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## Harvard On Location: Five Films Shot in Boston

by [Cheryl](#) 13 weeks ago- last edited 3 weeks ago

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With more than 100 colleges and universities located in the greater **Boston** area, the city's reputation as an epicentre of higher education is unrivalled. Founded in 1636 and with notable attendees such as John Adams, JFK, Natalie Portman, Tommy Lee Jones and Al Gore having strolled its halls, Harvard University is the nation's oldest higher learning institution and arguably the area's most illustrious. With a well-known motto of "truth" and a legion of movies filmed on its campus, there's some "*veritas*" to the idea that this Cambridge university is a favourite of Hollywood. Here are a few films shot in Boston that win high honours with us.

## Legally Blonde

Attempting to prove she's smarter than her brassy roots would suggest, blonde beauty Elle Woods (Reese Witherspoon) packs up her bags after being accepted into Harvard Law. This 2001 rom-com is set on the campus of the university's distinguished law school, as the unlikely candidate clicks her high heels down the hallowed halls on her way to winning back the love of her college sweetie.



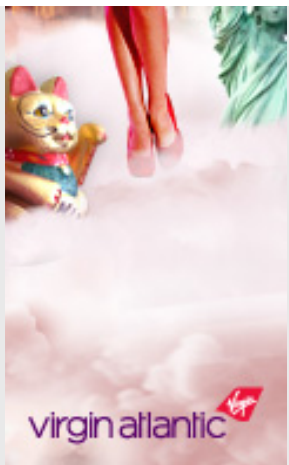
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Harvard Law © Kris Snibbe

## The Paper Chase

Intellectual humour mixes with dramatic moodiness in this classic 1973 movie which also takes place at Harvard Law School and throughout Cambridge. The story follows James Hart, a first-year student played by Timothy Bottoms, as he chases after the academic approval of stern contracts instructor Professor Kingsfield (John Houseman) and the just-out-of-reach love of his daughter Susan (Lindsay Wagner).



John Harvard statue in Harvard University © jiaawangkun, 2013. Used under license from [Shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com)

## Love Story

Laced with lingering outdoor strolls through the picturesque campus, this quintessential love story portrays a softer side of this tough-as-nails institute. Harvard Law student Oliver Barrett IV (Ryan O'Neal) and music student Jennifer Cavillari (Ali MacGraw) share an ill-fated love in this 1971 drama which garnered several Oscar nominations including Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Director and Best Film.





Harvard University Library © Sopotnicki, 2013. Used under license from [Shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com)

## The Social Network

This 2010 drama gives a glimpse into the early days of Facebook, starring Jesse Eisenberg as Harvard undergrad and computer programming genius Mark Zuckerberg (you might have heard of him). The movie is a thrilling, fast-paced ride from the global phenomenon's founding and infancy through the legal battles and lawsuits that resulted in Zuckerberg becoming history's youngest billionaire.



View of Harvard University and pedestrian bridge on Charles River © Jorge Salcedo, 2013. Used under license from [Shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com)

## Good Will Hunting

Filmed throughout South Boston and Cambridge (mostly in Harvard University's Dunster House and around Harvard Square), this 1997 Oscar-winner launched the careers of local golden boys Ben Affleck and Matt Damon, a former Harvard student himself. Will Hunting, a janitor at MIT played by Damon, is a genius with mathematics but needs help from a psychologist (Robin Williams) to make his life add up to something.

Header photo: Student dorms in Harvard Yard © Jorge Salcedo, 2013. Used under license from [Shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com)

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*Any other Boston-based films visitors should try and see before an upcoming trip? Which movies best sum up the essence of Boston? Let us know in the comments below.*



## Boston Short Films: The Best of Beantown

### Our Places

With its multitude of redbrick buildings and historic architecture, its down-to-earth people and its beautiful waterfronts – whether the Charles River or Boston Harbor – this city has many faces for film. Here we've chosen a few of our favourite Boston videos to whet your appetite for a trip to Beantown.

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### About the author: **Cheryl**

*Cheryl Fenton*

A Boston native, Cheryl Fenton is no stranger to the goings on and hot spots of her favorite city. Throughout her 15-year freelance career in dining, fashion, beauty and travel, Cheryl has covered it all for local magazines and websites including Stuff, The Boston Globe, Boston Phoenix, mysecretboston.com and Boston Common. You can also find her national bylines in glossies such as Glamour, Cooking Light, and Wallpaper. In her spare time, what little there is, Cheryl strolls the city with coffee in hand, always looking for what's next on the agenda.

