbieland's constitution, and the Barbies regain power. Having now experienced systemic oppression for themselves, the Barbies resolve to rectify the faults of their previous society, emphasizing better treatment of the Kens and all outcasts.

Barbie and Ken apologize to each other, acknowledging their mistakes. Ken bemoans that he has no purpose without Barbie, so Barbie encourages him to find an autonomous identity. Barbie, who remains unsure of her own identity, meets with the spirit of Ruth Handler, Mattel co-founder and creator of the Barbie doll, who explains that Barbie's story has no set ending and her ever-evolving history surpasses her roots.

After the Barbies, Kens, and Mattel executives bid Barbie goodbye, she decides to become human and return to the real world. Sometime later, Gloria, her husband, and Sasha take Barbie, now going by the name "Barbara Handler", to her first gynecologist appointment.

Cast

Margot Robbie at the 2016 San Diego Comic Con International in San Diego, California.

Ryan Gosling at the 2017 San Diego Comic Con International in San Diego, California.

Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling portray Barbie and Ken.

Margot Robbie as Barbie, often referred to as "Stereotypical Barbie"

Different variations of Barbie played by:

Kate McKinnon as Weird Barbie

Issa Rae as President Barbie

Alexandra Shipp as Writer Barbie

Emma Mackey as Physicist Barbie

Hari Nef as Dr. Barbie

Sharon Rooney as Lawyer Barbie

Ana Cruz Kayne as Judge Barbie

Ritu Arya as Journalist Barbie

Dua Lipa as Mermaid Barbie

Nicola Coughlan as Diplomat Barbie

Mette Narrative as Barbie Video Girl

Marisa Abela as Teen Talk Barbie

Lucy Boynton as Proust Barbie

Ryan Gosling as Ken, often referred to as "Beach Ken"

Different variations of Ken played by:

Kingsley Ben-Adir as Basketball Ken

Simu Liu as Tourist Ken/"Rival Ken"

Scott Evans as Stereotypical Ken

Ncuti Gatwa as Artist Ken

John Cena as Kenmaid, a merman Ken

Rob Brydon as Sugar Daddy Ken

Tom Stourton as Earring Magic Ken

America Ferrera as Gloria, a Mattel employee who helps Barbie in the real world

Michael Cera as Allan
Ariana Greenblatt as Sasha, Gloria's daughter
Genvieve Toussaint as young Sasha
Rhea Perlman as the spirit of Ruth Handler, the co-founder of Mattel
Helen Mirren as the narrator
Will Ferrell as the CEO of Mattel
Connor Swindells as Aaron Dinkins, a low-level Mattel employee
Jamie Demetriou as the CFO of Mattel
Emerald Fennell as Midge
Hannah Khalique-Brown as "Growing Up" Skipper
Erica Ford as Babysitter Skipper
Ann Roth as the woman on the bench
Ryan Piers Williams as Gloria's husband
Lauren Holt as Time Mom

Development

The idea of a live-action Barbie film had been in development at Cannon Films in the mid-1980s; little is known about it, other than a promotional blurb (with the plotline centering around Barbie showing her owner how all her dreams could come true), and it is unclear how far into development it got before Mattel ceased working with Cannon, following Cannon's live-action adaptation of *Masters of the Universe* (1987) flopping at the box-office.

Development on a film based on the Barbie toy line began in September 2009, when it was announced that Mattel had signed a partnership to develop the project with Universal Pictures and with Laurence Mark as producer, but nothing came to fruition. In April 2014, Mattel teamed with Sony Pictures to produce the film, which would have Jenny Bicks writing the screenplay and Laurie MacDonald and Walter F. Parkes producing through the Parkes+MacDonald Image Nation banner they created. Filming at the time was anticipated to begin by the end of the year. In March 2015, Diablo Cody was brought onto the project to rewrite the screenplay, and Amy Pascal joined the producing team. Sony Pictures would again have rewrites done to the screenplay later that year, hiring Lindsey Beer, Bert V. Royal, and Hillary Winston to write separate drafts.

In December 2016, Amy Schumer entered negotiations to star in the title role with Winston's screenplay; Schumer helped rewrite the script with her sister, Kim Caramelle. In March 2017, Schumer exited negotiations, blaming scheduling conflicts with the planned June 2017 filming start; in 2023 she revealed she left the project due to creative differences with the film's producers at the time. That July, Anne Hathaway was under consideration for the title role, with Sony Pictures hiring Olivia Milch to rewrite the screenplay and approaching Alethea Jones to direct as a means to interest Hathaway into signing on. Jones was attached to direct by March 2018.

