

[2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY](#) [ALIEN](#) [ALIENS](#)

The 25 Best Sci Fi Movies of All Time

Blade Runners, Body Snatchers, RoboCops, Terminators and more.

BY [IGN STAFF](#)

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Aliens, robots, outer space, future Earths, time travel, exquisitely posed questions about the place of humanity within the grand cosmic void -- science fiction is about the intimacy of exploration and the enormity of ideas.

Ever since 1902's *A Trip to the Moon*, directed by Georges Méliès, writers and directors have sought to transfer their exciting hot takes on mankind's ultimate fate to the big screen. With that in mind, we've scooped up the 25 best sci-fi films for your approval/outrage.

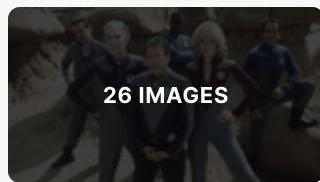




Our selection process? Well, aside from being just a great piece of moviemaking, the top 25 entries required a significant impact on the genre, stories and ideas that raised the bar on what good storytelling can be, pop-culture reaction, originality, and of course editor's choice.

You can also take a look at our list of the [best sci-fi movies on Netflix](#) for a more recent selection.

The 25 Best Sci-Fi Movies



25. Galaxy Quest (1999)





Where to Watch: Prime Video, Fubo, Paramount+

Hailed as the best "non-Star Trek" Star Trek movie, *Galaxy Quest* is a hilarious love letter to both sci-fi fandom and iconic performers in sci-fi properties perhaps held back in their careers because of their association with said sci-fi. Starring Tim Allen, Sigourney Weaver, Alan Rickman, and more as the cast of a beloved yesteryear space exploration series, *Galaxy Quest* finds the funny in a cosmic fish-out-of-water scenario where actors must battle in space for real and pedantic nerds save they day with their obscure knowledge. It's an absolute blast from start to finish.

24. WALL-E (2008)





Where to Watch: Disney+

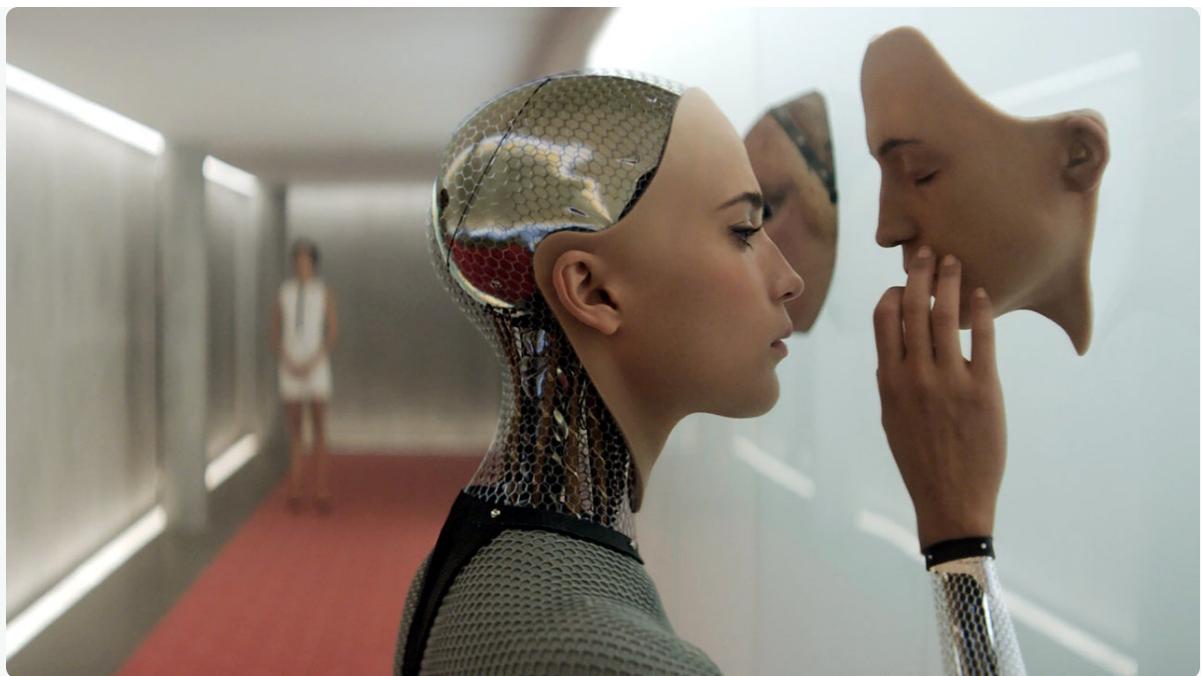
Finding Nemo's Andrew Stanton went from deep sea to deep space for this delightfully warped trek, seen through the eyes of a trash-bot tasked with cleaning up a centuries-later Earth smothered in garbage.

Laced with satirical social commentary regarding the consequences of excess and pollution, WALL-E is a love story among the landfills and one of the [best Pixar movies](#) to date. It's an imaginative romp through the fattened ashes of humanity featuring a mostly-silent, slapstick-prone protagonist finding romance amidst enthralling visuals and an emotionally-charged apocalypse. Evoking the distinguished charm of old silent movies, while still featuring occasional dialogue, WALL-E clings to optimism in the wake of waste.

Read our [review of WALL-E](#).

23. Ex Machina (2014)





Where to Watch: Max

Alex Garland's intimate, close-quarters sci-fi suspense piece *Ex Machina* centers on a lowly programmer (Domhnall Gleeson) who gets invited to the house of his CEO (Oscar Isaac) to administer the Turing test to the CEO's latest creation -- a humanoid robot (Alicia Vikander). It's an A.I. tale designed to set you on edge and catch you off guard.

As a stylish and savage slow-burn thriller, *Ex Machina* is the perfect example of the genre taking a huge leap forward with a small-scale film. Sci-fi can be both eye-popping and mind-opening, and quite often it's the more cerebral stories that resonate the loudest. You won't even notice, until it's too late, that *Ex Machina* is a crazed cautionary tale about the hypothetical terror of technology.

Read our [review of *Ex Machina*](#).

22. Inception (2010)





Where to Watch: Rentable on most platforms

Christopher Nolan movies won the hearts and minds of fanboys with *Batman Begins* and *The Dark Knight*, but he truly solidified his status as a filmmaker at the top of his game with 2010's *Inception*. A mind-bending sci-fi stunner that proved Hollywood blockbusters could still be smart while also dazzling us on a visual and visceral level, *Inception* is certainly one of the best films to hit, sci-fi or not, in this still young 21st century.

