

# THE MARVEL CARTOGRAPHER'S GUIDE

Complete Marvel Comics Chronology via Collected Editions  
From Fantastic Four #1 (1961) to Current Ongoing (2026)

Mapping the entire Marvel Universe — every era, every essential collected edition, every major event, with availability status, creator credits, story summaries, and continuity connections.

IMPORTANCE LEVELS	AVAILABILITY STATUS
<b>ESSENTIAL</b> — Core storyline, cannot skip	<b>IN PRINT</b> — Currently available new
<b>RECOMMENDED</b> — Enriches understanding	<b>OUT OF PRINT</b> — Secondary market only
<b>SUPPLEMENTAL</b> — Good but optional	<b>UPCOMING</b> — Solicited / announced
<b>COMPLETIONIST</b> — Deep-dive only	<b>ONGOING</b> — Currently publishing

**How to Use This Guide:** Each era is presented chronologically with all significant collected editions. Tables show the edition title, issues collected, creator credits, current availability, importance level, and a story summary with connections to other titles. Follow the **ESSENTIAL** entries for the core Marvel story. Add **RECOMMENDED** entries to deepen your understanding. Connection notes (marked with arrows) show how storylines branch across different titles.

**A Note on Marvel Continuity:** Marvel's timeline is not fully linear or settled. The 'sliding timescale' compresses 60+ years of publication into roughly 13-15 years of in-universe time. Retcons, editorial mandates, and creative reinterpretations mean multiple valid readings often exist. Where significant conflicts arise, we note the Official Marvel stance, the fan-accepted interpretation, and the editorial context. Confidence scores (0-100%) indicate how settled a particular chronological placement is.

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# I. THE BIRTH OF MARVEL

1961 — 1966 | *The Lee/Kirby/Ditko Era*

Everything begins here. In November 1961, Stan Lee and Jack Kirby launch **Fantastic Four #1**, and within five years they create the entire foundation of the Marvel Universe: Spider-Man, the Avengers, the X-Men, Thor, Iron Man, Hulk, Doctor Strange, Daredevil, Black Panther, the Inhumans, Galactus, the Silver Surfer, and Doctor Doom. These books are published monthly, sharing a single interconnected continuity — a revolutionary concept at the time.

## FANTASTIC FOUR — The First Family

The anchor series of the entire Marvel Universe. Lee and Kirby's FF introduces most of the core cosmic concepts (Galactus, Silver Surfer, Watcher, Negative Zone, Kree, Skrulls) and provides the narrative backbone that all other series branch from.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
Fantastic Four Omnibus Vol. 1	FF #1-30, Annual #1	Lee / Kirby	IN PRINT	Origin of the Marvel Universe. Mole Man (#1), Skrulls (#2), Namor's return (#4), Doctor Doom debut (#5 — most important villain in Marvel), Puppet Master & Alicia Masters (#8), Impossible Man (#11), Watcher & Red Ghost (#13), Super-Skrull (#18), Molecule Man (#20), Hate-Monger (#21), Diablo (#30). Annual #1 = Namor/Doom alliance. <b>Confidence: 100%</b> — foundational, no continuity disputes.
Fantastic Four Omnibus Vol. 2	FF #31-60, Annual #2-3	Lee / Kirby	IN PRINT	THE essential Silver Age volume. Frightful Four (#36), Dragon Man (#35), INHUMANS full introduction (#44-47 — creates entire civilization). <b>GALACTUS TRILOGY (#48-50)</b> — the most important cosmic event in early Marvel. Silver Surfer and Galactus debut. <b>BLACK PANTHER first appearance (#52-53)</b> . Doctor Doom steals Surfer's power (#57-60). => Spins off: Silver Surfer series, Inhumans, Black Panther in Avengers #52.
Fantastic Four Omnibus Vol. 3	FF #61-93, Annual #4-7	Lee / Kirby	IN PRINT	Peak cosmic Kirby. Him/Adam Warlock created (#66-67). Psycho-Man & Microverse. Annihilus debut (Annual #6). Crystal joins team. Ronan the Accuser returns. Kree-Skrull tensions build. => Leads to: Warlock series, Kree-Skrull War in Avengers #89-97. => Franklin Richards born (#94 area, continues in Vol. 4).
Fantastic Four Omnibus Vol. 4	FF #94-125, Annual #8-9	Lee-Kirby (#94-102), then Lee/Buscema, Thomas	IN PRINT	Final Lee/Kirby FF issues (#94-102) — end of the greatest creative partnership in comics. Over-Mind saga. Agatha Harkness as Franklin's nanny. Transition period as Marvel searches for new FF direction. => Connection: Kirby departs for DC (New Gods, Fourth World).
Fantastic Four Omnibus Vol. 5	FF #126-163, GS FF #1-4, GS Super-Stars #1	Conway / Buckler / Englehart / Perez	IN PRINT	Transition era. Medusa replaces Sue Storm temporarily. Thundra joins. Reed/Sue marriage strain. Crystal/Quicksilver wedding. Counter-Earth Warlock connection. => Ties into: Avengers (wedding issue), Inhumans ongoing developments.
Fantastic Four Omnibus Vol. 6	FF #164-200, Annual #10-14	Perez / Pollard / Wolfman / Wein / Thomas	IN PRINT	<b>Landmark #200</b> = definitive Doctor Doom battle and seeming death. Nova (Frankie Raye) introduced — later becomes Galactus's herald. Salem's Seven saga. George Perez's art elevates the series. => Leads to: John Byrne's legendary run starting at #232.

**GAP NOTE: FF #201-231**

Not yet collected in omnibus format. Available via: **FF Epic Collection Vol. 10: "The Possession of Franklin Richards"** (FF #201-218, Annual #14) — check availability. And **FF Epic Collection Vol. 11** for #219-231. Also available on Marvel Unlimited digitally.

## THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN — Street-Level Anchor

Created by Lee and Ditko in *Amazing Fantasy* #15 (August 1962), Spider-Man becomes Marvel's most popular character. His book runs parallel to *Fantastic Four* but occupies a street-level niche — organized crime, personal problems, and guilt-driven heroism.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
Amazing Spider-Man Omnibus Vol. 1	AF #15, ASM #1-38, Ann #1-2	Lee / Ditko	IN PRINT	Origin. Uncle Ben's death. Every classic villain debuts: Doc Ock (#3), Sandman (#4), Lizard (#6), Vulture (#2), Electro (#9), Mysterio (#13), Green Goblin (#14), Kraven (#15), Scorpion (#20). Sinister Six (Annual #1). Master Planner Saga (#31-33) — greatest early Spidey story. Ditko's final issue: #38. => Crossovers with FF and Human Torch throughout.
Amazing Spider-Man Omnibus Vol. 2	ASM #39-67, Ann #3-5, Spec #1-2	Lee / Romita Sr.	IN PRINT	Romita era begins. <b>Green Goblin unmasked as Norman Osborn (#39-40)</b> — defining Spidey revelation. Rhino, Shocker, Kingpin debut. Romita's style defines how Spider-Man LOOKS for decades. Mary Jane face reveal (#42). Peter/Gwen/MJ love triangle established.
Amazing Spider-Man Omnibus Vol. 3	ASM #68-104, Ann #6-8	Lee / Thomas / Romita / Kane	IN PRINT	Six Arms Saga. Prowler. Morbius debut (#101 — first Comics Code vampire). Drug issues (#96-98, published without CCA approval). Gwen Stacy/Norman Osborn storyline building. => Historical significance: Lee's anti-drug issues changed the Comics Code.
Amazing Spider-Man Omnibus Vol. 4	ASM #105-142	Conway / Kane / Andru	IN PRINT	<b>THE NIGHT GWEN STACY DIED (#121-122)</b> — the single most important Spider-Man story. Ends the Silver Age. Green Goblin dies. Punisher debut (#129). Jackal introduced (Clone Saga seeds). Mary Jane leaves, Gwen clone appears. => Tone shift for ALL of Marvel comics.
Amazing Spider-Man Omnibus Vol. 5	ASM #143-180, Ann #10-12, GS #1-5	Conway / Wein / Wolfman / Andru	IN PRINT	Original Clone Saga (#147-149, much simpler than the 90s version). Spider-Mobile (yes, really). Rocket Racer. Will-o'-the-Wisp. Peter/MJ relationship develops. => Bridge to the Stern/Romita Jr. era.