In August 2018, Robbie Brenner had been hired as producer by Mattel CEO Ynon Kreiz with the rights reverting to Mattel, with Kreiz having the intention to repossess the rights following the expiration of Sony Pictures's option. Later, Brenner was hired to run Mattel Films. The expiration of Sony Pictures' option on the project in October 2018 and its transfer to Warner Bros. Pictures would see the departures of Hathaway, Jones, Macdonald, Parkes and Pascal. Margot Robbie would enter early talks for the role, with Patty Jenkins briefly considered for the director position. Kreiz was determined to cast Robbie in the titular role after meeting with her following his hiring as CEO as both he and Brenner felt that Robbie's appearance resembled that of a conventional Barbie doll and were impressed by her ideas. Initial meetings occurred at the Polo Lounge located in The Beverly Hills Hotel. Brenner eventually partnered with Robbie's production company, LuckyChap

Entertainment, with Robbie's husband Tom Ackerley and Josey McNamara also being enlisted as producers. Robbie's casting was confirmed in July 2019.

In her capacity as a producer, Robbie pitched Barbie to Warner Bros. herself. During the green-light meeting, she compared the film to Steven Spielberg's *Jurassic Park* (1993) and also jokingly suggested that it would gross over \$1 billion. Later on, she approached Greta Gerwig—whose previous films, particularly *Little Women* (2019), Robbie enjoyed—to be the screenwriter. Gerwig was in post-production for another film, and accepted the assignment on the condition that her partner, Noah Baumbach, also write the script. Gerwig would sign on to also direct the film in July 2021. Robbie said the film aimed at subverting expectations and giving audiences "the thing you didn't know you wanted". In August 2023, it was announced that Robbie would earn "roughly \$50 million in salary and box office bonuses" as the star and producer of the film.

Writing

Gerwig and Baumbach were given full creative freedom in writing the film. They collaborated on the screenplay during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns of 2020–2021 and described the writing process as "open" and "free". Gerwig's film treatment consisted of an Abstract Poem on Barbie influenced by the Apostles' Creed. For the narrative arc, she was partially inspired by the non-fiction book *Reviving Ophelia* (1994) by Mary Pipher, which accounts the effects of societal pressures on American teenage girls. She also found inspiration in classic Technicolor musicals such as *The Red Shoes* (1948) and *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* (1964), and said: "They have such a high level of what we came to call authentic artificiality. You have a painted sky in a soundstage. Which is an illusion, but it's also really there. The painted backdrop is really there. The tangibility of the artifice is something that we kept going back to." The script also contains candid criticism of Mattel, which created skepticism among Mattel officials when they received the first version. However, Kreiz decided to trust Gerwig. Brenner noted that "being safe in this world doesn't work" as she interpreted Barbie to be a "bold" and "trailblazer" figure. As a result, Will Ferrell's portrayal as the Mattel CEO was meant to be an allegory for corporate America. Kreiz praised Ferrell and said that while Mattel officials took their brands seriously, they did not take themselves seriously. Gerwig and Robbie had both felt the film was "most certainly a feminist film" but Mattel officials had rejected the description. Both Gerwig and Robbie informed the studio that they would also explore the controversies and problematic parts of Barbie, but also convinced the studio that they would respect the product.

Gerwig was also influenced by her childhood experiences with Barbie; her mother would discourage her from purchasing such dolls, but eventually allowed her to. Opting to acknowledge the controversial nature of the Barbie doll, Gerwig chose to create a film in which she would be both "doing the thing and subverting the thing", in the sense that she would be celebrating the feminism behind Barbie while also noting the controversial beauty standards associated with it. She was also fascinated by the idea that humans create dolls, which in turn imitate humans, feeling that "we're in constant conversation with inanimate objects" while also conveying an affirmative message to the audience to "just be yourself and know that that's enough". The film deliberately juxtaposed contradictory messaging, such as critiquing consumerism yet glamorizing plastic products, and in the ending of the film, in which Barbie desires to be more than just a plastic doll. Gerwig made the film as an "earnest attempt to make amends" with the intention of affirming the worth of women and conveying the impossibility of perfection, which some perceived to be standards associated with Barbie. Reflecting upon the maximalism of Barbie, Gerwig said the "ontology of Barbie" was similar to what she perceived as Shakespeare's maximalism, which she enjoyed in his works. She grounded the film in what she described as a "heightened theatricality that allows you to deal with big ideas in the midst of anarchic play".

