

MOVIE REVIEW

Notes for your review, using the 8-point formula

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FILM TITLE

The Big Short

YEAR

2015

DIRECTOR

Adam McKay

GENRE

Comedy drama

RUNTIME

130 min

WHERE YOU WATCHED

Streaming, at home

YOUR NAME

Sam O.

YOUR RATING



SCORE 4.5 / 5

ONE-LINE VERDICT

Furious, funny and sharp about 2008.

THE 8-POINT FORMULA

1. PLOT SUMMARY the setup in 2 or 3 sentences, no spoilers

In 2005, a handful of outsiders spot that the US housing market is built on bad loans. They bet against it, and have to watch the banks lie while they wait to be proved right.

2. ACTING AND DIRECTION who stands out, and the choices behind it

Steve Carell is the heart of it as Mark Baum, angry at everyone including himself. McKay directs like he's losing his patience, in a good way.

3. THEMES what the film is really about

Greed, and how easy it is to look away. Winning the bet still means millions of people lose their homes.

4. SOUND AND VISUALS score, cinematography, editing, design

Handheld camera, jumpy cuts and freeze frames make finance feel like a heist. Pop songs and news clips mark the years.

5. PACING where it flies, where it drags

Fast for the first hour. Slows in the last act on purpose, as the crash lands and nobody celebrates.

6. SPECIFIC EXAMPLES scenes, shots or lines that prove your points

Margot Robbie explains mortgage bonds from a bubble bath. Baum's dinner with the CDO manager in Las Vegas. Ryan Gosling's Jenga tower.

7. DESCRIPTIVE WORDS 5 words that capture how it feels

Angry. Fast. Funny. Uneasy. Sharp.

8. RECOMMENDATION who should watch it, and why

Anyone who liked The Social Network or wants to understand 2008. Skip it if jargon on screen drives you mad.

MOVIE REVIEW

Outline your review, then write it

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HEADLINE

The Big Short Turns a Financial Crash Into a Furious Comedy

TARGET WORD COUNT

600 to 800

REVIEW OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION hook, film details, your verdict in one sentence

Hook: a movie about mortgage bonds shouldn't be this much fun. Adam McKay's The Big Short (2015) follows the outsiders who saw the 2008 crash coming. Verdict: it's the angriest comedy of the decade, and one of the best.

BODY PARAGRAPH 1 your strongest point, with an example

The cast. Carell's Baum carries the film's conscience. Example: his silence at the Las Vegas dinner says more than his speeches.

BODY PARAGRAPH 2 second point, with an example

The style. Celebrity cameos explain the jargon straight to camera. Example: Margot Robbie in the bath. It works because the film admits it's confusing.

BODY PARAGRAPH 3 what didn't work, or a third point

What didn't work: the fast cutting wears thin in the middle, and a few side characters never land.

CONCLUSION restate the verdict, then recommend

Restate: a comedy that leaves you angry, on purpose. Recommend it to anyone who wants 2008 explained without a textbook.

BEFORE YOU HAND IT IN

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|--|---|
| ☒ Title, year and director in the first paragraph | ☒ A clear verdict before the end of the intro |
| ☒ At least 3 specific scenes, shots or lines | ☒ No spoilers past the first act (or a warning) |
| ☒ Acting, direction, sound and visuals all covered | ☒ A recommendation: who should watch it |
| ☒ Present tense for what happens on screen | ☒ Read it out loud once before you hand it in |