## THE AVENGERS — Earth's Mightiest Heroes

Launched September 1963 by Lee and Kirby, the Avengers are Marvel's premier team book after FF. The roster constantly rotates, creating interconnections with nearly every Marvel title. Captain America's revival in #4 is one of the most significant moments in Marvel history.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
Avengers Omnibus Vol. 1	Avengers #1-30	Lee / Kirby / Heck	IN PRINT	Team forms: Thor, Iron Man, Hulk, Ant-Man, Wasp. <b>Captain America revived (#4)</b> — found frozen in ice by Namor, joins team as moral center. Hulk leaves early (#2). Kang the Conqueror debut (#8 — major time-travel villain). Wonder Man dies (#9 — comes back much later). Masters of Evil formed. Cap's "Kooky Quartet" (#16): Hawkeye, Scarlet Witch, Quicksilver join. => Hulk departure leads to his solo adventures.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>Avengers Omnibus Vol. 2</b>	Avengers #31-58	Thomas / Heck / Buscema	<b>IN PRINT</b>	Roy Thomas era begins. Black Widow appears. Sons of the Serpent (social commentary). Black Panther joins (#52 — from FF). Ultron first appearance (#54-55, initially as Crimson Cowl). Vision created by Ultron (#57) — becomes central Avenger. => Panther connection from FF #52. Vision/Scarlet Witch romance begins.
<b>Avengers Omnibus Vol. 3</b>	Avengers #59-88, Annuals	Thomas / Buscema / Sal Buscema	<b>OUT OF PRINT</b>	Vision/Wanda wedding (#60 area). Yellowjacket identity crisis. Squadron Supreme introduced (Justice League analogues). <b>Kree-Skrull War (#89-97)</b> — first true Marvel cosmic epic crossover. Rick Jones channels the power of Captain Marvel. => Kree-Skrull War ties directly to Captain Marvel and FF cosmic threads.
<b>Avengers Omnibus Vol. 4</b>	Avengers #89-117 (overlap varies)	Thomas / Englehart / Brown	<b>IN PRINT</b>	Englehart's run begins. Mantis introduced (becomes Celestial Madonna). Zodiac. Swordsman returns. Avengers/Defenders War crossover (#115-118). => Read alongside Defenders #8-11 for full crossover.
<b>Avengers: The Korvac Saga</b>	Avengers #167-177 (+ preludes)	Shooter / Perez / Michelinie	<b>IN PRINT</b>	<b>The Korvac Saga</b> — Michael Korvac absorbs cosmic power, defeats the Avengers. Guardians of the Galaxy (original team) guest-star. George Perez art. One of the greatest Avengers stories. => Introduces cosmic-level threats to the Avengers paradigm.

## THE X-MEN — Origins & Early Years

X-Men #1 launches September 1963. The original team (Cyclops, Marvel Girl, Beast, Angel, Iceman) under Professor X never quite catches fire commercially. The book goes to reprints from #67-93. Everything changes with Giant-Size X-Men #1 in 1975 — but these early issues establish the foundation: Magneto, Sentinels, the Juggernaut, and the mutant metaphor.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>Uncanny X-Men Omnibus Vol. 1 (Original)</b>	X-Men #1-31	Lee / Kirby, then Thomas / Roth	<b>IN PRINT</b>	Original five X-Men. Magneto (#1), Blob, Vanisher. <b>Sentinels (#14-16)</b> — giant mutant-hunting robots, become recurring threat for decades. Juggernaut (#12). Mimic, Banshee introduced. Mutant concept and Xavier's school established. => Historically important but often skippable for new readers — jump to Giant-Size.
<b>Uncanny X-Men Omnibus Vol. 2 (Original)</b>	X-Men #32-66	Thomas / Roth / Adams	<b>CHECK AVAIL</b>	Neal Adams (#56-63) breathes life into the dying book. Havok, Polaris, Sauron, Sunfire debut. Sentinels return. The Living Pharaoh/Monolith. Despite Adams' brilliance, sales can't be saved — #67-93 are all reprints. => Book essentially cancelled until 1975 relaunch.

## OTHER FOUNDATIONAL SILVER AGE TITLES

These titles run parallel to FF, Spider-Man, Avengers, and X-Men, establishing the wider Marvel Universe. Each has its own collected edition line.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>Mighty Thor Omnibus Vol. 1</b>	Journey Into Mystery #83-120	Lee / Kirby	<b>IN PRINT</b>	Thor's origin. Loki, Enchantress, Executioner, Absorbing Man debut. Tales of Asgard backup introduces Norse cosmology. => Thor is Avengers founding member. Asgard becomes key Marvel locale.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>Invincible Iron Man Omnibus Vol. 1</b>	Tales of Suspense #39-72	Lee / Heck / Ditko	IN PRINT	Tony Stark origin (captured, builds armor to escape). Mandarin, Crimson Dynamo, Titanium Man, Black Widow (as villain) debut. Cold War allegory. => Iron Man is Avengers founder. Armor evolves constantly.
<b>Incredible Hulk Omnibus Vol. 1</b>	Incredible Hulk #1-6, Tales to Astonish #60-101	Lee / Kirby / Ditko / Various	IN PRINT	Original 6-issue series. Hulk as grey, then green. Banner's curse. Leader, Abomination debut. Hulk is Avengers founding member who leaves in #2. => Hulk bounces between titles, guest-stars everywhere.
<b>Doctor Strange Omnibus Vol. 1</b>	Strange Tales #110-168, plus	Lee / Ditko	IN PRINT	Sorcerer Supreme origin. <b>Dormammu, Baron Mordo, Eternity, Ancient One.</b> Ditko's psychedelic dimensions define Marvel's magical realm. Establishes magic side of Marvel. => Connects to all supernatural Marvel.
<b>Daredevil Omnibus Vol. 1</b>	Daredevil #1-41	Lee / Wood / Romita / Colan	IN PRINT	Matt Murdock, blind lawyer with radar sense. Kingpin early encounters. Foggy Nelson, Karen Page. Gene Colan's noir art transforms the book. => Street-level counterpart to Spider-Man. Kingpin shared with Spidey.
<b>Silver Surfer Omnibus Vol. 1</b>	Silver Surfer (1968) #1-18, FF Annual #5 material	Lee / Buscema	IN PRINT	Surfer trapped on Earth by Galactus. Philosophical, tragic hero. Mephisto debuts as Surfer's adversary. Cosmic existentialism. => Spins directly from FF #48-50. Surfer becomes key cosmic character.
<b>Captain America Omnibus Vol. 1</b>	Tales of Suspense #59-99, CA #100-113	Lee / Kirby	IN PRINT	Cap post-revival. Red Skull returns. Batroc, MODOK, AIM debut. Sharon Carter (Agent 13) introduced. Bucky's "death" cemented as tragedy. => Cap is Avengers moral core. Red Skull = recurring universal villain.

