

We are already looking ahead to 2017 and, once again, we're expecting admissions to be on the up. There's good reason for our optimism, too, and here's 20 films to look out for, from huge returning franchises, future classic animation, original dramas from genius directors and the follow-up to the biggest film in UK history.

## The Birth of a Nation

ABC1  
25-44

**Release date:** 20 January

The sensation from this year's Sundance Film Festival, *The Birth of a Nation*, went straight to the top of the favourites for 2017's awards. Nat Turner, a former slave in America, leads a liberation movement in 1831 to free African-Americans in Virginia that results in a violent retaliation from whites.

**Did you know:** After premiering at Sundance it sold to Fox Searchlight for a record figure.

## T2: Trainspotting 2

ABC1  
25-44

**Release date:** 27 January

It's been 20 years since the original *Trainspotting* and it's worth remembering just how much of a sensation it was. It launched a host of careers and they're all back for this sequel. Most importantly Danny Boyle is back in the director's chair for one of 2017's standout titles.

**Did you know:** *Trainspotting* has been ranked 10th by the BFI in its list of Top 100 British Films of All Time.



## Beauty and the Beast

16-34

**Release date:** 17 March

After *Cinderella* and *The Jungle Book* were huge successes, this is the next big Disney live-action remake. The well-known story revolves around a monstrous prince and a young woman who fall in love. Emma Watson takes on the role of Belle, while *Downton Abbey's* Dan Stevens plays Beast.

**Did you know:** The teaser trailer was viewed 91.8m times in the first 24 hours of its release, a new record.

## Fast 8

16-34

**Release date:** 14 April

Each film in the *Fast & Furious* franchise gets bigger than the last and *Fast & Furious 7* was by far the biggest, grossing over £38m. With Charlize Theron playing the villain and the return of Jason Statham and Kurt Russell, this could be even bigger still.

**Did you know:** *Fast 8* is the next entry (after *The Italian Job* and *Mad Max: Fury Road*) in the Charlize Theron-driving-and-kicking-ass sub-genre.



## Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2

16-34

**Release date:** 28 April

*Guardians of the Galaxy* was one of Marvel's best films, so the return of the gang in this sequel marks it out as one of 2017's most anticipated movies. Set to the backdrop of *Awesome Mixtape Vol. 2*, the team start to unravel the mystery of Peter Quill's true parentage.

**Did you know:** Rumours that Black Lace's *Agadoo* is on *Awesome Mixtape Vol. 2* are unconfirmed.

## Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales

16-34

**Release date:** 26 May

There are three *Pirates of the Caribbean* titles in the top 30 films of all time, so the audience for this fifth instalment will be big. Johnny Depp returns as Captain Jack Sparrow, as he searches for Poseidon's trident.

**Did you know:** Johnny Depp, Geoffrey Rush, Kevin McNally and Jack the Monkey are the only actors to appear in every movie in the series.

## Fifty Shades Darker

25+

**Release date:** 10 February

*Fifty Shades of Grey* was a genuine sensation, becoming the highest-grossing 18-cert film of all time.

The second film of the trilogy sees Christian Grey wrestling with his inner demons, while Anastasia must confront the anger and envy of the women who came before her.

**Did you know:** *Fifty Shades of Grey* grossed over £35m in the UK alone.

## The LEGO Batman Movie

16-34

**Release date:** 10 February

*The LEGO Movie* was one of the best animated films in recent times and ended 2014 as the biggest film of the year. One of its best characters gets his own movie next year; Will Arnett voices Batman in what should be one of the funniest films of 2017, not just in the animated category.

**Did you know:** *The LEGO Movie* won the BAFTA for Best Animated Film at the 2015 BAFTAs but was inexplicably overlooked at the Oscars. Idiots.

## Wonder Woman

16-34

**Release date:** 2 June

She was arguably the highlight of *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* and thankfully Wonder Woman gets her own film for summer 2017. Gal Gadot reprises her role and *Monster* director, Patty Jenkins, is in charge.

**Did you know:** Gal Gadot is well prepared for battle; she served for two years in the Israeli Defence Forces.

## Kingsman: The Golden Circle

16-34

**Release date:** 16 June

*Kingsman: The Secret Service* was a slick, exciting spy thriller and \$400m worldwide meant that a sequel wasn't going to be far away. It looks like the filmmakers are taking it up a level, too, with Julianne Moore and Channing Tatum added to the already excellent cast. This should be one of the standout action films of 2017.

