FILM FACTS

*The Wizard of Oz*

Director: Victor Fleming
Main Cast: Judy Garland, Frank Morgan, Ray Bolger, Bert Lahr, Jack Haley
Release Year: 1939
Country: US
Run Time: 101 minutes

Plot

The third and definitive film adaptation of L. Frank Baum's 1900 children's fantasy, this musical adventure is a genuine family classic that made Judy Garland a star for her heartfelt performance as Dorothy Gale, an orphaned young girl unhappy with her drab black-and-white existence on her aunt and uncle's dusty Kansas farm. Dorothy yearns to travel "over the rainbow" to a different world, and she gets her wish when a tornado whisks her and her little dog, Toto, to the Technicolorful land of Oz. Having offended the Wicked Witch of the West (Margaret Hamilton), Dorothy is protected from the old crone's wrath by the ruby slippers that she wears. At the suggestion of Glinda, the Good Witch of the North (Billie Burke), Dorothy heads down the Yellow Brick Road to the Emerald City, where dwells the all-powerful Wizard of Oz, who might be able to help the girl return to Kansas. En route, she befriends a Scarecrow (Ray Bolger), a Tin Man (Jack Haley), and a Cowardly Lion (Bert Lahr). The Scarecrow would like to have some brains, the Tin Man craves a heart, and the Lion wants to attain courage; hoping that the Wizard will help them too, they join Dorothy on her odyssey to the Emerald City.

Garland was MGM's second choice for Dorothy after Shirley Temple dropped out of the project; and Bolger was to have played the Tin Man but talked co-star Buddy Ebsen into switching roles. When Ebsen proved allergic to the chemicals used in his silver makeup, he was replaced by Haley. Gale Sondergaard was originally to have played the Wicked Witch of the West in a glamorous fashion, until the decision was made to opt for belligerent ugliness, and the Wizard was written for W.C. Fields, who reportedly turned it down because MGM couldn't meet his price. Although Victor Fleming, who also directed *Gone with the Wind*, was given sole directorial credit, several directors were involved in the shooting, included King Vidor, who shot the opening and closing black-and-white sequences. Harold Arlen and E.Y. Harburg's now-classic Oscar-winning song "Over the Rainbow" was nearly chopped from the picture after the first preview because it "slowed down the action." The *Wizard of Oz* was too expensive to post a large profit upon initial release; however, after a disappointing reissue in 1955, it was sold to network television, where its annual showings made it a classic. ~ Hal Erickson, *All Movie Guide*

Review

The lavish MGM production of L. Frank Baum's children's book may have lost a million dollars on its initial release, but its songcraft, technical artistry, star-making performance from Judy Garland, and unexpected TV success turned it into a perennial classic. With future ace MGM musical producer Arthur Freed lending producer Mervyn LeRoy an uncredited hand in pre-production, Cedric Gibbons' art direction, Adrian's costumes, and Hal Rosson's sparkling cinematography maximized the creative potential of Technicolor film, as Dorothy goes "over the rainbow" from a sepia-toned black-and-white Kansas to a fantastically rendered Oz of ruby slippers, emerald cities, and yellow brick roads. Lent ample support by vaudeville vets Ray Bolger, Jack Haley, and Bert Lahr, neophyte Garland delivered a touching performance as Dorothy, proving that she had the acting talent to match her superb singing. As with *Gone with the Wind*, the film went through several directors and Victor Fleming got the credit; King Vidor directed the Kansas sequences, including Garland's solo "Over the Rainbow." Almost cut for the sake of pacing, "Over the Rainbow" became an Oscar winner for Best Song and a Garland standard. Although the 2.7-million-dollar film wilted at the box office, The Wizard of Oz was nominated for several Oscars, including Best Picture (which it lost to *Gone With the Wind*), winning for Herbert Stothart's score and Harold Arlen and E.Y. Harburg's song. It was the first feature sold for prime-time TV telecast, and its 1956 TV debut was a ratings hit, finally turning it into the crowd-pleasing blockbuster that MGM had always meant it to be. ~ Lucia Bozzola, *All Movie Guide*

Cast

Judy Garland - Dorothy Gale
Frank Morgan - The Wizard of Oz
Ray Bolger - The Scarecrow
Bert Lahr - The Cowardly Lion
Jack Haley - The Tin Woodsman
Billie Burke - Glinda, the Good Witch
Margaret Hamilton - The Wicked Witch of the West

Pat Walshe - Nikko; Clara Blandick - Auntie Em; Billy Bletcher - Mayor/Lollypop Guild; Ray Bolger - Hunk;
Tyler Brook - Ozmite; Adriana Caselotti - Juliet; Pinto Colvig - Munchkin; Billy Curtis - City Father; Abe Dinovitch - Apple Tree; Abe Dinovitch - Munchkin; Major Doyle - Munchkin (uncredited); Daisy Earles -
Munchkin Villager; Harry Earles - Guild Singer; Charles Grapewin - Uncle Henry; Jack Haley - Hickory;
Margaret Hamilton - Miss Gulch; Charles Irwin - Ozmite; Lois January - Cat Owner; Bert Lahr - Zeke; Mitchell Lewis - Head Winkie; Walter Miller - Bespectacled Munchkin; Yvonne Moray - League Dancer; Frank Morgan -
Prof. Marvel; Lillian Porter - Munchkin (uncredited); Jimmy Rosen - Munchkin (uncredited); The Singer
Midgets - Munchkins; Terry - Toto; Carol Tevis - Munchkin; Bobby Watson - Ozmite; Buddy Ebsen - Tin
Woodman on "We're Off to See the Wizard"; Frank Packard - Munchkin (uncredited); Oliver Smith - Ozmite;
George Ministeri - Coach Driver; Jerry Maren - Guild Leader; Harry Monty - Winged Monkey/Munchkin; Lee
Murray - Winged Monkey; "Little Billy" Rhodes - Barrister; Gus Wayne - Munchkin