## II-III. THE BRONZE AGE

1970 — 1980 | *Social Relevance, New Heroes, and Cosmic Expansion*

The Bronze Age sees Marvel tackle real-world issues (drug abuse, racism, political corruption), introduce a wave of diverse new characters (Luke Cage, Storm, Blade, Shang-Chi, Iron Fist), and expand the cosmic mythology through Jim Starlin's groundbreaking work on Warlock and Thanos. The era's most important development: the All-New, All-Different X-Men relaunch in 1975.

### KEY RUNS & COLLECTED EDITIONS

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
Warlock by Jim Starlin (Complete Collection)	Strange Tales #178-181, Warlock #9-15, Avengers Ann #7, MTIO Ann #2	Starlin	IN PRINT	<b>ESSENTIAL COSMIC MARVEL.</b> Adam Warlock vs. the Magus (his evil future self) and the Universal Church of Truth. Thanos becomes a fully realized villain here — obsessed with Death. Gamora and Pip the Troll introduced. Starlin invents modern cosmic Marvel. => Direct setup for Infinity Gauntlet (1991). Read before Thanos Quest.
Captain Marvel by Jim Starlin (Epic Collection or OHC)	Captain Marvel #25-34	Starlin	IN PRINT	Starlin's first cosmic work. Mar-Vell gains Cosmic Awareness. <b>Thanos first major storyline</b> — the Cosmic Cube saga. Drax the Destroyer introduced. => Foundation for ALL Thanos stories.
Marvel Masterworks: Luke Cage Vol. 1-2	Hero for Hire #1-16, Luke Cage #17-27	Goodwin / Lucas / Graham / Various	IN PRINT	First Black superhero to headline his own series. Blaxploitation roots. Power Man persona. Harlem setting. => Leads to Power Man & Iron Fist, then modern Alias/New Avengers appearance.
Iron Fist: The Complete Collection by Claremont & Byrne	Marvel Premiere #15-25, Iron Fist #1-15	Claremont / Byrne	IN PRINT	Danny Rand gains the Iron Fist. K'un-Lun mythology. Early Claremont/Byrne collaboration (before X-Men). Sabretooth's first appearance (#14). => Merges with Luke Cage into Power Man & Iron Fist.
Tomb of Dracula Omnibus Vol. 1-2	Tomb of Dracula #1-70	Wolfman / Colan	IN PRINT	THE horror masterpiece of Marvel. <b>Blade the Vampire Slayer debut (#10)</b> . Dracula as a complex, compelling villain. Gene Colan's greatest work. => Blade becomes key character. Vampires in Marvel = important for Blood Hunt (2024).
Master of Kung Fu Omnibus Vol. 1-4	MOKF #15-125, Giant-Size #1-4, Special #1	Moench / Gulacy / Zeck	OUT OF PRINT	Shang-Chi, son of Fu Manchu (later retconned due to licensing). Spy thriller + martial arts. Paul Gulacy's cinematic art. One of the most acclaimed runs of the Bronze Age. => Shang-Chi returns in modern Avengers. Recent solo series.
Defenders Omnibus Vol. 1	Marvel Feature #1-3, Defenders #1-29	Englehart / Thomas / Buscema	IN PRINT	"Non-team" of Hulk, Doctor Strange, Namor, Silver Surfer, Valkyrie. Avengers/Defenders War crossover. Surreal, counter-culture vibe. => Avengers #115-118 crossover. Valkyrie/Nighthawk become important.
Ghost Rider: Danny Ketch Omnibus Vol. 1 (or Epic Collections)	Marvel Spotlight #5+, Ghost Rider (1973) #1+	Friedrich / Ploog / Various	CHECK AVAIL	Johnny Blaze, cursed stunt rider. Motorcycle + hellfire. Demon/supernatural corner of Marvel. => Returns significantly in 2000s-2020s.

### BRONZE AGE AVENGERS CONTINUATION

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>Avengers: The Korvac Saga (repeated for context)</b>	Avengers #167-177	Shooter / Perez / Michelinie	<b>IN PRINT</b>	Korvac absorbs Power Cosmic, becomes god-like. Original Guardians of the Galaxy from the 31st century guest-star. Entire Avengers roster battles. => Defines "cosmic-level Avengers threat" template.
<b>Avengers: Nights of Wundagore (Epic Collection)</b>	Avengers #181-196	Michelinie / Byrne / Perez	<b>IN PRINT</b>	Government liaison Henry Peter Gyrich limits roster. Scarlet Witch/Vision marriage. Taskmaster debut. Ms. Marvel (Carol Danvers) joins and is controversially handled (#200). => The controversial #200 is later addressed by Claremont in Avengers Annual #10.

## IV. THE RISE OF THE X-MEN

1975 — 1985 | Claremont/Byrne Revolution, Byrne's FF, and Secret Wars

Giant-Size X-Men #1 (1975) relaunches the X-Men with an international team — Wolverine, Storm, Colossus, Nightcrawler — and Chris Claremont begins the longest, most influential run in superhero comics (1975-1991). Simultaneously, John Byrne reinvents the Fantastic Four, and Marvel launches its first major crossover event: Secret Wars (1984).

### THE CLAREMONT X-MEN

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
Uncanny X-Men Omnibus Vol. 1 (Claremont)	Giant-Size X-Men #1, UXM #94-131	Claremont / Cockrum / Byrne	IN PRINT	<b>THE essential X-Men starting point.</b> New team: Wolverine, Storm, Colossus, Nightcrawler, Banshee, Thunderbird. Phoenix Saga: Jean Grey gains cosmic power (#101-108). Shi'ar Empire, Lilandra introduced. Magneto deepened as character. Alpha Flight glimpses. Arcade, Hellfire Club introduced. <b>Dark Phoenix Saga begins (#129-131).</b> => Jean Grey/Phoenix is the X-Men's most important ongoing thread.
Uncanny X-Men Omnibus Vol. 2 (Claremont)	UXM #132-153, Ann #3-5, misc	Claremont / Byrne / Cockrum	IN PRINT	<b>DARK PHOENIX SAGA (#132-137)</b> — Jean Grey consumed by power, destroys a star, commits genocide, dies by her own hand. Top 3 X-Men story EVER. <b>DAYS OF FUTURE PAST (#141-142)</b> — dystopian future, Sentinels rule, most X-Men dead. Defines X-Men themes permanently. => Two stories that define the X-Men franchise. Both adapted as films.
Uncanny X-Men Omnibus Vol. 3	UXM #154-175+, Ann #6, various	Claremont / Cockrum / Smith	IN PRINT	Brood Saga (alien Xenomorph homage). Rogue joins (#171). Wolverine solo in Japan (Wolverine LS #1-4 included in some editions). Madelyne Pryor introduced (crucial for Inferno). Magneto begins rehabilitation. => Brood become recurring cosmic threat. Rogue becomes fan-favorite.
Uncanny X-Men Omnibus Vol. 4	UXM #176-200+	Claremont / Romita Jr. / Smith	IN PRINT	Forge introduced (makes mutant-depowering gun). Storm loses powers but leads team. Rachel Summers (from DoFP future) arrives. Secret Wars II crossover issues. <b>Magneto put on trial (#200)</b> — landmark issue, Xavier leaves for Shi'ar. => Magneto takes over Xavier's School. Sets up next phase of X-Men.
Wolverine Omnibus Vol. 1	Wolverine LS #1-4, Wolverine (1988) #1-23	Claremont / Miller / Buscema	IN PRINT	The original Frank Miller limited series: Logan in Japan, honor vs. berserker rage. <b>Defines Wolverine as standalone character.</b> Ongoing series by Claremont continues the character's journey. Patch identity in Madripoor. => Sets up Wolverine as Marvel's #1 solo star.

