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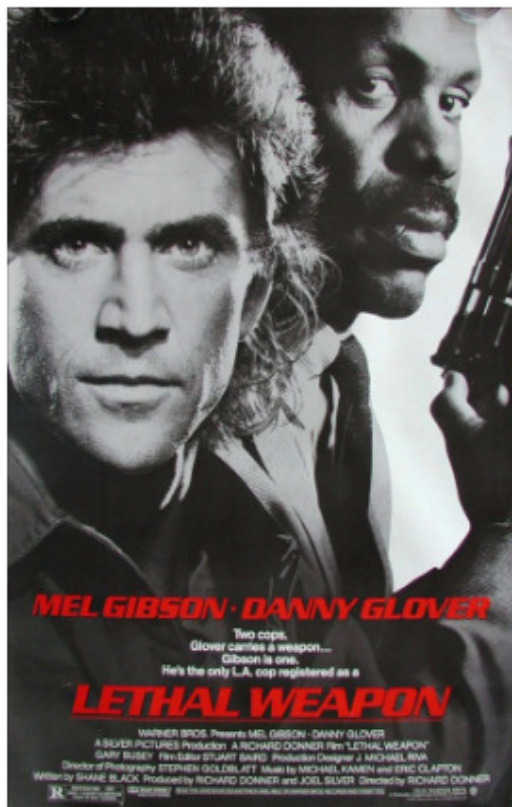
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5 buddy cop movies without the cops



Buddy cops. You know the formula. Two normally incompatible law enforcement personalities are forced to work together. They're initially resistant to new partner orders (usually from a shouting, zinger flinging superior) because they prefer to "work alone." Cue slow motion explosions, police work not done "by the book" and character exposition relayed via a shouting match in the middle of a shoot-out and/or reckless car chase with bad guys.

The formula hit its stride with 1982's ["48 Hours"](#) and arguably reached its "Citizen Kane" with 1987's ["Lethal Weapon"](#). A string of "buddy cop" set-up variations followed:

Chicago cop gets partner from Soviet Russia:

["Red Heat"](#) (1988)

One cop wears Armani, the other Levi's: ["Tango and Cash"](#) (1989)

Cop gets partner outside own species:

["Alien Nation"](#) (1988), ["Turner & Hooch"](#) (1989)

He's from China! He's from the hood!: ["Rush Hour"](#) (1998)

So the formula works well with law enforcement types. How well does it work outside the police beat? Here are five lesser known buddy movies whose dueling personalities are not The Man:



["Hidden Fortress"](#) (1958)

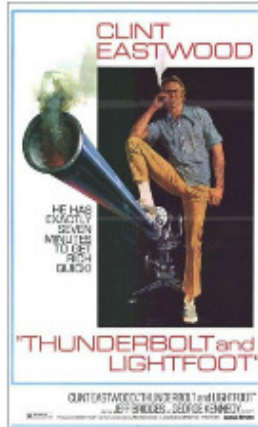
Peasants Tahei and Matashichi roam the countryside of feudal Japan in search of a fast buck. Regularly side-tracked by clan wars, bickering and greed, they're recruited with the promise of reward by Samurai General Makabe (Toshiro Mifune). Makabe needs their help delivering a feisty exiled princess and a large stash of gold across enemy lines all while evading an army in fast pursuit. Plot sound familiar? Just replace the peasants with R2-D2 and C-3PO, gold with Death Star plans and feisty princess with...a feisty princess and you've got

["Star Wars."](#) [George Lucas](#) has oft times cited this Kurosawa classic as an inspiration.



"The Thin Man" (1934)

Based on the eponymous novel by Dashiell Hammett (who also wrote "The Maltese Falcon"), Nick and Nora Charles (William Powell and Myrna Loy) are a New York high society couple in a playful relationship full of witty banter. He's a retired detective and she's an heiress. When a close friend disappears Nick is lured out of retirement to solve the mystery while Nora rides shotgun. Many drinks and classic one-liners are had along the way.



"Thunderbolt and Lightfoot" (1974)

Recent [Oscar](#) winner [Jeff Bridges](#) got a Best Supporting nom playing Lightfoot, a cocky young thief who inadvertently saves veteran bank robber Thunderbolt ([Clint Eastwood](#)) from an assassination attempt. After they meet and greet, Thunderbolt takes the inexperienced Lightfoot under his wing. They reunite with members of Thunderbolt's old gang (which includes George Kennedy) and plan a big bank heist using a 20mm German cannon. Because nothing says subtle like Nazi artillery. Directed by Michael Cimino whose next film was the Oscar bonanza "The Deer Hunter" followed by the career killer "Heaven's Gate." Ouch.



"The Frisco Kid" (1979)

An orthodox Jew and a Wild West gunslinger both walk into a bar... Gene Wilder plays Avram Belinski, a Rabbi living in Philadelphia who's fresh from Poland. With ancient Torah scroll in hand, he leaves for San Francisco where he will serve as a congregation's new Rabbi. During the journey he's conned and loses everything but meets up with bank robber Tommy Lillard ([Harrison Ford](#)). While traveling together they encounter rough weather and terrain, Native Americans and learn the meaning of being a mensch.



"The Late Show" (1977)

Art Carney plays aging detective Ira Wells who's short on dough and friends (think Phillip Marlowe in his later years where his distrust of humanity has left him bitterly cynical and alone). An old partner shows up on his doorstep one day with a mortal wound. Ira feels compelled to solve the mystery despite the fact he hates people and would rather stay home. In steps Lily Tomlin as Margo Sperling, an eccentric woman who's really only concerned with finding her cat. The two put

their differences aside (both generational and esoteric) and search for answers.