Inception doesn't just simply fit into the sci-fi genre; it's a caper film as well as an avant-garde delve into dreamscapes. At the heart of the picture is Leonardo DiCaprio's Dom Cobb, a stricken widower who specializes in a form of corporate espionage that involves stealing information from a mark's mind while they sleep. Of course, as good as Cobb is at his job, it's his own dreams -- including appearances by his dead wife (Marion Cotillard) -- that are his biggest challenge.

Buoyed by a great cast (including Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Elliot Page, Tom Hardy, Ken Watanabe and Michael Caine), stunning visual effects and those rarest of Hollywood commodities -- an original and intelligent script -- *Inception* is a no-brainer for this list. Unless we're just dreaming all of this, that is...





Read our [review of Inception](#).

21. Everything Everywhere All at Once (2022)



Where to Watch: Paramount+, Showtime apps

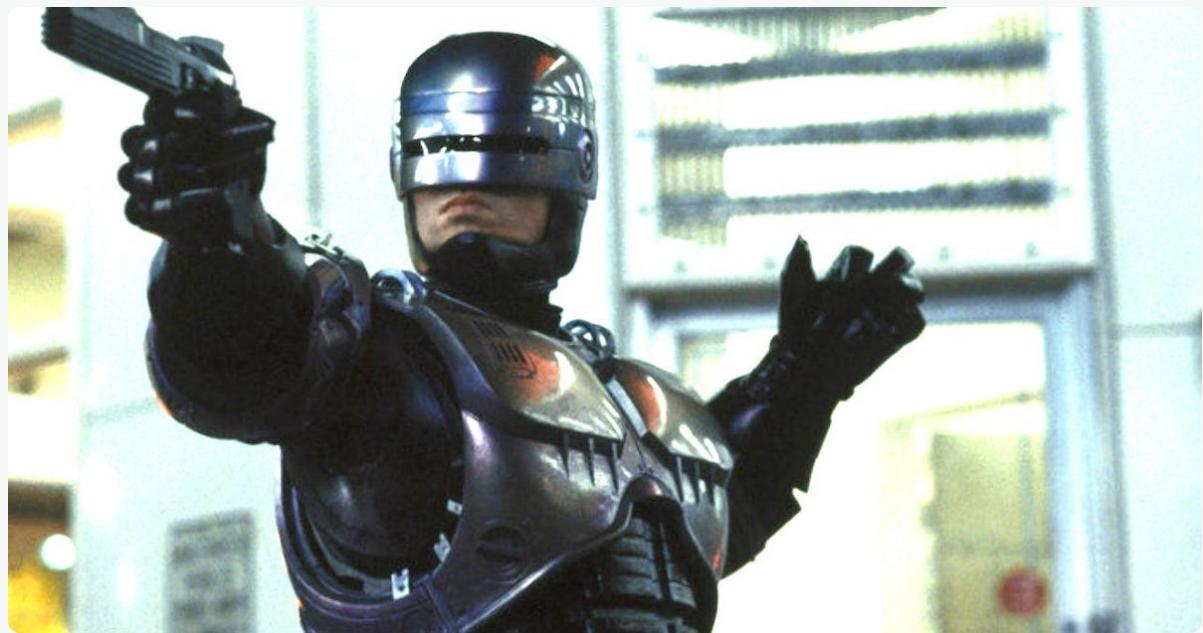
"In another life, I would have really liked just doing laundry and taxes with you."

Our most recent entry on this list is an honest-to-goodness Best Picture winner. In fact, the multiversal madness of A24's *Everything Everywhere All at Once* took home seven Academy Awards, which is one of the most significant feats for an arthouse film in history. Michelle Yeoh stars as a bitter laundromat owner confronted with a dimension-hopping variant of her own husband (Ke Huy Quan) and different branching destinies of her own life as she battles an entity threatening all of existence. It's a rollicking sob-fest, delighting fans with warped humor, uncanny imagination, and powerful heartache.

Read our [review of Everything Everywhere All at Once](#).



20. RoboCop (1987)



Where to Watch: Prime Video, Roku Channel (w/ ads), Tubi (w/ ads)

"Your move... creep."

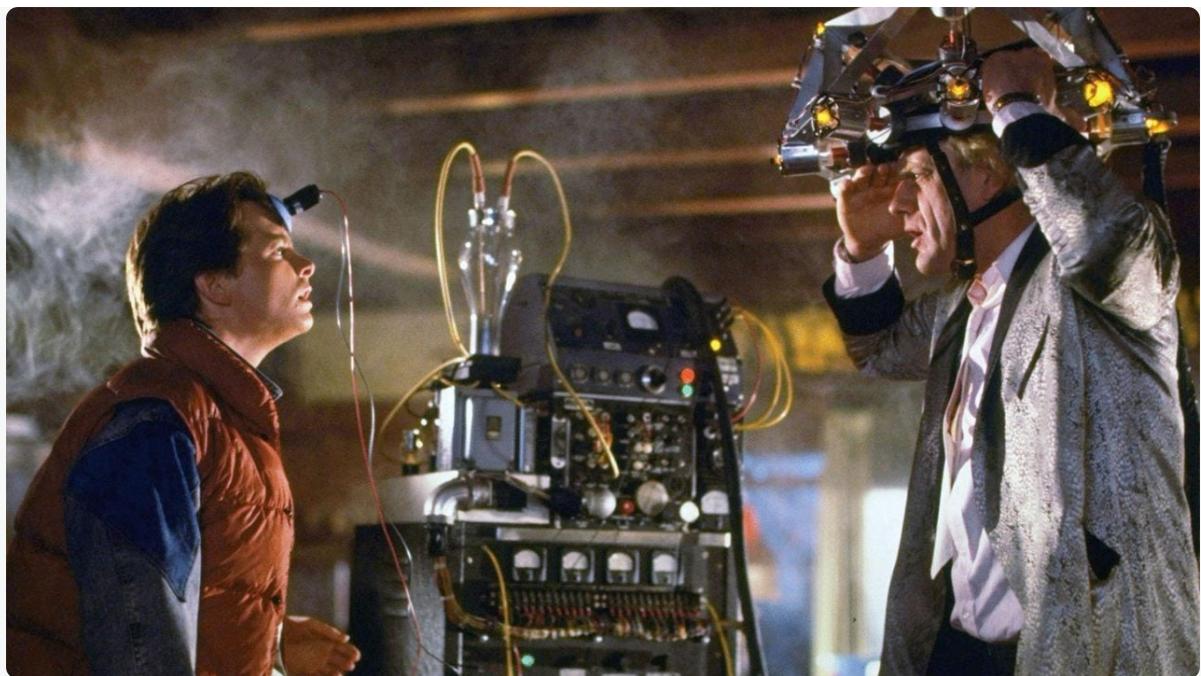
In the back half of the '80s, director Paul Verhoeven not only uncorked an action classic, complete with over the top gore and an unforgettable score, but also a wry sci-fi satire of corporate grime and greed.