### X-MEN SPINOFFS & EVENTS (1983-1987)

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
New Mutants Omnibus Vol. 1	Marvel GN #4, New Mutants #1-31, Ann #1	Claremont / McLeod / Sienkiewicz	IN PRINT	Next generation of Xavier's students: Cannonball, Dani Moonstar, Sunspot, Wolfsbane, Magma, Magik (Illyana Rasputin). Bill Sienkiewicz's revolutionary art (#18+). Warlock joins. Demon Bear Saga (#18-20). => Illyana's demonic corruption seeds Inferno. => These characters return major in Hickman's New Mutants during Krakoa era.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>X-Factor Omnibus Vol. 1</b>	X-Factor #1-36+	Layton / L. Simonson / W. Simonson	IN PRINT	Original five X-Men reunite. <b>Jean Grey revealed alive</b> (retconning Dark Phoenix — it was the Phoenix Force, not Jean, who died). Apocalypse major debut and rises as the X-Men's greatest villain. Angel loses wings, becomes Archangel. => RETCON NOTE: Jean's resurrection was controversial. Changes meaning of Dark Phoenix.
<b>X-Men: Mutant Massacre Omnibus</b>	UXM #210-214, XF #9-11, NM #46, Thor #373-374, PH #211-212, DD #238	Claremont / L. Simonson / Various	IN PRINT	The Marauders (led by Mr. Sinister) slaughter the Morlocks. Multiple titles cross over. <b>First true X-Men crossover event</b> . Angel crucified. Colossus paralyzed. Wolverine vs. Sabretooth. Thor involved. => Establishes X-crossover formula. Mr. Sinister becomes key villain.
<b>X-Men: Fall of the Mutants Omnibus</b>	UXM #225-227, XF #24-26, NM #59-61	Claremont / L. Simonson / Various	IN PRINT	Three separate stories (not a traditional crossover). X-Men "die" and are resurrected in the Australian Outback. X-Factor defeats Apocalypse publicly. New Mutants face the Ani-Mator. => X-Men go underground, world thinks they're dead.
<b>X-Men: Inferno Omnibus</b>	UXM #239-243, XF #36-39, NM #71-73, plus Spidey/Avengers crossovers	Claremont / L. Simonson / Various	IN PRINT	<b>Madelyne Pryor revealed as a clone of Jean Grey</b> (Mr. Sinister's creation). She becomes the Goblin Queen. Demons invade Manhattan. N'astirh and S'ym. Illyana loses Magik persona. Teams reunite. => Major continuity event. Resolves Madelyne/Jean/Cyclops love triangle.

## JOHN BYRNE'S FANTASTIC FOUR

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>Fantastic Four by John Byrne Omnibus Vol. 1</b>	FF #232-262, Ann #17, Thing #2, Avengers #233, Alpha Flight #4	Byrne (writer/artist)	IN PRINT	<b>Best modern FF run alongside Hickman</b> . Byrne as writer AND artist. She-Hulk replaces Thing. Trial of Galactus — FF defend Galactus before cosmic tribunal. Terrax saga. Doom restored to power. The Negative Zone. John Byrne treats FF with the scope and ambition of Lee/Kirby. => Best modern jumping-on point for Fantastic Four.
<b>Fantastic Four by John Byrne Omnibus Vol. 2</b>	FF #263-295, Ann #18-19, Thing #10, 19, 23, XF #1 partial	Byrne	IN PRINT	She-Hulk era continues. <b>Sue becomes Invisible Woman</b> (not Girl) — Byrne empowers her as team's most powerful member. Secret Wars II crossover issues. Reed and Sue leave team. Psycho-Man defeated by Sue alone. => Sue's character evolution here is permanent and defining.

## FIRST SECRET WARS & MAJOR EVENTS

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>Marvel Super Heroes Secret Wars Omnibus</b>	Secret Wars #1-12, Secret Wars II #1-9 + crossovers	Shooter / Zeck / Various	IN PRINT	<b>First major Marvel crossover</b> . The Beyonder transports heroes and villains to Battleworld. <b>Spider-Man gets the symbiote suit</b> (leads to Venom). <b>Doom steals the Beyonder's power, becomes God</b> — first time. Thing stays on Battleworld (She-Hulk replaces in FF). Titania and Volcana created. Spider-Woman II (Julia Carpenter). => Symbiote saga leads to Venom. Doom as God template repeats in 2015.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
Thor by Walter Simonson Omnibus	Thor #337-382, Balder the Brave #1-4	Simonson	IN PRINT	<b>Definitive Thor run. Beta Ray Bill</b> — first non-Thor being to wield Mjolnir (#337). Surtur Saga — fire demon threatens to destroy everything. Casket of Ancient Winters. Frog Thor. Hela's curse. Malekith the Dark Elf. Revolutionizes Thor as a cosmic/mythological epic. => Beta Ray Bill becomes beloved character. Malekith returns in War of the Realms.
Daredevil by Frank Miller Omnibus	DD #158-191, 219, 226-233	Miller / Janson	IN PRINT	<b>Reinvents superhero comics.</b> Introduces Elektra, The Hand, and Stick. Kingpin becomes DD's nemesis. <b>Born Again (#227-233)</b> — Kingpin destroys Matt Murdock's life. Karen Page sells Matt's identity for drug money. => Born Again considered one of the greatest superhero stories ever. Miller's DD influences EVERY street-level comic that follows.

# V. THE EVENT AGE

1985 — 1992 | *Crossovers Become King*

The late 1980s and early 1990s see Marvel fully embrace the crossover event model. X-Men crossovers multiply annually. Jim Starlin returns for the cosmic Infinity trilogy. Todd McFarlane redefines Spider-Man's visual language. This era peaks with Infinity Gauntlet and ends with the Image Comics exodus and the speculator market crash.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>Spider-Man by Michelinie &amp; McFarlane Omnibus</b>	ASM #296-329	Michelinie / McFarlane	IN PRINT	<b>VENOM SAGA.</b> Symbiote returns as Venom (#298-300). McFarlane's art redefines Spider-Man visually — spaghetti webbing, dynamic poses. Iconic Spidey. Cosmic Spider-Man arc. => McFarlane leaves to create Spawn/Image.
<b>Spider-Man: Kraven's Last Hunt</b>	Web #31-32, ASM #293-294, Spec #131-132	DeMatteis / Zeck	IN PRINT	<b>Top 5 Spider-Man story.</b> Kraven buries Spider-Man alive, takes his identity. Psychological horror. Mike Zeck's best work. DeMatteis explores death, identity, madness. => Elevated what a superhero comic could be thematically.
<b>X-Men: X-Tinction Agenda</b>	UXM #270-272, NM #95-97, XF #60-62	Claremont / L. Simonson / Various	IN PRINT	Genoshan government kidnaps mutants. Three X-teams unite. Genosha (mutant apartheid nation) becomes key location for decades. => Genosha returns in Morrison's New X-Men and Hickman's HoX/PoX.
<b>Infinity Gauntlet Omnibus</b>	Silver Surfer #34-38, Thanos Quest #1-2, Infinity Gauntlet #1-6 + tie-ins	Starlin / Perez / Lim	IN PRINT	<b>THE cosmic Marvel event.</b> Thanos acquires all six Infinity Gems. <b>Snaps his fingers, kills half the universe.</b> Every hero falls. Adam Warlock's plan. Nebula gets the Gauntlet. Direct adaptation became the MCU's biggest films (Infinity War/Endgame). => Prerequisite: Warlock by Starlin. Sequel: Infinity War/Crusade.
<b>Infinity War / Infinity Crusade</b>	IW #1-6, IC #1-6, Warlock & Infinity Watch	Starlin / Lim / Raney	CHECK AVAIL	Magus (Warlock's evil self) creates evil dopplegangers of all heroes (Infinity War). Goddess (Warlock's good self) brainwashes heroes (Crusade). Diminishing returns but completes the trilogy. => Less essential than Gauntlet but completes Starlin's cosmic opus.
<b>X-Men by Jim Lee Omnibus Vol. 1</b>	UXM #248-280, X-Men (1991) #1-9, misc	Claremont / Lee / Silvestri	IN PRINT	Jim Lee era. <b>X-Men #1 (1991) sells 8+ million copies</b> — record. Muir Island Saga. Magneto in space. Shadow King. Omega Red. Blue/Gold team split. Claremont leaves after 16 years (editorial conflicts). => End of an era. Lee and others leave for Image Comics shortly after.
<b>Avengers: Under Siege (Epic Collection)</b>	Avengers #264-277	Stern / Buscema	IN PRINT	<b>Greatest Avengers story pre-2000.</b> Baron Zemo's Masters of Evil invade Avengers Mansion. Hercules beaten near-death. Jarvis tortured. Cap's personal belongings destroyed. Emotional devastation + triumphant comeback. => Template for Avengers "low point" stories.
<b>Avengers: Operation Galactic Storm</b>	Multiple Avengers titles crossover	Various	IN PRINT	Kree-Shi'ar War. Avengers intervene in galactic conflict. Iron Man leads a faction that executes the Supreme Intelligence. <b>Moral divide: Cap vs. Iron Man on killing</b> — foreshadows Civil War. => Seeds of the hero vs. hero conflict that defines 2000s Marvel.

