

The **Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU)** is an American [media franchise](#) and [shared universe](#) centered on [a series](#) of [superhero films](#) produced by [Marvel Studios](#). The films are based on characters that appear in [American comic books](#) published by [Marvel Comics](#). The franchise also includes [television series](#), short films, digital series, and literature. The shared universe, much like the original [Marvel Universe](#) in comic books, was established by [crossing over](#) common plot elements, settings, cast, and characters.