Envisioning a bleak, practically lawless future Detroit filled with massive human collateral damage, RoboCop tracks what happens when a legally dead person becomes the cybernetic property of a tech company, and how that hero must battle to regain both his soul and his freedom.

RoboCop also features one of the best '80s villains, and non-Joker Jokers, in Kurtwood Smith's Clarence Boddicker. He and his crew are so vile you can't wait for them to get obliterated... or, er, melted with toxic waste.

19. Back to the Future (1985)





Where to Watch: DirecTV, Turner apps

[Time travel in movies](#) wasn't uncommon before 1985's [Back to the Future](#), but no one thought to cram a flux capacitor in the back of a DeLorean until Marty McFly and Doc Brown stepped onto the scene. This family(ish)-friendly sci-fi classic sees Michael J. Fox's Marty accidentally drive himself back to 1955. Before he can get home, he has to deflect his mother's romantic advances, ensure his parents fall in love, and do something about that bully Biff.

Time travel hijinks have never been as enjoyable as they are with Marty McFly, and the movie inspired two sequels that saw ever-more complicated problems arise in the timestream. The franchise as a whole was far more consistently entertaining than many sci-fi series, but we still favor the original above all others.

18. Close Encounters of the Third Kind (1977)





Where to Watch: Rentable on most platforms.

"This means something."

Yes, yes it does, Richard Dreyfuss. His character's carving Devil's Tower a.k.a. UFO-topia and then later visiting the site where the titular close encounter occurs turns this movie into one of the few entries on this list about aliens that is more concerned with the wonder and privilege of first contact than the horror movie consequences of it.

Spielberg's first alien-centric blockbuster forever set the tone for the director's unique brand of Hollywood filmmaking -- that of grounding the extraordinary within the perspective of a working-class family with "real" interactions and problems. It's a hallmark the director would revisit in such films as E.T. and 2005's War of the Worlds. Moreover, the movie's messaging is that -- despite what most movies tell us -- not all aliens are malevolent.

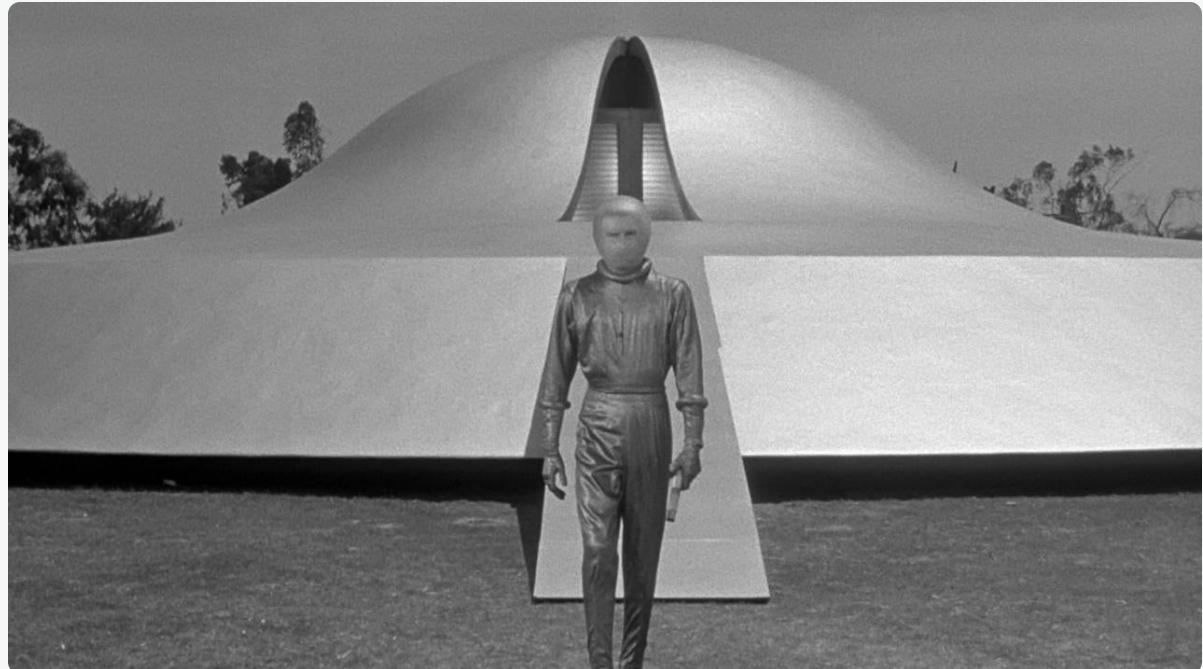
The script, written by Spielberg, has some issues that don't hold up as well as the movie's impressive spectacle, but overall Encounters earns its place here for reminding us that good sci-fi doesn't have to have explosions or aliens slaughtering people.



Read our [review of Close Encounters of the Third Kind](#).



17. The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951)



Where to Watch: Prime Video, Fubo

Forget the bland 2008 remake starring Keanu Reeves, the original 1951 version of *The Day the Earth Stood Still* is the one that deserves accolades in the annals of sci-fi greatness. After all, it's the movie that inserted the phrase "Klaatu barada nikto" into the pop-culture lexicon!

The Day the Earth Stood Still was designed to be a thinking fan's sci-fi film. Instead of epic space battles and evil empires, the film featured a visiting alien named Klaatu. Klaatu arrives on Earth with a peaceful but stern warning: Should humanity extend its penchant for violence into the stars, they'll be struck down.

It attracted a fair amount of controversy in its day. Some didn't appreciate the cautionary message the film presented as humanity entered the atomic age. Others took offense at the Christ-like traits of Klaatu. Sixty





years later, the controversy has faded, but the message remains as strong and as relevant as ever.