## VI. THE SPECULATION CRASH

1992 — 1996 | *Image Exodus, Clone Saga, Market Collapse*

The early 1990s boom (variant covers, foil embossing, new #1s) leads to a devastating bust. Marvel's top artists leave to found Image Comics. The notorious Clone Saga derails Spider-Man for years. X-Men proliferate but quality varies. Marvel declares bankruptcy in 1996. But there are gems: Age of Apocalypse, Marvels, and early Warren Ellis/Garth Ennis work.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>X-Men: Age of Apocalypse Omnibus</b>	Complete AoA event (all series)	Lobdell / Nicieza / Waid / Madureira / Kubert Bros / Various	IN PRINT	<b>Best X-Men event of the 90s.</b> Legion accidentally kills Xavier in the past, creating a timeline where Apocalypse rules. All titles replaced for 4 months with alternate versions. Brilliant world-building. Blink, X-Man (Nate Grey), Dark Beast survive into 616. => Sugar Man and Dark Beast affect 616 continuity going forward.
<b>Marvels</b>	Marvels #1-4	Busiek / Alex Ross	IN PRINT	<b>Marvel history through a photographer's eyes.</b> Phil Sheldon witnesses the birth of the Marvel Age — WWII heroes, FF, Galactus, X-Men persecution, Gwen Stacy's death. Alex Ross painted art is transcendent. => Perfect companion piece to reading any era. Provides civilian perspective.
<b>Spider-Man: The Complete Clone Saga Epic Vol. 1-5</b>	ASM #394-418+, Spec, Web, Spider-Man, etc.	Various	IN PRINT	The most notorious storyline in Spider-Man history. Ben Reilly (clone) might be the "real" Peter Parker. Goes on far too long due to editorial chaos. Norman Osborn revealed alive as mastermind. Peter/MJ's baby lost. => Despite fan hatred, it's historically important. Osborn's return is major.
<b>X-Men: X-Cutioner's Song</b>	UXM #294-297, XF #84-86, XM #14-16, XF #84-86	Lobdell / Nicieza / Various	IN PRINT	Stryfe (Cable's clone) frames Cable for shooting Xavier. Apocalypse infected with virus. Cable/Stryfe origins explored. => Deepens Cable/Cyclops/Sinister mythology.
<b>X-Men: Fatal Attractions (included in omnibus or trades)</b>	X-Men #25, UXM #304, Wolverine #75, etc.	Lobdell / Nicieza / Hama / Various	IN PRINT	<b>Magneto rips the adamantium from Wolverine's skeleton (#25/Wolverine #75).</b> Xavier mindwipes Magneto, creating Onslaught. => Wolverine without adamantium for years. Onslaught seeds planted.
<b>Onslaught Omnibus</b>	Complete Onslaught event	Lobdell / Waid / Various	IN PRINT	Xavier's dark side + Magneto's powers = Onslaught. Nearly destroys everything. Non-mutant heroes sacrifice themselves to stop him. <b>FF and Avengers "die" — actually shunted to a pocket universe (Heroes Reborn).</b> => Direct lead-in to Heroes Reborn. Franklin Richards creates the pocket universe.

## VII. HEROES REBORN & RETURN

1996 — 1998 | *The Pocket Universe Experiment*

After Onslaught, Marvel farms out Fantastic Four, Avengers, Iron Man, and Captain America to Image founders Jim Lee and Rob Liefeld for 13-issue runs set in a pocket universe created by Franklin Richards. The experiment is commercially successful but creatively mixed. Heroes return to the main 616 universe in 1997-98.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
Heroes Reborn: Fantastic Four	FF (1996) #1-13	Jim Lee	OUT OF PRINT	FF reimagined in pocket universe. Updated origins. Doom, Galactus, Namor, Inhumans all reintroduced. Art is Jim Lee at his most detailed. => Continuity note: this is technically real (Franklin's created world) but not 616.
Heroes Reborn: Avengers	Avengers (1996) #1-13	Liefeld (1-7) / Loeb / Various	OUT OF PRINT	Avengers in pocket universe. Liefeld replaced by Loeb midway. => Less well-regarded. Liefeld's work was controversial.
Heroes Return: Avengers by Busiek & Perez Omnibus Vol. 1	Avengers (1998) #1-34, Annual '98-99	Busiek / Perez	IN PRINT	<b>THE modern Avengers renaissance.</b> Heroes return from pocket universe. Busiek writes love letter to Avengers history. Perez draws EVERYBODY. Morgan le Fay, Ultron Unlimited (#19-22 — "Ultron, we would have words with thee"), Kang Dynasty. => Restores Avengers to A-list status.
Avengers by Busiek & Perez Omnibus Vol. 2	Avengers (1998) #35-56, Annual 2001	Busiek / Perez / Various	IN PRINT	<b>Kang Dynasty</b> — Kang conquers Earth with future army. Marcus Kang, the Scarlet Centurion. Epic in scope. => Kang becomes major recurring threat. Sets up Hickman's later Kang work.