**Did you know:** *Kingsman: The Secret Service* even topped *X-Men: First Class* at the box office to be director Matthew Vaughn's biggest hit.



## Despicable Me 3

**Release date:** 30 June



The *Despicable Me* series is the biggest new family franchise to emerge in recent years, attracting millions of fans of all ages. Even their spin-off title, *Minions*, was huge, grossing over £47m in the UK. This third instalment of the series sees Steve Carell return as Gru and it's the hot favourite to be the biggest family title of 2017.

**Did you know:** *Minions* is the 11th biggest film of all time worldwide.

## Spider-Man: Homecoming

**Release date:** 7 July



Spider-Man's introduction was one of the highlights of *Captain America: Civil War*, with Tom Holland's incarnation of the character delighting fans. He gets his own film next summer and Robert Downey Jr has already joined the cast as Tony Stark/Iron Man with Michael Keaton rumoured to be playing the villain.

**Did you know:** Thankfully, this is not another origin story.



## War for the Planet of the Apes

**Release date:** 14 July



The reboot of the *Planet of the Apes* series is a true success story and the second movie in the franchise, *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*, was one of the best sequels in living memory. This third instalment has the same director, the same writer, and Andy Serkis is back as Caesar. It should be another stunner.

**Did you know:** Caesar is the only big screen ape to have a salad named after him.

## Dunkirk

**Release date:** 21 July



A new film from Christopher Nolan is a true cinematic event and him taking on a big budget World War II action drama is a genuinely mouthwatering prospect. When the cast includes Tom Hardy and Mark Rylance, we could be looking at the most exciting title of 2017.

**Did you know:** Christopher Nolan is the fifth highest-grossing film director in history.

## Alien: Covenant

**Release date:** 2 August



Bound for a remote planet on the far side of the galaxy, the crew of the colony ship, *Covenant*, discovers what they think is an uncharted paradise, but is actually a dark, dangerous world whose sole inhabitant is the "synthetic" David (Michael Fassbender), survivor of the doomed *Prometheus* expedition.

**Did you know:** Despite what a lot of people say, *Prometheus* was good.

## Untitled Blade Runner Sequel

**Release date:** 6 October



*Blade Runner* is an all-time classic, and this sequel is shaping up very nicely. Harrison Ford returns, alongside new cast members Ryan Gosling, Robin Wright and Dave Bautista, all marshalled by one of Hollywood's best directors, Denis Villeneuve (*Sicario*, *Prisoners*). It's one of 2017's most exciting prospects.

**Did you know:** *Blade Runner* was number 11 in *Empire*'s 2014 poll of the best 301 films of all time.



## Paddington 2

**Release date:** 10 November



The first *Paddington* was an absolute delight; funny, warm-hearted and Paddington himself was beautifully animated. Unsurprisingly, it charmed its way to huge box office in the UK. This sequel has the same creative team, including Paul King back as writer/director, so everything points to it being another family classic.

**Did you know:** *Paddington* was the highest-grossing family film of all time worldwide released by a non-U.S. studio.

## Justice League

**Release date:** 17 November



*Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* spent part of its running time introducing a number of DC Comics characters, such as Aquaman, Shazam, The Flash and, of course, Wonder Woman, and they all come together in this epic showdown. Ben Affleck is set to return as Batman, too.

**Did you know:** Shazam's superhero power surprisingly isn't being able to identify any song within seconds.

## Star Wars: Episode VIII

**Release date:** 15 December



The follow-up to the biggest film of all time has some big shoes to fill, but *Looper* director, Rian Johnson, has more than enough talent to do it. The new cast members return and there should be a much bigger role for Mark Hamill as Luke Skywalker in this one. Christmas in 2017 is once again all about *Star Wars* and this is odds-on to be the biggest film of the year and one of the biggest films of all time.

**Did you know:** Oscar Isaac is a dude.

## Pitch Perfect 3

**Release date:** 22 December



When the second *Pitch Perfect* film grossed almost three times as much as the first, a third film was never going to be far away. Thankfully all our favourite characters (Beca, Emily, Fat Amy) are coming back for what should be one of 2017's biggest and aca-awesome comedies.

**Did you know:** Rumours that Rebel Wilson's real name is actually Subordinate Wilson are untrue.