16. Terminator 2: Judgment Day (1991)



Where to Watch: Netflix

Terminator 2 is a solid example of a sequel coming along and just destroying the original in every regard. In this follow-up to the original, Skynet sends back an advanced, liquid metal-based Terminator to destroy John Connor once and for all. Connor's only hope is the T-800 -- a reprogrammed version of the same machine that once nearly succeeded in killing his mother.

T2 is host to some truly epic action and chase sequences. Over 30 years later, the film puts most action movies to shame. But where T2 truly earns its enduring status is in its heart and thoughtful message. This [James Cameron movie](#) was all about the notion that the future is not set in stone, and that people can rewrite their destinies if they so choose. Even a cold machine can learn what it means to love and feel emotion.





No matter how much the sequels have (perhaps inadvertently) dulled these messages, *Terminator 2* remains the high point of the franchise and one of the definitive works of Cameron's career.



Read our [review of Terminator 2](#) or check out our guide to [watching the Terminator movies in order](#).

15. Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956)



Where to Watch: Paramount+, Fubo

Pod people want to rule the world! Actually, those no good, dirty Commies want to, or wanted to back in 1956 when Don Siegel's sci-fi/horror Cold War cautionary tale, [Invasion of the Body Snatchers](#), first scared the bejesus out of Reds-fearing Americans everywhere.

The film stars Kevin McCarthy as Miles Bennell, a small-town doctor who discovers a quiet epidemic in the making -- many of his patients believe that their loved ones have been replaced by impostors. Eventually, of course, these impostors are revealed to be the pod people from space,





alien plants whose biological mission is to destroy and replace higher life forms (i.e. humanity). The scenario is quite terrifying, for the enemy can be your wife, your boss, your kid... anyone.



The film careens towards an unforgettable finale as Siegel lets a panicked McCarthy stare directly into the camera at us and scream his warnings about the Reds... uh, the aliens: "They're here already! You're next!" Funny thing is, in the years after the film's success, the filmmakers usually denied that the movie was meant to be anything more than a sci-fi scarefest. But we know better.



14. Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan (1982)



Where to Watch: Paramount+

The [best of the Trek movies](#), Wrath of Khan tackles some of the series' heaviest themes, ideas centered around space exploration as a means to feel young despite the inevitability of death.

The plot centers on the consequences such mortality has on William Shatner's Admiral Kirk, a guy who doesn't believe in the no-win scenario,





but who ends up paying for that view when a man he hasn't seen in 15 years comes calling with phasers set to "KHAaaaaaaAN!" There is more going on, subtextually and emotionally, than a movie based on a sci-fi show (with too many Styrofoam sets) needs. But that's the genius of *Trek II*; it goes above and beyond what is required of its genre trappings and delivers a great story and a great film.

And if Kirk and Spock's last moments together, separated by glass, don't have you crying the same big fat tears you shed at Pixar movies, then you have a Ceti eel where your heart should be.

What is the best sci-fi movie of all time?

- Galaxy Quest (1999)
- WALL-E (2008)
- Ex Machina (2014)
- Inception (2010)
- Everything Everywhere All at Once (2022)
- RoboCop (1987)
- Back to the Future (1985)
- Close Encounters of the Third Kind (1977)
- The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951)
- Terminator 2: Judgement Day (1991)
- Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956)
- Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan (1982)
- Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (2004)
- E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial (1982)



- Aliens (1986)
- Forbidden Planet (1956)
- The Thing (1982)
- Planet of the Apes (1968)
- Metropolis (1927)
- Star Wars: Episode V - The Empire Strikes Back (1980)
- The Matrix (1999)
- Alien (1979)
- Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope (1977)
- Blade Runner (1982)
- 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968)
- Other (Tell us in the comments.)

[Answer](#)[See Results >](#)

13. Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (2004)





Where to Watch: Starz apps

Directed by Michel Gondry and written by Charlie Kaufman, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* is a sci-fi examination of love and obsession, designed to powerfully resonate with just about anyone who's ever been in a romantic relationship. This is one of the rare instances of Jim Carrey playing against his usual zaniness (something he was actually usually great at!) as a desperate man who learns his estranged ex-girlfriend (Kate Winslet) has undergone an experimental procedure to have all her memories of him removed from her mind. When he decides to undergo the same treatment, the whole thing becomes a bizarre, wonderful erase-off, with the two of them, guided by fate, usually finding their way back to one another as strangers. Almost two decades before *Everything Everywhere All at Once* wowed crowds with its mix of sci-fi, surrealism, and sentiment, *Eternal Sunshine* bowled people over with its brilliant, cerebral fun-house tone and stark vulnerability.

Read our [review of *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*](#).

12. E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial (1982)





Where to Watch: Rentable on most platforms

In 1982, Spielberg's *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial* became a bonafide blockbuster by providing audiences with an unrivaled emotional journey.

This is textbook Spielberg. Henry Thomas' Elliott, a lonely young boy living with his single mom and siblings, finds some direction and meaning in his life when he stumbles upon a lovable alien critter who he dubs E.T. Stranded on Earth and trying to phone home, E.T. forms a bond with Elliott that rivals some of cinema's greatest teams.

The animatronic alien is and was unique and convincing, the performances from a mostly young cast are superb, and best of all, the film's exploration of the mysteries of childhood is thoughtful, sensitive, and at the same time often fun. Also sad -- but in a good way!

11. **Aliens (1986)**





Where to Watch: Hulu

Aliens, James Cameron's souped-up action spectacle sequel to Ridley Scott's Alien, is layered with so much awesomeness that it's hard to narrow down the exact reason it works as well as it does.

Aliens continues Ellen Ripley's story, years later, while adding a new layer to the xenomorph's biological cycle, introducing an Alien Queen and, in doing so, one of the big screen's best and scariest villains. The hit sequel is a bullet of a movie that packs the perfect amount of character development, horror and action into a story that could have been threadbare in a lesser craftsman's hands.

