



Classification labels

What do age restrictions mean for me?

New Zealand classification labels

WHY DO WE NEED THEM?

Age ratings and descriptive notes provide people with information and warnings about films, shows and games.

These help you make choices that are right for you and for your whānau.

Everyone is different and has different experiences. What is fine for you may not be for someone else.

If you disagree with a classification decision, contact us at info@classificationoffice.govt.nz

What do the labels mean?

UNRESTRICTED

G or **General Audiences** means people of all ages can view the film or game. There is no language, nudity, sex, violence or other material that would upset tamariki.

PG or **Parental Guidance** means that the film or game can be sold, hired or shown to anyone. This means unaccompanied tamariki can watch. However, the label indicates that some scenes may upset younger or more sensitive tamariki and it pays to check before they watch or play.

M or **Mature Audiences** means that the film or game can be sold, hired or shown to anyone, but the content is more suitable for mature audiences. M-rated material might contain violence, offensive language, drug use, sexual or adult themes, or nudity. It's a good idea to check the descriptive note before watching.

Note: although unrestricted video games are exempt from classification, they've usually been rated elsewhere (such as in Australia or the US) and often carry classification labels from those countries.

RESTRICTED

R means legally age-restricted. It is an offence to allow someone underage to watch or access restricted films and games.

RP means younger people can only watch with a parent or guardian.



Restrictions apply in cinemas, at home and at school – everywhere. Adults cannot give tamariki permission to watch restricted films or play restricted games. Doing so can lead to a large fine – so if a cinema denies you access on account of age, they're just doing their job.

STREAMING

Most streaming providers are legally required to display New Zealand ratings and classifications (such as **G**, **PG**, **M**, **16** and **18**). These can be classifications as assessed by the Classification Office, ratings issued by the Film and Video Labelling Body, or the provider's own self-rating.

These labels look similar to the physical labels that audiences are already familiar with. Rating information should be shown close to the title of the content you're going to watch, and again when the content starts playing.

The number on the label shows the lowest age the content is suitable for. It's always a good idea to read the content warning.

For information about using parental controls, head to our website.

Handy hints

The descriptive note on the label tells you about the highest impact content you can expect to see in a film or game. So it may say things like 'contains violence and offensive language'.

Not all animated films are meant for tamariki! Check the age rating and descriptive note first.

Think about where you or your child might be watching a film. Watching a movie at home means you can switch it off, mute a scene, or walk away instead of experiencing it on a big screen at the cinema with surround sound. You know your family best.



People often ask

Can I take my baby to a restricted film?

No. It's illegal to take underage tamariki and babies to see age-restricted films.

What ID is accepted at cinemas and retailers?

Cinemas and retailers have their own policies about what forms of ID are acceptable, so it's best to check with them.

Are 'M' rated films age-restricted?

No. 'M' rated films indicate the content may be more suitable for older teens. It is not a legal restriction.

Why are some films and games age-restricted?

Age restrictions protect tamariki and rangatahi from content that can be harmful for young minds.

What are the rules for trailers played before films?

It's against the law for R-rated trailers to be shown before unrestricted movies. Cinemas should show trailers with ratings that are the same or lower than the movie being screened.



ABOUT US

Te Mana Whakaatu – Classification Office is an independent Crown entity which classifies films and other content and provides information about classification work. We conduct research and produce evidence-based resources to promote media literacy and enable New Zealanders to make informed choices about content they watch.

To search for classifications and ratings visit:

classificationoffice.govt.nz