Gerwig described the film as being anarchic, unhinged, and humanist. She felt the film originated from the "deep isolation of the pandemic", opining that the line in which Barbie says "Do you guys ever think about dying?" exemplifies the film's anarchic nature. She also found the idea of Barbie being "constrained in multitudes" as "all of these women are Barbie and Barbie is all of these women" to be "trippy" and felt as a result, Barbie did not need to have her own personal life, as she was attuned to her environment. She also described the story as mirroring a girl's journey from childhood to adolescence, though she did not deem it to be a coming of age film and felt that the film ultimately "ends up, really, about being human".

Primarily, she began her writing by interpreting Barbie as living in a utopia and eventually experiencing reality, where she would have to "confront all the things that were shielded from them in this place [Barbieland]". She also drew parallels to the story of Adam and Eve and taking inspiration from John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, particularly being inspired by the concept that there is "no poetry without pain". To underscore the tragic elements of Barbie and Ken facing the real world, she focused on elements of dissonance. As such, she chose to keep a scene featuring Robbie's Barbie telling an older woman that she is beautiful after being requested to remove it, as she felt that the scene epitomized "the heart of the movie". She also desired to provide a "counterargument" to Barbie by featuring a scene in which Barbie learns that some women do not like her, and felt it gave the film "real intellectual and emotional power". As such, a scene is featured in which Barbie is being stared at inappropriately on the Venice Beach, which Gerwig chose to feature as she felt it was a universal experience, being especially relevant for actors. She was inspired by an audition she did in which she wore overalls and felt that she did not perform well in. The ending of the film features Barbie saying the line "I'm here to see my gynecologist", with Gerwig describing it as a "mic drop kind of joke". She had chosen to include the line as she had wanted to instill confidence in younger girls, as she had been embarrassed about her body when she was younger.

Barbie also explores the negative consequences of hierarchical power structures, with Gerwig saying that she extrapolated that "Barbies rule and Kens are an underclass" and felt it was similar to the *Planet of the Apes*. Ken has low self-esteem and seeks approval from Barbie, which Gerwig identified as a good source for a story. Gosling compared Gerwig's vision to Milton Glaser's I Love New York logo as he felt Gerwig created the film's characters as a way of understanding the contemporary world. Ken has the only power ballad in the film, and Gerwig had identified it as the moment in which she felt the film transcended what a Barbie movie traditionally should have been.

Casting

During the casting process, Gerwig and Robbie searched for actresses with "Barbie energy" (which they described as "a certain ineffable combination of beauty and exuberance").

In October 2021, Ryan Gosling entered final negotiations to play Ken in the film. America Ferrera, Simu Liu and Kate McKinnon were cast in February 2022. Liu auditioned for the film after his agent raved about the script being one of the best they had ever read. In March 2022, Ariana Greenblatt, Alexandra Shipp, and Emma Mackey were revealed to be in the cast. Will Ferrell joined the cast in April, along with Issa Rae, Michael Cera, Hari Nef, Kingsley Ben-Adir, Rhea Perlman, Ncuti Gatwa, Emerald Fennell, Sharon Rooney, Scott Evans, Ana Cruz Kayne, Connor Swindells, Ritu Arya and Jamie Demetriou. In April 2023, a trailer revealed that John Cena had joined the cast. It was later reported that Cena had spontaneously been offered a part in the film after paying for Robbie's meal in London during production. Helen Mirren narrated the film's trailer and the film itself. Robbie and Gosling were each paid \$12.5 million for their participation as actors.

Robbie wanted Gal Gadot to play a Barbie in the film, but Gadot was unavailable due to scheduling conflicts. Gerwig wanted her frequent collaborators Timothée Chalamet and Saoirse Ronan to make cameo appearances, but neither was available. Gerwig revealed that during a visit to the set, Chalamet said he should have been in the film. Additionally, Bowen Yang, Dan Levy and Ben Platt were considered for Ken; Jonathan Groff was the first choice for Allan but turned it down.

