



# The Academy Awards

The **Academy Awards**, commonly known as the **Oscars**, are the best-known movie awards in the United States. The awards have been given by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences since 1929. The awards ceremony takes place each year in late February or early March in Hollywood, California.

## Trophy and Naming

The winners receive a trophy known as an "Oscar." In the first years of the award, the trophy was called Academy Award of Merit. The trophy is 13 ½ inches and weighs 8 ½ pounds. It isn't clear exactly where the name "Oscar" came from, but it has been in use since at least 1931.

## Categories

### Current Awards

- Best Picture – since 1928
- Best Actor – since 1928
- Best Actress – since 1928
- Best Supporting Actor – since 1936
- Best Supporting Actress – since 1936
- Best Animated Feature – since 2001
- Best Art / Set Direction – since 1928
- Best Cinematography – since 1928
- Costume Design – since 1948
- Directing – since 1928
- Documentary Feature – since 1943
- Documentary Short Subject – since 1941
- Film Editing – since 1935
- Best Foreign Language Film – since 1947
- Makeup – since 1981
- Original Music Score - since 1934
- Best Song- since 1934
- Animated Short Film – since 1931
- Live Action Short Film – since 1931
- Academy Award for Sound Mixing - since 1930
- Best Sound Effects Editing – since 1963
- Best Visual Effects – since 1939
- Best Writing Adapted Screenplay – since 1928
- Best Writing Original Screenplay – since 1940
- Academy Award, Scientific or Technical – since 1931

\*\*\* The five "most important" categories are Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Actress, and Best Original Screenplay. They are called the "Big Five". Only three films have swept these categories: *It Happened One Night*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *The Silence of the Lambs*.

## The Awards Show

The Academy Awards show is also a major entertainment event and is broadcast during prime-time television. It is attended by popular actors and actresses, as well as other major stars in various fields of entertainment. The host is usually a "big name" performer, as well. In addition to the presentation of the awards, the show is marked by musical numbers, dancing acts, and comedy routines.

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**Source:** <http://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar>

Adapted from "Academy Awards" article in the **Simple English – Wikipedia** (an abbreviated version of the world's largest collaborative online encyclopedia)