Ripley returns to LV-426, the planet where she first encountered the alien, to discover that it's now home to a shake-n-bake colony of families and workers, which is basically ringing the dinner bell for the xenomorphs to prove that, in space, everyone can hear you scream if you die loudly enough. Our heroine joins an elite group of Colonial Marines sent to the surface, and they quickly find that neither flame throwers nor machine gunnery are a match for things that bleed acid and sweat slime. Cameron's decision to keep Ripley and her surrogate daughter Newt as

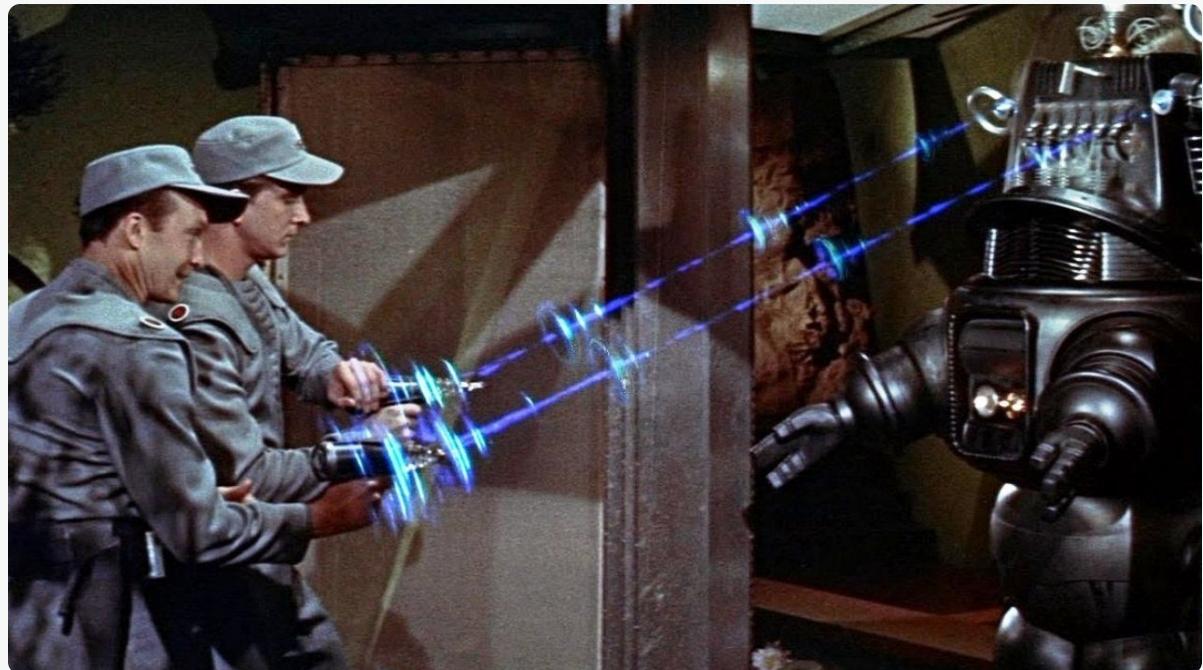




the emotional core of the movie makes the increasing threats around them all the more real, putting us on the edge of our seats.



Read our [review of Aliens](#) or check out our guide on how to watch [the Alien movies in order](#).



Where to Watch: Fubo, MGM+

Would you like some Shakespeare with your sci-fi? Good, because that's what this 1956 trendsetter is -- the Bard's *The Tempest*, only relocated from an isolated island to an isolated planet. Also altered from the original play? Robby the Robot has a bigger part.

We typically think of sci-fi movies from the 1950s as being cheap or B-grade, but [Forbidden Planet](#) is nothing of the kind. A big-budget tale with amazing visual effects that still work today, shot in glorious color and CinemaScope, the picture is like an old fresco from the Sistine Chapel -- curiously ancient and not-of-this-time, but undeniably beautiful and mesmerizing. Also, again with robots.





Leslie Nielsen plays the commander of the Earth ship C-57D, a sort of proto-Captain Kirk in what is in many ways a nascent version of the Star Trek scenario (Gene Roddenberry would acknowledge his debt to this film in the years after that franchise's success). Finding only the mysterious Dr. Morbius (Walter Pidgeon) and his daughter Altaira (Anne Francis) on the planet Altair IV, Nielsen's character eventually learns that there is one other resident of this world... the Monster from the Id!

9. The Thing (1982)



Where to Watch: Rentable on most platforms

An alien with the ability to take the form of any life that it absorbs infiltrates an Antarctic research base, and soon the 12-man team that works there is up to their eyeballs in slaughter, suspicion and paranoia. John Carpenter's best film has itself planted right in the middle between the [horror movie](#) and sci-fi movie lines.

As a sci-fi film, a cross between *Alien* and *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, the movie succeeds at asking the question "Who Goes There?", much like its literary source material did, by forcing our survivors to figure out who





they really are as *The Thing* puts their humanity to the test. The tension escalates and Kurt Russell gives one of his best performances as team leader MacReady.



The practical special effects hold up better than you'd think, and we defy you to not have your mind blown when the head of a victim sheers itself from its burning corpse and spider-walks away. If you haven't seen this movie, remedy that now.

8. **Planet of the Apes (1968)**



Where to Watch: Starz apps

Spawning four sequels, two reboots, a TV series, a cartoon, comics, toys and every kind of marketing tie-in you can dream of, the original 1968 *Planet of the Apes* isn't just a great sci-fi film, it's also one of the very first genre franchises to come out of Hollywood.

The wonderfully misanthropic George Taylor (Charlton Heston) heads into outer space to get away from all those damned dirty hippies in the far-off future of 1972, only to wind up living among all those damned dirty apes