Filming

Principal photography began on March 22, 2022, at Warner Bros. Studios, Leavesden in England and wrapped on July 21, 2022. Among the notable filming locations was the Venice Beach Skatepark in Los Angeles, California. Rodrigo Prieto served as cinematographer. Prior to filming, Gerwig had organized a sleepover with the female cast members for them to establish positive relationships while also feeling that it "would be the most fun way to kick everything off". She also opted to use filming techniques from the 1950s, as Barbie has been a popular toy since 1959, with the intention of recreating a period-accurate look. Additionally, she watched Powell and Pressburger's *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946) to understand how older visual effects were used to provide a sense of theatricality. To highlight the tragic nature of Barbie and Ken facing the difficulties of the real world, she directed Robbie and Gosling to play their characters as if they were in a drama. Reshoots took place in Los Angeles in April 2023.

Marketing

Director Greta Gerwig and Abby Phillip at an event for Barbie at the British Embassy in Washington, D.C.

Barbie was promoted with an extensive marketing campaign. In the months leading up to the release of the film, Mattel entered into several Barbie-themed promotional partnerships and collaborations with various brands, including Airbnb, Aldo, Bloomingdale's, Burger King Brazil, Chi Haircare, Forever 21, Gap, Hot Topic, Krispy Kreme Philippines, Primark, Progressive Insurance, Spirit Halloween, Ulta, and Xbox. Additionally, studio parent company Warner Bros. Discovery engaged in cross-promotion for the film through its TV channels, most prominently with an HGTV renovation reality competition series titled *Barbie Dreamhouse Challenge*, coproduced by Mattel Television, which premiered shortly before the film's release. Trade publication *Variety* reported that Warner Bros. spent \$150 million on marketing for Barbie—more than the \$145 million budget used to produce the movie itself.

A first-look image of the film was revealed during a Warner Bros. presentation at CinemaCon in April 2022. Released to the public on April 27, 2022, the image saw Margot Robbie as Barbie, sitting behind the wheel of her iconic pink 1956 Chevrolet Corvette. Collider complimented Robbie in the image, stating: "This photo is just further proof that Robbie was made to play this role. She just looks like a Barbie doll come to life—it's almost uncanny". On June 15, 2022, a second still featuring Ryan Gosling as Ken was released. Despite noting similarities between his look in the image and his previous roles, *The Guardian* asserted that "there is a very strong chance that this will be [Gosling's] defining role".

A booth dedicated to Barbie was opened at the 2022 CCXP event in São Paulo, Brazil. The first teaser trailer for the film debuted during preview screenings of *Avatar: The Way of Water* in December 2022. It featured a parody of the opening "Dawn of Man" sequence in Stanley Kubrick's 1968 film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, in which Robbie (clad in Barbie's original 1959 outfit) imitates an alien monolith whose influence on the history of dolls is narrated by Mirren. Along with a theatrical poster, the teaser trailer was released to the public on December 16, 2022. *Rolling Stone* praised the 2001 homage and vibrant colors of the trailer, and remarked on its vague outlining of the plot: "One has to wonder when, or better yet how, it will all get shaken up".

On April 4, 2023, twenty-four character posters of the several Barbies and Kens featured in the film—each tagged with brief descriptions—were shared on the Barbie's social media accounts. Empire remarked: "You might have thought that Multiverse fever would be constrained generally to comic book films and never-would-have-called-it Oscar winners [Everything Everywhere All at Once]. But ... it seems Greta Gerwig's Barbie movie will also be flooding the screen with variants, this time of plastic dolls Barbie and Ken". A second teaser trailer was unveiled shortly after the release of the posters. It featured a rendition of the Beach Boys' 1964 surf rock song "Fun, Fun, Fun". The Washington Post noted that the "visually striking" and "polysemic" teaser captivated multiple demographics because of its humor, color palette, and the Barbie doll's cross-generational appeal. An official trailer for the film was released on May 25, 2023. Critics noted for its existential tone set against upbeat music. Ben Travis of Empire said: "There's much to discuss here—not least, that it looks visually impeccable" and speculated Academy Awards attention for its production and costume design.

A parade float was featured at the 2023 WeHo Pride Parade in Los Angeles to promote the film. Two of its LGBTQ+ cast members, Alexandra Shipp and Scott Evans, were present during the event.

