

Easy Living

Written by bluesever

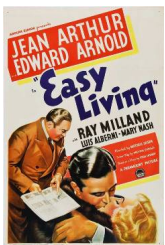
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Easy Living

Easy Living (1937) is a screwball comedy film, directed by Mitchell Leisen. Jean Arthur and Ray Milland shine in this comedy written by Preston Sturges. Mary Smith (Arthur) is a poor working girl who literally has a fortune dropped in her lap when a wealthy financier (Edward Arnold) tosses a sable coat out a window and it lands on her. Everyone automatically assumes she's his mistress, and soon her fairytale-like rags-to-riches lifestyle threatens a very real romance with an inept waiter (Milland). It's a "delightful comedy" full of misunderstandings that showcases high-society slapstick at its best!

Easy Living

Ralph Rainger and Leo Robin composed the song "Easy Living" for the film, and it has since become a jazz standard.



Easy Living, 1937

Ralph Rainger won a scholarship to a prestigious music school but at the behest of his parents left after a year to work his way through law school, playing piano and accompanying vaudeville shows at night. His heart wasn't in his law practice so he left in 1928 to co-lead a Broadway pit orchestra. In 1930 he wrote a show hit with Leo Robin, beginning a prolific partnership that would last until his untimely death in a plane crash.



Ralph Rainger

Leo Robin studied law and drama, harboring a secret ambition to be a playwright, but he became a first-rate lyricist instead. In 1928 Robin went to Hollywood. He wrote *"Louise"* (1929) and *"My Ideal"* (1930), both famously sung by Maurice Chevalier in films. Robin's songs were ten times nominated for Oscars.



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Leo Robin

The songwriting pair took off for Hollywood and wrote for over 100 films between 1930 and 1942. But the duo's most memorable song, "*Easy Living*," was written in 1937 and has maintained its popularity to this day.



Ray Milland and Jean Arthur

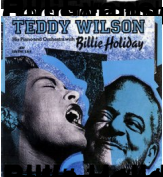
"*Easy Living*" is a slow ballad with straightforward lyrics that declare just how wonderful life can be when living for someone you love.

"**Easy Living**" did not immediately garner much public attention because it was only performed instrumentally in the original film. However, **Billie Holiday** recorded it with **Teddy Wilson's Orchestra** on June 1, 1937, and their version stayed on the charts for two weeks in July, 1937, peaking at fifteenth position.

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Billie Holiday (1915-1959) was a jazz singer and actress. She was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and was known for her smooth, sultry voice and her ability to swing.

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