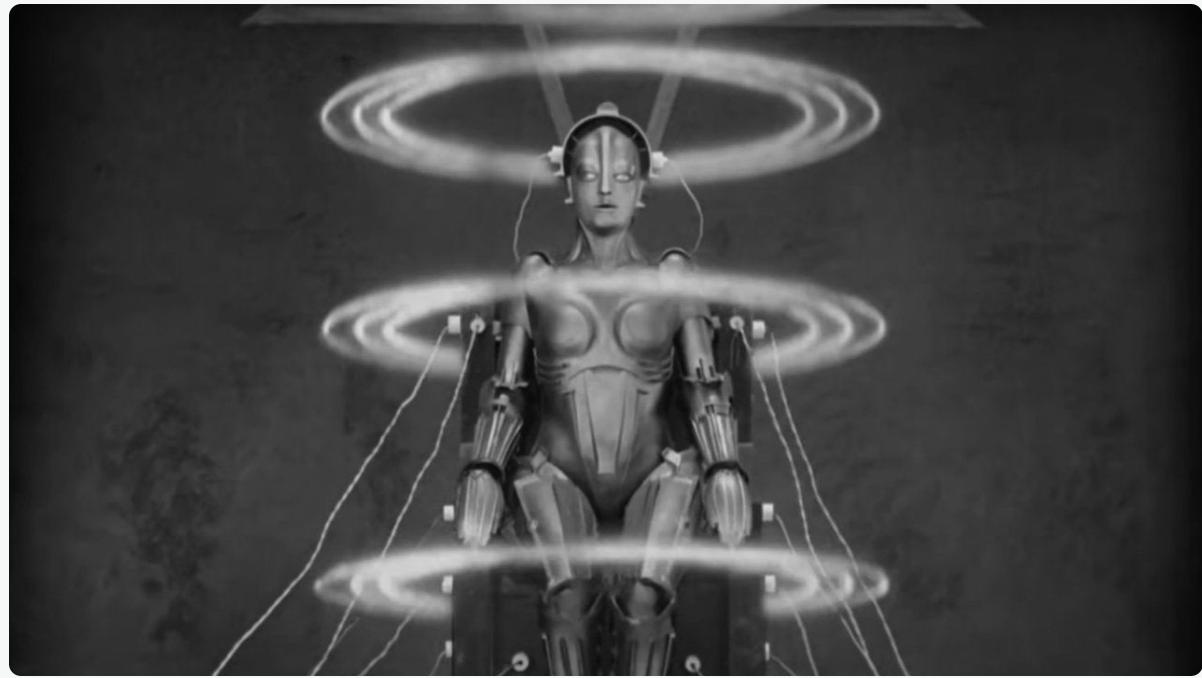


in the far-far-off future of the 40th century. Perhaps the apes makeup and concepts of the film have worn thin by today's standards, but this was state of the art stuff back in the day. A movie where apes evolved from men? There's got to be an answer!

The answer is simple: Whereas this first film is the most polished, highbrow and grandiose of the original series, the sequels that followed all added value to the overall concept, never resting on their monkeyshines laurels but instead furthering and expanding upon the ideas of the original picture. But the 1968 film, with its upside-down world social commentary and Big Ideas about science, religion and history, is where it all started. And where it will all start again and again and again...

See our guide to the [Planet of the Apes movies in order.](#)

7. Metropolis (1927)



Where to Watch: Fubo, Hoopla, Pluto TV (w/ ads), Crackle (w/ ads)

Filmmakers around the world were still working to understand the complexities of cinema in the 1920s. It took a visionary director like Fritz



Lang to provide early evidence of the storytelling heights film could aspire to.



[Metropolis](#) is not just a great sci-fi film, it's easily one of the best films of the silent era. The movie presents a future society divided by class warfare, with the rich elite living in the towering skyscrapers above, and the lowly workers toiling below. As a relic of the German Expressionism movement, Metropolis shows impressive visual design and effects work.



The film continues to make an impact, and has inspired countless other sci-fi projects onscreen and off. A longer cut of the film was also discovered in 2008 in Argentina; it seems Metropolis is one of those rare films that truly does get better and more relevant with age.



6. Star Wars: Episode V - The Empire Strikes Back (1980)



Where to Watch: Disney+

[The Empire Strikes Back](#) takes the "escape your hometown" joyride aspects of its groundbreaking predecessor and adds an adult sensibility





and thematic through-line that brings a real depth to George Lucas' galaxy far, far away. While one hesitates to use the well-worn terms "dark" and "stylish" when describing director Irvin Kershner's installment in the series, the film nonetheless *is* the darkest and most stylish of the [Star Wars movies](#).

Han Solo's uncertain fate, Luke's terrible realization about his father, Lando's betrayal, the defeat of the Rebels at Hoth... these were all gut-punch moments that had us reeling then and, in some ways, still do, even if the soft-pedaling of Return of the Jedi undoes so much of Empire's hard work. But that's a discussion for a different list.

See our guide to the [Star Wars movies in order](#).

5. The Matrix (1999)



Where to Watch: Max

The Matrix, from the inventive boundary-pushing Wachowskis, captured the imaginations of sci-fi lovers everywhere and offered them a type of film they hadn't seen before. Though the franchise never became the





"new star Wars" everyone hailed it as at the outset, the first film of the trilogy remains a savage and nihilistic roller coaster of butt-kicking awesomeness.



This [Keanu Reeves movie](#) is brimming with all sorts of philosophical questions. What is reality? Is the world around us an illusion? Whose kung fu is strongest? The film yearned to be more intelligent and thoughtful than the average action movie, yet it was never afraid to put aside the musing for some well-choreographed bullet-dodging and martial arts mayhem. The Matrix's slow-motion combat ballet inspired legions of imitators, but none have lived up to the original, not even the Matrix sequels.



Read our [review of The Matrix](#) or check out our guide to watching the [Matrix movies in order](#).



4. Alien (1979)



Where to Watch: Hulu





The tagline "In Space, No One Can Hear You Scream" defined the [Alien film series](#). It was Ridley Scott's movie that first pit Warrant Officer Ripley against the acid-bleeding xenomorph, and while on the surface Alien is a "monster in the house" creature feature, here the house is a spaceship and the monster is a mouth-tongued beastie that lays eggs and uses people's chests as doors.

The fun here is that the science fiction goes less Star Trek and Star Wars, and more gritty, which makes the scares more urgent, more real. This is a future where ships look more like oil derricks than the Enterprise. Putting a blue-collar crew in the middle of our first truly great "monster in space" movie created a new subset of the genre, one that Hollywood has milked ever since with less-than-consistent results.

Alien changed the careers of both its director and leading lady. It introduced one of the best movie monsters ever. And it reminded us how great the genre can be when it combines expert storytelling with new and different concepts. And mouth tongues.

3. Star Wars: Episode IV - A New Hope (1977)





Where to Watch: Disney+

Yes, Empire has AT-AT battles and Boba Fett and the iconic "I am your father" twist. But in terms of pure science fiction action and adventure, nothing can top the original Star Wars.

[A New Hope](#) wowed viewers from the opening shot of the Star Destroyer pursuing the fleeing Rebel ship to the final ceremony where Luke Skywalker and Han Solo were crowned as galactic heroes. In between these two points was everything a sci-fi/fantasy fan could hope for: humble heroes pulled into larger worlds, roguish scoundrels, princesses in peril, a menagerie of weird and wonderful aliens, and epic space battles that held the fates of planets in the balance.

With A New Hope, George Lucas took everything that was great about the classic adventure serials of the early 20th century and updated that with a modern flourish. It is not the most complex or dense of the Star Wars movies. It's simply the most pure fun anyone can hope to have watching a movie.

