



# Understanding classifications—cinema

## Classifications help you decide which films to choose

Classifications tell you about the impact of the content and the most suitable audience for a film.

### Who decides the classification?

Generally, all films that are publicly exhibited in Australia must be classified by the Classification Board, which is broadly representative of the Australian community.

## Classifications

### G is an advisory classification

The content is very mild in impact.

G films are for general viewing. While many G films are for children, not all will be of interest to them.

### PG is an advisory classification

The content is mild in impact.

PG films contain material that a parent or carer might need to explain to younger children.

### M is an advisory classification

The content is moderate in impact.

M films are not recommended for people aged under 15 as a level of maturity is required.

### MA 15+ is a legally restricted classification

The content is strong in impact.

MA 15+ films are not suitable for people aged under 15.

A person aged under 15 cannot be admitted to an MA 15+ film unless accompanied by his or her parent or an adult guardian (in Queensland the person under 15 must be accompanied by an adult).

The requirements are not met if the parent or adult guardian buys a ticket, but does not accompany the child in the cinema for the duration of the film.

### Who qualifies as a 'guardian' for a person under 15?

The 'guardian' must be an adult exercising 'parental control' over the person under 15 years of age. The guardian needs to be 18 years or older. An older sibling or friend would not generally satisfy this requirement, whereas a grandparent, aunt or uncle may.



### What is the difference between M and MA 15+

There is no legal restriction on who can see an M film. The content for M films is moderate and a mature perspective is required. M films are recommended for people aged 15 or older.

A person needs to be 15 or older to see an MA 15+ film. The content is strong and unsuitable for people aged under 15. However people under 15 can see an MA 15+ film if accompanied by their parent or an adult guardian.

### R 18+ is a legally restricted classification

The content is high in impact.

R 18+ films are not suitable for people aged under 18.

People aged under 18 cannot be admitted to an R 18+ film.

## Proof of age at the cinema

Cinemas may verify a person's age before they provide access to an MA 15+ or R 18+ film.

Proof of age (preferably in the form of photo identification) may be requested of the person claiming to be 15 or 18, or of the parent or guardian.

## When can a cinema refuse entry to an MA 15+ or R 18+ film?

Cinemas are required to abide by the MA 15+ and R 18+ restrictions. This means refusing entry to an MA 15+ film to any person who reasonably appears to be under 15 and who is not accompanied by his or her parent or a guardian.

Entry to an R 18+ film can be refused to any person who reasonably appears to be under 18.

## Consumer advice

Additional information about the film, called 'consumer advice' gives you an indication of specific content of a film (examples are violence, language, sex). Generally the strongest content is indicated in the consumer advice. An example is:

## Advertising unclassified films

Unclassified films can be advertised prior to classification. Advertising such as trailers and posters may display the following message:

If you see this message, check the classification before buying a ticket to see a film.

## Copyright and piracy

Film theft has an enormous impact on filmmakers, cinema staff and consumers everywhere.

You should be alert to the unauthorised use of camcorders and mobile phones in cinemas. Selling or distributing pirated product is a criminal offence.

## Further information

You can obtain further information about the National Classification Scheme at <http://www.classification.gov.au>.

Or contact:

Classification Branch  
Locked Bag 3  
HAYMARKET NSW 1240  
**Phone:** 02 9289 7100  
**Fax:** 02 9289 7101  
**Email:** [enquiries@classification.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@classification.gov.au).

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