# VIII. MARVEL KNIGHTS & THE ULTIMATE ERA

1998 — 2004 | *Creative Renaissance*

Joe Quesada and Jimmy Palmiotti's Marvel Knights imprint revitalizes B-list characters with A-list talent. Brian Michael Bendis, Mark Millar, Grant Morrison, and Jeph Loeb/Tim Sale bring literary ambition to superhero comics. The Ultimate Universe launches as a modern continuity-free alternative. This is widely considered Marvel's creative peak of the modern era.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
Daredevil by Kevin Smith	Daredevil (1998) #1-8	Smith / Quesada	IN PRINT	Guardian Devil. Marvel Knights launches with Kevin Smith relaunching DD. Baby that might be savior or antichrist. Karen Page dies. Quesada's art is stunning. => Relaunches DD as premiere street-level title.
Daredevil by Bendis & Maleev Omnibus Vol. 1-2	Daredevil (1998) #26-81	Bendis / Maleev	IN PRINT	<b>Masterpiece.</b> Matt Murdock outed as Daredevil by tabloid press. Declares himself Kingpin of Hell's Kitchen. Wilson Fisk brought low. Noir storytelling, long-form crime saga. Matt arrested at end. => Directly leads to Brubaker's DD. Changes DD status quo permanently.
Daredevil by Brubaker & Lark Omnibus Vol. 1-2	DD (1998) #82-119, #500	Brubaker / Lark	IN PRINT	Matt in prison. Lady Bullseye. The Hand. Matt becomes leader of the Hand. Continues the Bendis noir approach with more action. => Leads to Shadowland (Matt goes dark), then Waid's lighter run.
New X-Men by Morrison Omnibus	New X-Men #114-154	Morrison / Quitely / Various	IN PRINT	<b>Reinvents the X-Men.</b> Genosha destroyed (16 million mutants killed). Cassandra Nova, Xorn, Fantomex. Xavier outed as mutant. Jean Grey dies (again). Magneto revealed as Xorn (then retconned — see continuity notes). Scott/Emma relationship begins. => RETCON CONFLICT: Is Xorn really Magneto? Marvel said no (Excalibur), Morrison intended yes. Fan interpretation: it was Magneto.
Astonishing X-Men by Whedon Omnibus	Astonishing X-Men #1-24, Giant-Size #1	Whedon / Cassaday	IN PRINT	<b>Colossus resurrected.</b> Danger Room becomes sentient. Breakworld saga. Kitty Pryde phases a giant bullet through Earth (trapped in space). Feels like a love letter to Claremont-era X-Men. Cassaday's art is gorgeous. => Best X-Men run of the 2000s alongside Morrison.
Fantastic Four by Waid & Wieringo Omnibus	FF (1998) #60-70, #500-524, misc	Waid / Wieringo	IN PRINT	<b>Modern FF masterpiece.</b> "Unthinkable" — Doom sacrifices his childhood love for dark magic, traps Franklin and Valeria in Hell. Most terrifying Doom ever. "Authoritative Action" — FF conquer Latveria. Galactus turned into a star. => Alongside Hickman, the best modern FF. Essential.
Captain America by Brubaker Omnibus Vol. 1	Captain America (2005) #1-25	Brubaker / Epting	IN PRINT	<b>WINTER SOLDIER.</b> Bucky Barnes revealed alive as brainwashed Soviet assassin. Redefines Cap's mythology. Red Skull, Lukin, Cosmic Cube. <b>Captain America assassinated (#25)</b> — leads to Bucky as Cap. => Winter Soldier is the most important Cap retcon ever. MCU adapted directly.
Ultimate Spider-Man Omnibus Vol. 1-3	Ultimate Spider-Man #1-133	Bendis / Bagley / Immonen	IN PRINT	<b>Ultimate Universe (Earth-1610).</b> Modern Peter Parker retelling for new readers. Accessible, emotionally resonant, no continuity baggage. => NOT 616, but Miles Morales (later introduced) enters 616 after Secret Wars 2015. The Ultimate line influences modern MCU heavily.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>The Ultimates Omnibus</b>	Ultimates #1-13, Ultimates 2 #1-13	Millar / Hitch	<b>IN PRINT</b>	Ultimate Universe Avengers. Widescreen action. Nick Fury as Samuel L. Jackson. Directly adapted for MCU's Avengers films. => Not 616 continuity but MASSIVELY influential on the MCU.
<b>Black Panther by Priest Omnibus</b>	Black Panther (1998) #1-62	Priest / Various	<b>IN PRINT</b>	<b>Definitive Black Panther.</b> Christopher Priest reinvents T'Challa as genius political operator. Everett K. Ross (narrator/comic relief — adapted for MCU). Killmonger, Man-Ape, Mephisto. Wakandan politics. => Everything good about modern BP comes from Priest.
<b>Alias Omnibus</b>	Alias #1-28, Pulse #1-14	Bendis / Gaydos	<b>IN PRINT</b>	Jessica Jones — former superhero turned PI. MAX imprint (mature). Purple Man as terrifying villain. Jessica's PTSD. Marries Luke Cage. => Jessica Jones Netflix show. She joins New Avengers.

# IX. THE BENDIS AVENGERS ERA

2004 — 2012 | *Disassembled Through AvX*

Brian Michael Bendis becomes Marvel's architect. He tears down the Avengers (Disassembled), decimates the mutant population (House of M), and pits hero against hero (Civil War, Secret Invasion). This is Marvel's "event era" — every year brings a universe-shaking crossover. Simultaneously, the cosmic side gets a renaissance through Annihilation and the DnA Guardians of the Galaxy.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
Avengers Disassembled	Avengers #500-503, Finale	Bendis / Finch	IN PRINT	<b>Scarlet Witch goes insane.</b> She-Hulk rampages, Jack of Hearts explodes, Vision destroyed, Hawkeye killed, Scott Lang killed. Avengers disband. <b>Wanda's chaos magic retcon</b> — her powers were always reality warping, not "hex bolts." => Direct setup for House of M. New Avengers forms from ashes.
House of M	House of M #1-8	Bendis / Coipel	IN PRINT	<b>"NO MORE MUTANTS."</b> Wanda creates a reality where mutants rule, then collapses it. Mutant population goes from millions to 198. => Decimation shapes X-Men for the next DECADE. Only reversed by Hickman in House of X (2019).
New Avengers Omnibus Vol. 1	New Avengers #1-31, Annual #1, New Avengers: Illuminati #1	Bendis / Various	IN PRINT	New team: Spider-Man, Wolverine, Luke Cage, Spider-Woman, Iron Fist, Sentry. <b>The Illuminati revealed</b> — secret group (Iron Man, Reed, Xavier, Strange, Black Bolt, Namor) has been making decisions behind the scenes for years. The Sentry (Marvel's Superman analogue) joins. Breakout. Ronin. => Illuminati retcon adds new context to all prior Marvel events.
Civil War	Civil War #1-7	Millar / McNiven	IN PRINT	<b>Superhero Registration Act.</b> After a tragedy, the government requires heroes to register. IRON MAN (pro-registration) vs. CAPTAIN AMERICA (anti-registration). Spider-Man unmask publicly (#2). Clone Thor kills Goliath. Cap surrenders. Tony becomes Director of SHIELD. => Divides the Marvel Universe. Spider-Man's unmasking leads to One More Day.
New Avengers Omnibus Vol. 2	New Avengers #32-64, Annual #2-3	Bendis / Various	IN PRINT	<b>Secret Invasion.</b> Skrulls have been replacing heroes for years. Who can you trust? Spider-Woman revealed as Skrull Queen Veranke. Norman Osborn kills the Skrull Queen on live TV — becomes a hero. <b>Dark Reign begins.</b> Osborn gets control of SHIELD (becomes HAMMER). => Norman Osborn as top villain. Dark Avengers formed.
Immortal Iron Fist Omnibus	Immortal Iron Fist #1-27, Annual, Orson Randall one-shot	Brubaker / Fraction / Aja	IN PRINT	Reinvents Iron Fist mythology. 66 previous Iron Fists. The Seven Capital Cities of Heaven. Tournament arc. Orson Randall. David Aja's art is revolutionary. => Aja goes on to Hawkeye with Fraction.
Captain America by Brubaker Omnibus Vol. 2-3	Captain America #26-50, CA: Reborn #1-6	Brubaker / Epting / Guice	IN PRINT	<b>Bucky Barnes becomes Captain America.</b> Steve Rogers dead (but not really — trapped in time by Red Skull). Bucky must prove himself worthy. Steve returns in Reborn. => Bucky as Cap = controversial but acclaimed.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>Invincible Iron Man by Fraction Omnibus</b>	Invincible Iron Man #1-33, #500-527	Fraction / Larroca	<b>IN PRINT</b>	Definitive modern Iron Man. "World's Most Wanted" — Tony on the run from Osborn, deleting his brain to keep Registration database from Osborn. "Stark Resilient" — rebuilding. "Fear Itself" tie-in. => Best Iron Man run since Michelinie. Fraction defines modern Tony.
<b>Siege</b>	Siege #1-4	Bendis / Coipel	<b>IN PRINT</b>	Norman Osborn attacks Asgard (floating over Oklahoma). Sentry goes full Void, destroys Asgard. Cap, Tony, Thor reunite. Osborn falls. <b>Heroic Age begins</b> — heroes united again. => End of Dark Reign. Status quo reset before Hickman era.