2. Blade Runner (1982)





Where to Watch: Rentable on most platforms

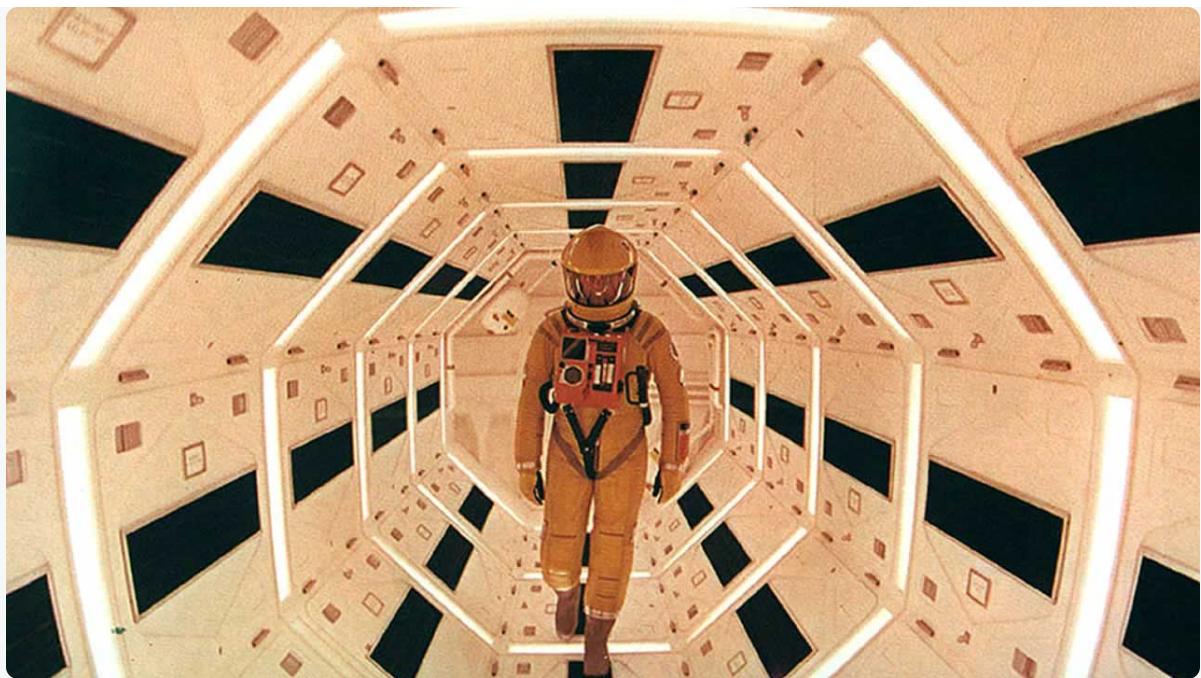
A future built on a science that allows men to play God. Their creation? An artificial intelligence more human than human, forced into slave labor and born with a ticking-clock expiration date. It is up to an ex-cop by the name of Deckard, an ex-Blade Runner, to put down a group of these renegade Replicants. This is the bare-bones context in which Ridley Scott's masterpiece resides. Surrounding that core conceit is the stuff that great sci-fi is made of, moral and ethical themes that are not easy to navigate and are even more difficult to satisfy dramatically on screen.

Using Philip K. Dick's source material as a blueprint to build a detective story around that which wants to be about more than just Deckard catching his prey, Scott effortlessly knows how to tell this story -- you feel it in every shot, every cut, every music cue. Scott and his production team create a future Los Angeles built on neon and skyscrapers that stab a permanent rain-streaked sky. From the top down, Blade Runner is film noir science fiction -- as unique and alive as the androids its protagonist must retire. The film's impact on visual storytelling cannot go unmentioned.

[Blade Runner](#) is also a classic and triumph of the genre because no singular viewing delivers the same experience; you'll notice a new detail here or catch a different subtext in a line of dialogue there. You'll think you get the message of the movie, but then you realize you're just touching the surface. It may take a few more years and a touch more hindsight for Blade Runner 2049 to crack this list, but Denis Villeneuve's sequel, 35-years after the fact, is also a visual feast that expertly expands on the original.

1. **2001: A Space Odyssey (1968)**





Where to Watch: Max

Stanley Kubrick's 1968 epic existentialist arthouse addition to the space exploration genre may be light on actual "story," but it's way high on hypnotic splendor, standing tall as one of the major artistic works of the 20th century.

Divided into four main parts (the apes, Heywood Floyd's mission to the moon, the Discovery One's Jupiter flight, and the LSD finale), the film's plot in an extreme nutshell is about an alien monolith that is discovered by astronauts, and how it leads to a close encounter of the third kind and beyond. Oh, it's also about the evolution of man from ape to Something Else.

Technically masterful and innovative, thematically challenging and enthralling, visually and aurally exquisite and unforgettable, 2001 is everything a great sci-fi movie should be. But don't take our word for it: Pop a stress pill some time and check it out yourself.

Upcoming Sci-Fi Movies

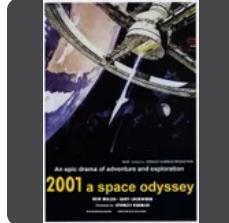




If you're curious about upcoming sci-fi movies, there are quite a few to keep on your radar as we near the end of 2023. [Godzilla Minus One](#) is releasing on November 3 this year, and in the realm of superhero sci-fi, [The Marvels](#) is set to hit theaters on November 10. Also coming out in November this year on the 17th is [The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes](#), and looking to the months ahead will see Zack Snyder's [Rebel Moon Part 1: A Child of Fire](#) on December 22 and next year on March 15 will be [Dune, Part Two](#).

This story was updated on September 7, 2023, with our current rankings. It originally ran on November 9, 2015.

In This Article



2001: A Space Odyssey

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER (MGM)

APR 6, 1968



Recommends



Black Friday 2023 Deals: The Best Sales End Today

1h ago - One more day of Black Friday shopping left

ERIC SONG





Nintendo Switch Black Friday 2023 Deals Are Live Now

2h ago - Save on Switch OLED, Switch Online, and more.

NINTENDO SWITCH CHRIS REED 78



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PLAYSTATION 5 ROBERT ANDERSON 18



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PLAYSTATION 5 ROBERT ANDERSON 7





The Boy and the Heron English Voice Cast Revealed, and It's Absolutely Stacked

Oct 17, 2023 - Christian Bale, Dave Bautista, Mark Hamill are involved, and that's just to start.