In June 2023, a French Barbie poster went viral for including the tagline "Elle peut tout faire. Lui, c'est juste Ken.", which literally translates to "She can do everything. He's just Ken." However, *ken* is the *verlan* slang term for "fuck" in French, i.e. the phonological inversion of *nique*, while *c'est* ("he is") is a homophone for *sait* ("he knows how"), meaning the tagline could be read as "She can do everything. He just knows how to fuck." Analysts concluded that it was likely that the pun was intentional, as the slang term is common knowledge among French speakers, though Warner Bros. would neither confirm nor deny whether this was the case.

Leading up to the release, pink billboards, blank apart from the film's release date, have appeared worldwide, and a real-world "Barbie Dreamhouse" in Malibu, California became available to rent through Airbnb.

On July 14, 2023, SAG-AFTRA, an American labor union of film, television, and voice actors, declared a strike action, effectively halting any promotional event that involves any member in the guild. Robbie showed her support in the action. SAG-AFTRA President Fran Drescher later claimed the studios "duped" the guild into accepting a 12-day extension for negotiations to continue promoting summer films like Barbie.

Release

Theatrical

The Barbie pink carpet premiere in Sydney, Australia

Barbie had its world premiere at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles on July 9, 2023, followed by the European premiere at Cineworld Leicester Square in London on July 12, 2023. It was released theatrically in the United States and the United Kingdom on July 21, 2023, taking over the original release date of *Coyote vs. Acme*. Previous iterations of the project were set for June 2, 2017; May 12, 2017; June 29, 2018; August 8, 2018; and May 8, 2020.

The film was released on the same day as *Oppenheimer*, a biographical film about J. Robert Oppenheimer written and directed by Christopher Nolan based on the book *American Prometheus*, and distributed by Universal Pictures. Due to the tonal and genre contrast between the two films, many social media users created memes and ironic posts about how the two films appealed to

different audiences, and how they should be viewed as a double feature. The trend was dubbed "Barbenheimer". In an interview with *La Vanguardia*, *Oppenheimer* star Cillian Murphy endorsed the phenomenon, saying, "My advice would be for people to go see both, on the same day. If they are good films, then that's cinema's gain."

In August 2023, it was announced that the film will be re-released in IMAX theaters on September 22, 2023, for one week only, along with a new post-credit scene.

Home media

Barbie was released on digital download on September 12, 2023 and will be released on Ultra HD Blu-ray, Blu-ray, and DVD on January 2, 2024 by Warner Bros. Home Entertainment.

Box office

As of September 11, 2023, *Barbie* has grossed \$620.7 million in the United States and Canada, and \$783.5 million in other territories, for a worldwide total of \$1.404 billion.

It was described as a "record-breaking" box office success during its opening weekend, and set the record for any film that was not a sequel, remake, or superhero property. The film crossed the \$1 billion mark worldwide on August 6, 2023, making it the first film by a solo female director to do so. This was also the fastest Warner Bros. film to reach \$1 billion, beating *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2* (2011). In late August, *Barbie* surpassed that same film again, becoming Warner Bros.'s highest-grossing film, not adjusted for inflation. By September 2, the film surpassed \$1.365 billion at the global box office, overtaking *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* as the highest-grossing film of the year. Additionally, it became the highest-grossing film by a solo female director, surpassing the previous records held by *Wonder Woman* (2017) and *Hi, Mom* (2021).

United States and Canada

In the United States and Canada, *Barbie* was released alongside *Oppenheimer*, and was originally projected to gross \$90–125 million from 4,243 theaters in its opening weekend, with Warner Bros. predicting a \$75 million debut. The week of their release, AMC Theatres announced that over 40,000 AMC Stubs members had pre-booked tickets to both films on the same day. It earned \$70.5 million on its opening day, which included \$22.3 million from Wednesday and Thursday night previews, both of which were the best of 2023. *Barbie*'s opening weekend gross of \$162 million marked the largest opening since *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* (\$181.3 million in November 2022). It was also the biggest opening ever for a film helmed by a female director, besting *Captain Marvel* (2019), and surpassed *Suicide Squad* (2016) to have Robbie's highest opening weekend, as well as *Blade Runner 2049* (2017) to have Gosling's largest opening weekend. It scored the third-highest July opening weekend at the time, behind *The Lion King* (2019) and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2*. This also marked the third-highest opening weekend for a Warner Bros. film, after the latter film and *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* (2016). *Barbie* also scored the biggest opening for a film based on a toy, surpassing *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen* (2009). The Barbenheimer phenomenon was widely credited with boosting interest in the film, with a total of 79% of tickets sold over the weekend (52% for *Barbie*) being for the two films, a total of 18.5 million people.

