

## Film Feature: Bond, James Bond – Ranking the Bond Movies Worst to First, Including ‘Spectre’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on November 7, 2015 - 12:47pm

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CHICAGO – James Bond is back in his latest adventure, “Spectre,” but what about his movie life before this film? Spike Walters of HollywoodChicago.com ranks the 24 official James Bond films from worst to first, an overview of 007’s movie and cultural presence from 1962 through today.

The legacy of James Bond began in 1953, with the release of the first in a series of novels detailing the spy’s escapades, written by Ian Fleming. The British agent with a “license to kill” designation (007) was featured in 12 novels and two short story collections. In 1962, the first of the 24 official films – “Dr. No” – was released, starring Sean Connery, and began a series that maintains its popularity to this day. Many fans of the series consider Connery the essential James Bond, but many other actors followed him as Bond in the official film canon – George Lazenby, Roger Moore, Timothy Dalton, Pierce Brosnan and the current 007, Daniel Craig.



Daniel Craig is James Bond in ‘Spectre’

*Photo credit: Columbia Pictures*

From HollywoodChicago.com contributor Spike Walters, “Bond, James Bond” movies from the bottom to the top...

### 24. License to Kill

James Bond winds up stranded in this extended episode of “Miami Vice,” which has Timothy Dalton chasing a South American drug lord.

While this film has its defenders, this is the one that made Bond dreadfully boring. Timothy Dalton was always a little suspect, but by this time he'd lost his license to thrill completely.

### **23. A View to a Kill**

Another film that almost put a nail in James Bond's coffin. Even those with a soft spot for Roger Moore had to admit he'd put on the tuxedo one too many times. When you have Christopher Walken as a diabolical megalomaniac and the results are merely pedestrian, you know something's wrong. But one extra credit point for a great theme song.

### **22. The World is Not Enough**

The low point of Pierce Brosnan as James Bond. Denise Richards plays a nuclear physicist, and that's the least of its problems. John Cleese is a welcome addition to Q branch, but outside of that the pleasures are slight.



Timothy Dalton as James Bond

*Photo credit: 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment*

### **21. Quantum of Solace**

Daniel Craig's James Bond is reliable as always in his second outing as 007, but this Bond was chopped up into incoherency by edit-happy director Marc Forster. Forster seemed eager to turn Bond into Jason Bourne to cover up a lack of coherent story, and a weak villain doesn't help this headache inducing entry.

### **20. Die Another Day**

The Pierce Brosnan Bond film that gets the most grief, this was easily the silliest entry since Moonraker – remember that invisible car? It's only gotten sillier in the intervening years and there is no getting around the terrible looking CGI. But it's a relentless action machine that barely stops to catch its breath, and it can be an entertaining enough ride if you're in the right mood.

### **19. The Living Daylights**

Timothy Dalton's best film as James Bond still ain't that great. It has a couple of eye-popping stunts, but Bond was a little lost at this time looking for his place in the world – and Timothy Dalton wasn't the one to lead him there.

### **18. Moonraker**

Roger Moore's silliest outing as James Bond often gets dismissed as an attempt to cash in on the success of "Star Wars." I'm not saying it's good exactly, but it does start with a great opening skydiving stunt sequence. 'Bond in Space' yields some small cheesy pleasures, not the least of which is Moore's famous closing double entendre.

### **17. The Man with the Golden Gun**

Roger Moore's arched eyebrow and groan inducing puns are right at home in this entry that puts future "Fantasy Island" star Herve Villechaize as an evil henchman for super villain Christopher Lee. An underrated entry from the Roger Moore years.

## 16. Tomorrow Never Dies

Pierce Brosnan was always a little like a younger, more dapper Roger Moore. In this entry, his puns get a workout again while battling a Rupert Murdoch-type media tycoon out to start civil unrest in China to boost his own media empire. While Jonathan Pryce as the villain is more whiny than diabolical, extra points for Michelle Yeoh as a Bond Girl who can kick serious butt on her own.



Pierce Brosnan is James Bond in ‘Tomorrow Never Dies’

*Photo credit: 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment*

## 15. For Your Eyes Only

Roger Moore’s back-to-basics Bond has the actor beginning to show his age. The green screens that Moore used for his stunt work become more obvious, and the film kinda runs on autopilot. The film’s opening showdown with the villain Blofeld is a sign of the cheesiness to come, but any movie that puts Bond on skis ain’t all bad.

## 14. You Only Live Twice

Features one of the all time great evil villain lairs, and the quintessential incarnation of arch-villain Blofeld. But mostly Sean Connery’s James Bond is spinning his wheels here, and his unfortunate go around in Japanese garb doesn’t make it any easier to get through. By this time the series was getting more gadget heavy, but Bond has nothing particularly special.