Credits
Adrian - Costume Designer; Harold Arlen - Composer (Music Score); George Bassman - Composer (Music
Score); L. Frank Baum - Book Author; Victor Fleming - Director; Cedric Gibbons - Art Director; Arnold A.
Gillespie - Special Effects; Noel Langley - Screenwriter; Mervyn LeRoy - Producer; Harold Hal Rosson -
Cinematographer; Florence Ryerson - Screenwriter; Blanche Sewell - Editor; Herbert Stothart - Composer
(Music Score); George Stoll - Composer (Music Score); Edwin B. Willis - Set Designer; Edgar Allan Woolf -
Screenwriter; Jack Dawn - Makeup; Bobby Connolly - Choreography; Don Trumbull - Special Effects Assistant

Similar Movies
Alice in Wonderland; A Connecticut Yankee; Mary Poppins; Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory; The Lion,
the Witch and the Wardrobe; The Patchwork Girl of Oz; Alice in Wonderland; A Wrinkle in Time

From answers.com

DVD Release: The Wizard of Oz
Release Date: 1997

- Release Date: 1999
- Behind-the-scenes documentary The Wonderful Wizard of Oz: The Making of a Movie Classic, hosted by Angela Lansbury
- 2 English soundtracks: Dolby Surround 5.1 and original mono
- Languages & subtitles: English & Français
- A classic reproduction of the original theatrical script
- Rare still photos
- Theatrical color poster reproduction (8½"x11")
- A restored and enhanced Wizard of Oz DVD, digitally restored for enhanced picture quality and remastered in true stereo sound
- Outtakes, including the deleted Jitterbug dance sequence
- Original theatrical trailer
- Vintage movie and cartoon clips
- Theatrical trailers
- Outtake musical numbers
- Newsreel excerpts
- Cast interviews
- Shooting script
- Extensive audio program of original recording session material and radio broadcasts
• Interactive menus
• Scene access

**DVD Release: The Wizard of Oz [Deluxe Edition]**
Release Date: 1999
- "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz: The Making of a Movie Classic" hosted by Angela Lansbury
- 2 English soundtracks: Dolby Surround 5.1 and original mono
- Languages & subtitles: English & Français
- cc
- Vintage movie and cartoon clips
- Theatrical trailers
- Outtake musical numbers
- Newsreel excerpts
- Cast interviews
- Shooting script
- Extensive audio program of original recording session material and radio broadcasts
- Interactive menus
- Scene access

Release Date: 2005
- "Prettier Than Ever: The Restoration of Oz"
- "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz: The Making of a Movie Classic" and "Memories of Oz"
- TV specials
- All-new "The Art of Imagination: A Tribute to Oz" and "Because of the Wonderful Things It Does: The Legacy of Oz"
- All-new documentary "L. Frank Baum: The Man Behind the Curtain"
- His Majesty: The Scarecrow of Oz (1914)
- cc
- Reproductions of the original 1939 premiere program, ticket, and invitation
- MGM studio news
- Photoplay studies guide
- Publicity photographs and more
- New commentary by historian John Fricke, including archival interviews of the cast and crew
- The Wonderful Wizard of Oz storybook
- Supporting cast profile gallery
- Music-and-effects-only audio tracks
- Harold Arlen's home movies
- Outtakes and deleted scenes
- The Tornado tests
- Vintage vault featurettes
- Exclusive stills gallery
- Theatrical trailer gallery
- Over six hours of audio-only treasures, including a jukebox of recording session materials, radio shows, and promos
- "Off to See the Wizard"
• Over three hours devoted to Oz creator L. Frank Baum
• Pre-1939 screen versions of Oz Adventures
• The Wizard of Oz (1910)
• The Magic Cloak of Oz (1914)
• The Wizard of Oz (1925)
• Restored silent version (1925) featuring Oliver Hardy and a new score by Robert Israel
• The Wizard of Oz (1933 Cartoon)

**DVD Release: The Wizard of Oz [Special Edition] [2 Discs]**
Release Date: 2005

• Disc 1: Featuring a new Digital transfer from restored film elements presenting the movie's Technicolor
• Prettier Than Ever: The Restoration of Oz
• Languages: English (Both Dolby 5.1 & Original Mono) & Français
• Subtitles: English, Français & Español (Feature Film Only)
• Disc 2:
  • Documentaries on the movie's creation and impact: The Wonderful Wizard of Oz: The Making of a Movie Classic and Memories of Oz TV specials
  • Plus the all-new The Art of Imagination: A Tribute to Oz and Because of the Wonderful Things it Does: The Legacy of Oz
• cc
• Splendors as never before possible
• New commentary by historian John Fricke with cast, crew and family
• The Wonderful Wizard of Oz storybook
• We Haven't Really Met Properly...
• Supporting cast profile gallery
• Dolby Surround 5.1, Original Mono and music-and-effects-only audio tracks
• Harold Arlen's home movies
• Outtakes and deleted scenes
• It's a Twister! It's a Twister! The Tornado Tests
• Off to See the Wizard
• Vintage vault featurettes
• Extensive stills gallery
• Theatrical trailer gallery
• Over 6 hours of audio-only treasures, including a Jukebox of Recording session materials, radio shows and promos