

# A Fish Called Wanda Parents Guide



**A Fish Called Wanda** is a classic comedy film released in 1988, directed by Charles Crichton and written by John Cleese. The movie is widely praised for its humor, clever dialogue, and memorable performances. As a parent or guardian, it's essential to understand the content and themes of any film before deciding whether it's appropriate for younger audiences. This article serves as a thorough guide to help you navigate the appropriateness of "A Fish Called Wanda" for your family.

# Overview of the Film

"A Fish Called Wanda" follows the story of a group of con artists who double-cross each other in their pursuit of a hidden fortune. The primary characters include:

- Wanda (played by Jamie Lee Curtis): A seductive and cunning con artist who manipulates the men around her.
- Otto (played by Kevin Kline): A dim-witted but violent man who is in love with Wanda.
- Ken (played by Michael Palin): A stuttering animal lover who has his own agenda.
- George (played by Tom Georgeson): The mastermind of the heist who is ultimately betrayed by his associates.

The film is renowned for its witty dialogue, comedic antics, and unexpected plot twists. However, its humor often straddles the line between clever and crude, which raises questions about its suitability for younger audiences.

## Content Themes and Messages

Understanding the themes and messages within "A Fish Called Wanda" is crucial in assessing its suitability for children. The film explores various adult themes, including:

### 1. Crime and Deception

At its core, the film revolves around crime, specifically a jewel heist. The characters engage in deceitful behavior, which is portrayed humorously but may not be suitable for younger viewers who could misinterpret these actions as acceptable.

### 2. Relationships and Manipulation

The dynamics between the characters are complex, with Wanda manipulating the men around her for her gain. The film presents a rather cynical view of relationships, showcasing betrayal and selfishness.

### 3. Violence

While the violence in "A Fish Called Wanda" is primarily comedic, it still features scenes of aggression, including physical confrontations and threats. Some viewers may find these moments inappropriate, particularly for children.

## 4. Adult Humor

The film is rich in adult humor, including sexual innuendos and jokes that may go over the heads of younger viewers but are clearly intended for a mature audience. Parents should consider whether their children are ready to understand and process this type of humor.

## Language and Profanity

"A Fish Called Wanda" contains strong language and profanity throughout. The dialogue includes:

- Multiple uses of the f-word and other profanities
- Racial slurs and derogatory terms
- Innuendos and suggestive comments

These elements contribute significantly to the film's comedic style but may not be suitable for younger viewers. Parents should consider the maturity level of their children when deciding if the language in the film is appropriate.

## Sexual Content

The film includes several scenes that portray sexual situations and innuendos, which may not be appropriate for younger children. Some examples include:

- Wanda's flirtations and romantic entanglements
- Suggestive comments and situations that imply sexual activity

Parents should be aware that while the sexual content is often played for laughs, it may still raise questions for younger audience members.

## Parental Guidance Ratings

In assessing the film's appropriateness, various parental guidance organizations have assigned ratings that can help inform your decision:

- MPAA Rating: "A Fish Called Wanda" is rated R for strong language, sexual content, and violence. This rating indicates that the film is intended for mature audiences and may not be suitable for children under 17 without parental guidance.
- Common Sense Media: This organization rates the film based on content and provides insights into its themes. They recommend the film for ages 14 and up, noting the adult humor, language, and violence.

# Why Parents Should Watch Together

If you decide that "A Fish Called Wanda" is suitable for your teens, consider watching it together as a family. Doing so can provide valuable opportunities for discussion about the film's themes and the characters' actions. Here are some points to discuss:

- **The impact of crime:** Talk about the consequences of the characters' illegal actions and how they affect others.
- **Understanding relationships:** Discuss the dynamics between Wanda, Otto, and Ken, and what they reveal about manipulation and trust.
- **Humor and boundaries:** Explore the nature of the humor in the film and whether certain jokes cross a line. Ask your teens what they think about the level of humor and whether they found it funny or inappropriate.

## Alternatives to Consider

If you feel that "A Fish Called Wanda" may not be suitable for your family, there are plenty of other comedy films that offer similar humor without the more adult themes. Here are some alternatives to consider:

1. **Ferris Bueller's Day Off** - A light-hearted comedy about a high school student who skips school for a day of adventure.
2. **The Princess Bride** - A fairy tale adventure filled with humor, romance, and action, suitable for all ages.
3. **Home Alone** - A family-friendly comedy about a young boy who defends his home from burglars during the holiday season.
4. **Mrs. Doubtfire** - A heartwarming and funny story about a father disguising himself as a nanny to spend time with his children.

## Final Thoughts

In conclusion, "A Fish Called Wanda" is an iconic film that offers a blend of humor, crime, and complex relationships. However, its R rating and adult themes make it important for parents to assess its appropriateness for younger viewers. By understanding the film's content, discussing its themes, and considering alternative films, parents can make

informed decisions that align with their family's values and comfort levels. Remember, watching films together can foster communication and understanding, making movie nights a valuable family bonding experience.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Is 'A Fish Called Wanda' suitable for children?**

No, 'A Fish Called Wanda' is rated R for language, sexual content, and violence, making it unsuitable for young children.

### **What are the main themes of 'A Fish Called Wanda'?**

The film explores themes of betrayal, greed, and the complexities of love and relationships, often through comedic lenses.

### **Are there any explicit scenes in 'A Fish Called Wanda'?**

Yes, the film contains some explicit sexual content and innuendos that may not be appropriate for younger viewers.

### **What age group is recommended for watching 'A Fish Called Wanda'?**

The film is recommended for adults and older teenagers, typically 17 and above, due to its mature content.

### **Does 'A Fish Called Wanda' have any messages about crime?**

The film humorously portrays crime and heists, but ultimately it suggests that greed and betrayal can lead to negative consequences.

### **Can parents watch 'A Fish Called Wanda' with their teens?**

Parents should consider their teens' maturity level before watching, as the film includes strong language and adult themes.

### **What is the overall tone of 'A Fish Called Wanda'?**

The film has a comedic tone, blending elements of heist films with satire, but it also touches on darker themes of morality and relationships.

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