Following its opening weekend, *Barbie* surpassed *The Dark Knight* (2008) as the highest Monday gross ever for a Warner Bros. film, collecting a total of \$26.1 million. In its second weekend, the film earned \$92 million, dropping by 43%, which was the largest sophomore weekend ever for a Warner Bros. film and the seventh-largest ever. The film remained in first place with \$53 million in its third weekend, and \$33.7 million in its fourth weekend. On August 16, 2023, *Barbie* once again surpassed *The Dark Knight*; this time as the highest-grossing domestic release in Warner Bros.

history, having earned \$537.5 million. The film was dethroned in its fifth weekend by newcomer Blue Beetle (\$25 million), though it continued to hold well with a gross of \$21.5 million. On August 24, 2023, Barbie surpassed The Super Mario Bros. Movie (\$574 million) to become the highest-grossing film of the year in North America. Barbie finished in second place again in its sixth weekend, this time behind newcomer Gran Turismo.

Other territories

Outside of the United States and Canada, Barbie earned \$194.3 million from 69 offshore markets in its opening weekend. Of the 69 markets, it was the number one film for the weekend in 58, scored the largest opening weekend for a Warner Bros. film in 26 and marked the largest opening for a 2023 film in 24. In the United Kingdom, the film opened with \$24.2 million, which was the year's largest opening. In France, it opened with \$10.2 million, marking the largest debut for a Warner Bros. film since Joker (2019). The following weekend, Barbie earned \$127 million, dropping by just 31%. It remained the number one film of the weekend in 57 markets. Within its sophomore weekend, it became the highest-grossing film of 2023 in Brazil, as well as the highest-grossing Warner Bros. release ever. In Australia, the film scored the largest second week ever, for a running total of \$30.6 million after two weekends. In the UK, Barbie began outpacing the ten-day total of Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows – Part 2, Warner Bros.' highest-grossing film in the country, in its second weekend. In its third weekend, Barbie grossed \$74 million from 69 markets for a drop of 41%. As of September 9, 2023, the highest-grossing overseas markets were the United Kingdom (\$120.8 million), Germany (\$56.5 million) Australia (\$55.6 million), Mexico (\$54.3 million) and France (\$47.6 million). In Ireland, Barbie became the highest-grossing film in history with \$9.57 million, surpassing Avatar (2009).

By contrast, in South Korea (where the film opened on July 19, 2023), Barbie under-performed in the box office there. During the period between July 28 and 30, 2023, the film recorded around 81,000 admissions (earning \$667,000) and finished in the fifth place in the South Korean box office, falling behind Smugglers (around 1.17 million admissions; \$9.31 million), Elemental (around 360,000 admissions; \$2.85 million), Mission: Impossible – Dead Reckoning Part One (around 300,000 admissions; \$2.43 million) and the twenty-sixth theatrical feature film from the Case Closed animated series (around 89,000 admissions; \$703,000). It was suggested that the animosity against feminist messages in the film, and the lack of popularity of Barbie dolls in South Korea have contributed to the film's under-performance there. Film critic Youn Sung-Eun told Yonhap News Agency that 'in [South] Korea, where the recognition of feminism is not good, [people] don't want to accept that an amusement like film has a message [about social issues]', and that 'the film uses its later half to preach [about sexual discrimination], which might be hard to accept [to South Koreans]'. In an interview with The Hollywood Reporter, Kang Hye-jung, the producer of Smugglers, said "I couldn't understand why Hollywood went so wild about Barbie, perhaps because it has never been our [toy]."

In Japan, Barbie ranked at no. 16. Prior to the release date, public opinion of Barbie had soured after the official Twitter account for the Barbie film had responded positively to several Barbenheimer memes, all of which depicted atomic bombings comically. This, in turn, was met with disapproval from the Japanese public, who criticized their ignorance and lack of professionalism, particularly due to their negligence towards the history of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Mitsuki Takahata, who provided Barbie's voice in the Japanese dub of the film, stated on her Instagram account that she was disappointed and had considered dropping out of one of the film's promotional events.