

## Back To College, Back To Movies

When you're in school, it's all about academic achievement (otherwise how will you get into college?). Once you get into college, sure... academics remain important, but your social life is much more in the limelight. It's all about whom you know, how popular you are, which clique you belong to and how cool you can be. Because that's how it is in the movies. Our movies show us a picture of the candy-coated-sugar-drop college we always dreamed of, where we can bunk all we want, and we'll never get caught (and that popular guy will always have somebody to put 'proxy' for him!) and also a place where we will find true love, the one that lasts forever. (Ya, Like that happens! ). But, most importantly, they give us lessons on friendship and tell us just how much fun college can be. So, to integrate the 'reel' with the 'real', here's a list of must-see college-y movies to watch with your pals!

1. **Dil Chahta Hai** – Perhaps a pioneering effort to understand the mentality of the youth at the onset of the new millennia, Dil Chahta Hai will always be remembered for introducing us to bold subjects like love between a younger man and an older woman and for making Aamir Khan's goatee (and Saif Ali Khan's acting) popular. A fresh look at the lives of three just-out-of-college friends and their views on love, marriage, sex, their careers, and of course, their unbreakable friendship, this breakthrough film was packed with powerful performances from the superb ensemble cast. The music by Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy and the light moments along with some witty one-liners are the highlight of this great film.
2. **Gulaal** – A dark take on student and campus politics, Anurag Kashyap's Gulaal is an out and out political drama. You will be surprised at the intricacies about campus and hostel-life observed and added into the storyline by the director. Watch it for the performances and the morbid look at ruthless political games and ugly incidents of hostel ragging. We must see what the big fuss is about. After all, it took them seven years just to get the movie released.
3. **Lakshya** – Not set in a traditional college campus, the first half of this movie shows the transition of a purposeless and confused youth into a focused and disciplined army officer on training at the IMA, after quite some probing, of course. The second half lets the poignancy of the romance seep in along with the brutality of war and violence, which lends able support to the already fantastic storyline. The journey is unbelievable, and the treatment, classy, which may not find universal appeal. But what really connects you to the film is the familiarity with the main protagonist, aimless Karan, and his metamorphosis from an 'ordinary life to an extraordinary life'. Surely, we have all gone through what he faces sometime or the other in our lives, or at least hope to find our respective paths to glory as well!
4. **Rang De Basanti** – Actually, this is not really college movie but perhaps, one of the best Indian movies of our generation. RDB is more about

creating a sense of patriotism and a thirst for change in the youth. It draws parallels between British India and India ruled by corrupt politicians to move the story forward. The carefree lifestyle, as a product of Modern India, of the six main youths portrayed in the movie is quickly changed into a fire of rebellion when tragedy strikes on their own loved one. AR Rahman's music is first-rate and the performances, especially those of Aamir Khan and Siddharth are haunting. And by the time the movie ends, this sound still echoes in your head: *"Aye Sala, abhi abhi hua yakeen... ki aag hai mujhme kahin!"*

5. **Rock On!!** – Okay, so technically it's not about the youth and neither about after college perils. It's about four estranged friends who meet again after years, their complicated relationships with their families and each other, their attempt to break out of their monotonous 9-to-5 jobs and most importantly, to not let go of a dream they saw years ago, while giving another chance to their friendship. It's not only about the music (although that is one of the most important aspects of the film) but also about emotions, nostalgia and dreams. Even when tragedy ensues, you never really feel bad...instead you cry and laugh with Adi, Joe, KD and Rob and feel really good once the lights have brightened and the popcorn's over.

Just like these movies, college life is a potpourri of joy, sadness, despair, hope and insecurities...generally the sadness and despair having a hand over the good stuff. But then, that's why you have the movies to keep your sanity intact.