## COSMIC MARVEL RENAISSANCE (2006-2011)

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>Annihilation Omnibus</b>	All Annihilation minis + main series #1-6	Giffen / Various	<b>IN PRINT</b>	<b>Cosmic Marvel reborn.</b> Annihilus launches the Annihilation Wave from the Negative Zone. Entire cosmic side devastated. Nova (Richard Rider) becomes the last Nova. Ronan redeemed. Drax kills Thanos. Star-Lord assembles a team. => Creates modern Guardians of the Galaxy. Essential for cosmic Marvel.
<b>Annihilation: Conquest Omnibus</b>	All Conquest minis + main series	DnA / Various	<b>IN PRINT</b>	Phalanx (techno-organic aliens) conquer Kree Empire. Ultron revealed as mastermind. Adam Warlock revived. Star-Lord's team crystallizes. => Direct lead-in to Guardians of the Galaxy ongoing.
<b>Guardians of the Galaxy by DnA Omnibus</b>	GotG (2008) #1-25, War/Realm of Kings, Thanos Imperative	DnA / Pelletier / Various	<b>IN PRINT</b>	<b>THE Guardians of the Galaxy run.</b> Star-Lord, Gamora, Drax, Rocket, Groot, Adam Warlock, Mantis, Bug. The Cancerverse invasion. Thanos Imperative: Star-Lord and Nova sacrifice themselves. => This IS the GotG. James Gunn's films adapt this team. Essential cosmic Marvel.
<b>Nova by DnA (Complete Collection Vol. 1-3)</b>	Nova (2007) #1-36	DnA / Various	<b>IN PRINT</b>	Richard Rider as sole surviving Nova. Worldmind. Nova Corps rebuilt. Ties into Annihilation, Conquest, War of Kings. => Companion piece to GotG. Rider's journey is incredible.

# X. THE HICKMAN SAGA

2009 — 2015 | *The Grand Cosmic Architect*

Jonathan Hickman constructs the most ambitious single-author narrative in Marvel history. Starting with *Fantastic Four*, expanding through *Avengers* and *New Avengers*, and culminating in *Secret Wars* (2015), Hickman builds a story about the death and rebirth of the multiverse. This is arguably the greatest sustained run in modern superhero comics.

## READING ORDER (CRITICAL — Must read in this sequence):

1. FF by Hickman Omnibus Vol. 1 => 2. FF by Hickman Omnibus Vol. 2 => 3. *Avengers* by Hickman Omnibus Vol. 1 (interleave with NA) => 4. *Avengers* by Hickman Omnibus Vol. 2 => 5. *Secret Wars* (2015)

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>Fantastic Four by Hickman Omnibus Vol. 1</b>	FF (1998) #570-588, Dark Reign: FF #1-5, etc.	Hickman / Eaglesham / Epting	IN PRINT	<b>THE modern FF masterwork.</b> The Council of Reeds — infinite Reed Richards across the multiverse. War of Four Cities (Atlantis, Negative Zone, Wakanda, Inhumans). Old Galactus. Nu-World. Franklin Richards's power teased. <b>Johnny Storm dies (#587)</b> — "Three" storyline. Future Foundation formed. => Sets up EVERYTHING for Hickman's <i>Avengers</i> and <i>Secret Wars</i> .
<b>Fantastic Four by Hickman Omnibus Vol. 2</b>	FF (2011) #1-23, FF (1998) #600-611	Hickman / Various	IN PRINT	Johnny returns from the Negative Zone. <b>Franklin and Valeria become central characters.</b> The Celestials. Universal Inhumans. Kang's machinations. Seeds of the Incursions planted — parallel Earths colliding. => Leads directly into Hickman's <i>Avengers</i> / <i>New Avengers</i> .
<b>Avengers by Hickman Omnibus Vol. 1</b>	<i>Avengers</i> (2012) #1-23, <i>New Avengers</i> (2013) #1-12, <i>Infinity</i> #1-6	Hickman / Opeña / Deodato / Cheung	IN PRINT	<b>INFINITY.</b> <i>Avengers</i> expanded to cosmic scale. Ex Nihilo, Starbrand, Nightmask — new universal concepts. <i>New Avengers</i> : The Illuminati discover Incursions — parallel Earths colliding. Must destroy other Earths or die. <b>The moral impossibility.</b> <i>Infinity</i> : Builders invasion + Thanos invades Earth while <i>Avengers</i> are in space. => The Illuminati's moral compromise drives EVERYTHING to <i>Secret Wars</i> .
<b>Avengers by Hickman Omnibus Vol. 2</b>	<i>Avengers</i> (2012) #24-44, <i>New Avengers</i> (2013) #13-33	Hickman / Various	IN PRINT	<b>Time Runs Out.</b> 8 months in the future. The multiverse is dying. Incursions accelerate. Cabal (Namor, Thanos, etc.) doing what heroes won't. SHIELD vs. <i>Avengers</i> civil war. Steve Rogers and Tony Stark's friendship destroyed. The final Incursion: Earth-616 vs. Earth-1610 (Ultimate). => Leads directly to <i>Secret Wars</i> . All hope is lost.
<b>Secret Wars (2015) Omnibus</b>	<i>Secret Wars</i> #1-9, plus Battleworld tie-ins	Hickman / Ribic	IN PRINT	<b>The multiverse dies. Doom becomes God.</b> Doctor Doom saves fragments of dying universes, creates Battleworld, rules as God Emperor. Reed Richards challenges Doom. Reed wins because he would not have destroyed everything. Reed and Franklin rebuild the multiverse. <b>Molecule Man is the key.</b> => Post-SW: Miles Morales in 616. The Maker (evil Ultimate Reed) in 616. All titles relaunch with new #1s. Soft continuity reset.

**CONTINUITY NOTE — Post-Secret Wars (2015):** *Official:* Earth-616 was rebuilt by Reed Richards using Beyonder power. All prior history 'happened.' *Fan interpretation:* Functionally a soft reboot — some details are vague, allowing clean starts. *Editorial:* *Secret Wars* allowed all-new #1 issues and creative team reshuffles. Miles Morales, the Maker, and other Ultimate elements are now in 616. **Confidence: 80%.**