## 13. Spectre

While this newest Bond doesn’t reach the same level of “Skyfall” or “Casino Royale,” realistically how could it? Daniel Craig gets in touch with a little of Bond’s silly side – adding a nice touch of humor – and from a few new gadgets from Q branch to the relentless action and impressive stunt work, there are homages to memorable scenes from the entire series. Christoph Waltz isn’t quite the hammy delight you’d expect, and the story tries a little too hard to tie up the previous three Daniel Craig entries, but graduating third in this impressive class is nothing to be ashamed of. Extra demerits however for the title theme by Sam Smith, which is easily one of the worst Bond theme songs ever.

## 12. Diamonds are Forever

Sean Connery’s last outing as Bond isn’t his best work, but it’s still got plenty going for it. While Connery is a little older by this point, he hasn’t lost the touch as he travels through the bright lights of old 1970’s Las Vegas and drives around the desert in a Moonbuggy. It’s enjoyable to see him put through his paces one more time.



Roger Moore is James Bond in ‘Octopussy’

*Photo credit: 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment*

### 11. Octopussy

Another Roger Moore Bond that gets an unfairly bad rap. This entry has Bond fighting the good old USSR and dodging poisonous snakes, while riding in a submarine cloaked as a crocodile in the jungles of India. While the film’s use of body doubles for Moore had become even more obvious – Moore appears only closeup in front of what appears to be green screen – and at one point Bond ends up in a clown costume, this film is firing on all cylinders. It offers all kinds of escapist silly pleasures, especially during a chase sequence on top of a train.

### 10. Dr. No

The first film in the legendary series, and Sean Connery’s first James Bond turn finds him, and the character, still figuring themselves out. There’s plenty here that would lay the groundwork for the films to come, but there’s also a lot more slow patches than you might remember as well.

### 9. Live and Let Die

Roger Moore’s first time as Bond has him ‘do do that voodoo that you do so well,’ chasing Jamaican bad guys. There’s an amusingly long speedboat chase that was only a sign of the stunts to come, and Moore’s considerable charms and droll humor seemed to indicate he was enjoying himself just as much as the audience.

### 8. GoldenEye

Pierce Brosnan provided just what Bond needed, when he needed it most. This stunt heavy extravaganza introduced Judi Dench as M, and had Bond fighting a turncoat agent and the Russians in a reignited Cold War. Brosnan’s first go-around as Bond proved to be his best.

### 7. From Russia with Love

Sean Connery at his grittiest 007. There are a few gadgets, but this Bond is more about the close quarters hand-to-hand combat here – his fight with Robert Shaw is a particular highlight.



George Lazenby is James Bond in ‘On Her Majesty’s Secret Service’

*Photo credit: 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment*

## 6. Thunderball

James Bond was still riding high from the heights of ‘Goldfinger,” with this entry which took Bond underwater and gave him all sorts of cool new toys to play with. While it’s a sign the series would be heading to new and more ridiculous heights, it’s still pretty entertaining.

## 5. The Spy Who Loved Me

Roger Moore’s best film as James Bond, hands down. It has his coolest gadgets, his best Bond girl, and one of the series best evil henchmen ever, Richard Kiel’s Jaws.

## 4. On Her Majesty’s Secret Service

While George Lazenby is no one’s idea of a great Bond, he was fortunate enough to get one of the series strongest stories, and the best Bond girl ever in Diana Rigg. This is the film that made Bond more human, and proved he was more than just a tuxedo with a license to kill. Telly Savalas ain’t too bad a bad guy either, as a gnarly Blofeld.



So It Begins: Sean Connery is James Bond in ‘Dr. No’  
Photo credit: 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment

### 3. Casino Royale

Daniel Craig gave us a James Bond like we’d truly never seen him before, in a reboot which took the world’s most famous spy in a new and grittier direction, and helped a whole new generation “Bond” with 007 all over again.

### 2. Skyfall

Great stunts, a terrific villain and exotic locales, plus a meaty, engaging and even half way believable story make this one not to miss. It also might be one of the most cinematic entries in the whole series, with one of the all-time best theme songs.

### 1. Goldfinger

How can anyone argue with Goldfinger? The perfect mix of gadgets, great villains and a top notch story. This is the James Bond movie that set the mold for decades to come.

*Article edited by Patrick McDonald of HollywoodChicago.com. “Spectre” is in theaters everywhere now. Featuring Daniel Craig, Christoph Waltz, Léa Seydoux, Ralph Fiennes, Monica Belluci and Ben Whishaw. Screenplay by John Logan, Neal Purvis, Robert Wade and Jez Butterworth. Directed by Sam Mendes. Rated “PG-13”*



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