

5 Films That Made My Christmas

[Jordan Allwood](#) explains why *Die Hard* is a Christmas film, and shares with us some special film scenes that have become part of his seasonal celebrations

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For many families, Christmas offers a chance to plonk yourself down in front of the television, switch off that recurrent DFS advert and stick on some classic movies. However, this isn't just about your typical "top five Christmas films", but how a series of heart-warming, action-packed and even eye-wateringly awkward movie moments have over the years come to form an important part of my festive season.



Home Alone (1990)

When I was about five or six, I was obsessed with this film. Properly nuts for it. Who am I kidding? I still am a bit. I'd watch *Home Alone* repeatedly, often not even at Christmas. A favourite scene of the older, nostalgic person in me would have to be those final minutes when, as John Williams' tinkling score swells, little cherub Macaulay Culkin sees his mother through the snow, returned just in time for Christmas. No doubt my younger, carnage-happy self would have gone for the bit where Joe Pesci's burglar gets his head set on fire.

Die Hard (1988)

In my opinion, the perfect "anti-Christmas" Christmas film. Bruce Willis starts and ends in a suitably grumpy manner, playing the harassed NYPD cop struggling his way through a Christmas Eve party. In timely fashion, the celebrations are interrupted by Alan Rickman's Hans Gruber – terrorist, robber and owner of a suspect German accent. *Die Hard's* real triumph is that it's a movie I can get my Grandma to watch ("trust me, it's a Christmas film...") while still being full of bazookas, machine guns and all the reckless fun that follows the catchphrase "yippee-kay-yay mother..." well, you know.



Love Actually (2003)

A sickly-sweet syrup-fest of a movie that nevertheless belongs here for having burnt a moment of extreme awkwardness into my mind. Having never seen it before, one Christmas my parents suggested we – that is, my twelve-year-old self and my ten-year-old brother – watch it as a family. All good, until Martin Freeman and Joanna Page turn up as a romantically involved couple who also happen to be porn stars. Cue uncomfortable coughs from my folks. By the time we got to that wretch-inducing bit of foreplay involving Laura Linney’s character (the one with the crazy brother), I was braced to dive out of the window.

A Christmas Carol (1999)

By no means the most critically renowned version of Dickens’ well-loved classic, Hallmark’s TV adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* starring Patrick Stewart is still my favourite. Make no bones about it, Stewart is Scrooge. The rickety set sometimes looks like cardboard and the visual effects can be naff, but none of this matters when the whole thing is held together by such a wonderfully genuine performance. For a case in point, witness Ebenezer’s final transformation, starting with a throaty, gasping laugh that washes away years of humbug and misery. This is a Christmas Eve staple in our house.



It’s A Wonderful Life (1946)

With this last choice, things are starting to look sentimental. My dad made me watch this a few years ago and I scoffed: as if a black and white film could keep me entertained for two-and-a-half hours (I’m a heathen, I know). It is, of course, the best Christmas film ever. And I cry every time like a big baby. In fact, each time I watch it, I start welling up a little bit earlier. At this rate, it won’t be long before I’ll start sobbing just from looking at the DVD case. I challenge anyone to sit through the last scene, with that rousing rendition of ‘Auld Lang Syne’, and not get a lump in their throat. A life-affirming film that’s made for the festive season.



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