THE BOY AND THE HERON KAT BAILEY 60

Conversation 442 Comments

Have fun. Don't be mean. Feel free to criticize ideas, not people. Report bad behavior. [Read our community guidelines.](#)



What do you think?



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jtamez679

...

43w ago

Arrival is one of my favorite films of all time, I would have included it in my own top 25. The discussions on time travel and language the film offers are great. It is also a good take on the typical "alien invasion" storyline. If you like Arrival and haven't seen Contact, I'd highly recommend it. ...

[See more](#)

Reply • 19 •



kasplat

...

11w ago

Arrival has a good combination of mystery as well and even when you watch it again and know what's coming to a certain extent, it is so well done that it still works. Contact is good, but the necessary beginning gives it a very slow start.

Reply • 1 •



gameboy8877

...

5w ago

Completely opposite of another commenter: I loved Arrival until the ending spelled it out for the audience like we're children. I think that's taboo for sci-fi.

Reply • •

↳ Show 2 more replies



Boom4Real

1y ago

Starship Troopers has always been one of my favorite sci-fi films of the 90's , It always felt like one of a kind within the decade and never gets old to this day. Glad to see the original Blade Runner so high up , as well as the original Matrix , and the original Jurassic Park was magical. Donnie ...[See more](#) (Edited)

Reply • 10 •



Dnez

1y ago

" 2049 Isn't strong enough to make this list imo , If It was It would've already been thought of that way." I disagree here. Even the original Bladerunner took time to be appreciated this way it is now. Sometimes it takes movies time to find their place in history when they aren't as highly regarde...[See more](#)

Reply • 7 •



↳ 1 reply



joshuya5

36w ago

2001 may be the single most overrated film in the history of cinema. Kubrick films in general are extremely pretentious. There are good pieces from several of them I won't deny but the outrageous level of praise they get 24/7 always baffles me. 2001 doesn't deserve to be uttered in the same convers...[See more](#)

Reply • 15 •



firen_my_lazer

36w ago

I hadn't seen it until recently and I found it to be one of the worst films I've ever seen. The underlying themes were good but it was just horribly put together and not to mention excruciatingly slow. That movie could have been condensed into a 30 minute twilight zone episode and been much better....[See more](#)

Reply • 6 •



Justinrob31

11w ago

I love you. And I'm just hear to say that alien is a perfect movie.

Reply • 1 •

↳ Show 4 more replies



beshocked

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1y ago

Minority Report and Total Recall would make my top 25 list.



Probably Predator too.



Minority Report is kind of forgotten even though- starring one of the biggest action stars, one of the most famous directors and a story by one of the greatest science fiction writers....[See more](#)

Reply · 18 ·



Frankenheimer33

...

36w ago

I was literally just going to bring up Minority Report. Criminally underrated, it's one of my fave movies of all time and a tremendous science fiction film. It would DEFINITELY crack my top 10 list. A shame it didn't make this list.

Reply · 3 ·



GregCastro

...

11w ago

I agree on Total Recall and Predator! Minority Report just never quite comes together for me. I always feel like the middle is missing a few beats to really nail and earn the ending.

Reply · 1 ·



↳ Show 2 more replies



wreckfromtech

...

11w ago

Arrival deserves a spot in the top 25. Denis Villeneuve (same guy that directed Bladerunner 2049 and Dune) delivered a masterpiece. It's not flashy sci-fi, but is no less impactful.

Reply · 7 ·



nextjosz

...

11w ago

It's a good list but it's unbelievable none of Villeneuve's 3 sci fi films made it.

Reply · 2 ·

↳ 1 reply



ololo3

...

1y ago

Decent list. IMO, The Empire Strikes back or the original Star Wars would be number one. That franchise is truly the holy grail of sci-fi, even if better movies





exist.

Reply

1 like

Upvote

...

**S1G1L**

1y ago

You are absolutely entitled to that opinion, and as a huge fan of Star Wars in my youth I can't really disagree, but older now I feel like there are much better science-fiction movies out there on their own. However, the original Star Wars trilogy as an epic, mainstream representation of sci-fi, it...[See more](#)

Reply

2 likes

Upvote

↳ 1 reply

...

**nerdrage**

1y ago

I'd put ESB ahead of ANH.

Reply

3 likes

Upvote

↳ Show 1 more reply

...

**BlackSheepBoy4**

11w ago

Take off "Eternal Sunshine..." and replace it with "Sunshine" and you're good.

But really, Sunshine is an underrated modern sci-fi classic. Love it.

Reply

5 likes

Upvote

...

**Cinemaniac5**

11w ago

Is "Eternal Sunshine..." even sci-fi? "Sunshine" is definitely underrated. Very dark and my favorite performance by Chris Evans.

Reply

2 likes

Upvote

...

**Maxim1985**

43w ago

Ok ok great list but how is terminator not on it I know people like judgment day better (I am not one of them) but come on the original terminator is one of the best sci fi movies of all time and don't even get me started on why return of the Jedi isn't on it either another one of the best sci fi movies of all time [See more](#)

**IGN**

Reply

3 likes

Upvote

Deals

...

**UninspiredUsername69**

43w ago





I dont think Star Wars should even count as scifi, there's nothing scientific about it. It's a pretty obvious fantasy movie that just takes place in space.
IGN supports Group Black and its mission to increase greater diversity in media voices and media ownership. Group Black's collective includes Cxcommunity, Black Women Talk Tech and AFROPUNK

Reply • 5 •

↳ 3 replies



Boobhell69

11w ago

In all fairness, Terminator is great, but T2 is a gd masterpiece. I suppose they could have made the list up to 30, which they didn't lol

Reply • 2 •

↳ 1 reply

↳ Show 1 more reply



Popsicle

1y ago

Should have Interstellar on here somewhere

Reply • 14 •



GamePlayersHub

11w ago

Interstellar I just really like for some reason. I know others don't.

Reply • 1 •



Cinemaniac5

11w ago

"Interstellar" > "2001: A Space Odyssey"

Reply • 1 •

↳ Show 1 more reply



DanielPlainv1ew

1y ago

Good list. I would put Children of Men at # 1. Jurassic Park is the movie that made me start loving movies.

Reply • 6 •



S1G1L

1y ago

It's a shame Children of Men isn't even listed, never is. Criminally overlooked film.

Reply • 7 •

↳ 1 reply