# XI. ALL-NEW ALL-DIFFERENT MARVEL

2015 — 2018 | Post-Secret Wars Relaunch Through Fresh Start

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
<b>Invincible Iron Man by Bendis Omnibus Vol. 1-2</b>	Invincible Iron Man (2015) #1-14, IIM (2016) #1-11, etc.	Bendis / Marquez / Caselli	IN PRINT	Tony meets Riri Williams. Post-Civil War II (Tony in coma). Riri becomes Ironheart. Victor Von Doom tries to be Iron Man. => Doom as hero seeds his later Doctor Doom series and OWUD.
<b>Mighty Thor by Jason Aaron Omnibus Vol. 1-2</b>	Thor (2014) #1-8, Mighty Thor #1-23, plus	Aaron / Dauterman / Various	IN PRINT	<b>JANE FOSTER IS THOR.</b> Jane, dying of cancer, lifts Mjolnir. Each transformation reverses her chemo. War of the Realms buildup. Mangog. Jane sacrifices Mjolnir to save Asgardia. => Leads to War of the Realms. Jane's story is deeply emotional.
<b>Amazing Spider-Man: Worldwide Omnibus Vol. 1-3</b>	ASM (2015) #1-32, (2016) #1-31+	Slott / Various	IN PRINT	Peter as global tech CEO (Parker Industries). Spider-armor. Regent. Clone Conspiracy (Ben Reilly returns). Peter loses everything — back to basics. => Slott's mega-run concludes. Spencer takes over.
<b>Black Panther by Ta-Nehisi Coates Omnibus</b>	Black Panther (2016) #1-18, (2018) #1-25	Coates / Stelfreeze / Acuña / Various	IN PRINT	Political/philosophical BP. "A Nation Under Our Feet." Wakanda becomes democracy. Intergalactic Empire of Wakanda. Literary approach — divisive but ambitious. => Continues Priest's political complexity with literary flourish.
<b>Immortal Hulk Omnibus</b>	Immortal Hulk #1-50	Ewing / Bennett	IN PRINT	<b>MASTERPIECE. Best Hulk run EVER.</b> Body horror meets superhero existentialism. Banner dies and comes back every night. The One Below All (gamma demon). Devil Hulk. Joe Fixit. Hulk as horror genre. Deconstructing what the Hulk IS. => Al Ewing becomes key Marvel architect (also writes Ultimates, Defenders).
<b>Venom by Donny Cates Omnibus</b>	Venom (2018) #1-35, Absolute Carnage #1-5, King in Black #1-5	Cates / Stegman	IN PRINT	<b>Knull, God of the Symbiotes.</b> Retcon: symbiotes are part of a cosmic entity older than the universe. King in Black: Knull invades Earth. => Major cosmic retcon. Eddie Brock becomes King in Black (god of symbiotes).
<b>War of the Realms Omnibus</b>	War of the Realms #1-6 + extensive tie-ins	Aaron / Dauterman	IN PRINT	Malekith invades Midgard. All Ten Realms at war. Avengers, X-Men, FF all involved. Punisher with Helheim weapons. Spider-Man with Venom symbiote. Daredevil becomes Heimdall temporarily. Jane Foster becomes Valkyrie. => Culmination of Aaron's entire Thor saga (7+ years).

## XII. THE DAWN OF KRAKOA

2019 — 2024 | *Mutant Nation-Building and the Fall*

Jonathan Hickman returns to Marvel and completely reinvents the X-Men. Mutants establish the nation of Krakoa, conquer death through resurrection protocols, and create a mutant society. It's the most ambitious X-Men reinvention since Giant-Size X-Men #1. The era evolves through multiple phases: Dawn of X, Reign of X, Destiny of X, and Fall of X, before concluding with the return to more traditional X-Men status quo.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
House of X / Powers of X	House of X #1-6, Powers of X #1-6	Hickman / Larraz / Silva	IN PRINT	<b>PARADIGM SHIFT. Moira MacTaggart is a mutant</b> — she reincarnates with memories, has lived multiple lives trying to save mutantkind. Krakoa established as mutant nation. Resurrection protocols. The Five (Elixir, Proteus, Hope, Tempus, Egg) can resurrect any mutant. Xavier/Magneto alliance. Villains welcome on Krakoa. <b>RETCON: Moira's lives reframe EVERYTHING about X-Men history.</b> => Most important X-Men comic since Giant-Size #1.
X-Men by Hickman (Dawn of X) — trades or omnibus	X-Men (2019) #1-21, misc	Hickman / Yu / Larraz / Various	IN PRINT	Hickman's flagship X-Men. The Vault (time-accelerated Children of the Vault). Mystique's betrayal seeds. Orchis (human anti-mutant organization) introduced. The Quiet Council governs Krakoa (Xavier, Magneto, Sinister, Emma, Apocalypse, etc.). => Hickman leaves before completing his plan. Other writers continue.
X-Men: Dawn of X Omnibus Vol. 1	Multiple launch titles: X-Men, Marauders, X-Force, New Mutants, Excalibur, Fallen Angels	Various	IN PRINT	Full Krakoa launch. Marauders (Emma Frost + Kitty Pryde smuggle drugs/mutants). X-Force (Krakoa's CIA). New Mutants on Krakoa + in space. Excalibur (Captain Britain/magic). => Each book explores different aspect of the nation.
X of Swords	X of Swords event crossover	Hickman / Howard / Various	IN PRINT	Tournament between Krakoa and Arakko (the other mutant island, in Otherworld). Ten swords vs. ten swords. Apocalypse reunited with his first horsemen family. Apocalypse leaves Krakoa for Arakko. Captain Britain mantle reshuffled. => Arakko/Mars becomes key concept. Apocalypse redeemed.
Inferno (2021)	Inferno #1-4	Hickman / Schiti / Caselli	IN PRINT	<b>Hickman's farewell. Moira's secret exposed.</b> Mystique and Destiny destroy Moira's power. Xavier and Magneto's deception revealed. Orchis plans escalate. => Hickman's intended story truncated. Other writers (Ewing, Gillen, Duggan) continue Krakoa era.
Immortal X-Men	Immortal X-Men #1-18	Gillen / Schiti	IN PRINT	Quiet Council politics. Mr. Sinister's manipulation. Sins of Sinister event. Gillen writes the political thriller of the Krakoa era. => Sinister clones, Moira clones, timeline manipulation.
X-Men: Fall of X	Multiple titles (X-Men, Immortal X-Men, X-Force, etc.)	Duggan / Gillen / Percy / Various	IN PRINT	<b>Orchis attacks the Hellfire Gala.</b> Most mutants killed or depowered via teleportation. Xavier captured. Krakoa falls. Mutants scattered and hunted again. Firestar as double agent within Orchis. => Krakoa era ending. Return to persecution status quo.
Rise of the Powers of X / Fall of the House of X	Rise of the Powers of X #1-5, Fall of the House of X #1-5	Gillen / Ewing / Schiti / Cassara	IN PRINT	<b>The Krakoa era concludes.</b> Orchis defeated. Enigma (the Dominion AI from PoX timelines) revealed as ultimate threat. Moira confronted. Xavier dies (for real? probably not). Krakoa dissolved. X-Men return to more traditional setup. => Transition to "From the Ashes" era (2024+).

# XIII. BLOOD HUNT & ONE WORLD UNDER DOOM

2024 — 2025 | *The Doom Era*

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
Blood Hunt	Blood Hunt #1-5 + tie-ins	Jed MacKay / Pepe Larraz	IN PRINT	Blade, corrupted, leads a vampire army that blocks out the sun. Global vampire war. Every Marvel hero involved. <b>Doctor Strange dies. Doctor Doom becomes Sorcerer Supreme</b> — combining his science and now magical authority. => Doom with the title of Sorcerer Supreme = setup for One World Under Doom.
Doctor Doom (2024 series)	Doctor Doom #1-8+	Zdarsky / Larroca	IN PRINT	Doom as reluctant Sorcerer Supreme. Valeria Richards as his ally. Doom forced to protect the world to fulfill his bargain. => Direct prelude to One World Under Doom. Read Doom's POV.
One World Under Doom	One World Under Doom #1-9	Zdarsky / Ewing / Various	IN PRINT	<b>CURRENT MAJOR EVENT.</b> Doctor Doom conquers the world using magic and technology. Not through tyranny — he genuinely makes things better (no more poverty, disease). But at the cost of freedom. Heroes must decide: fight the man saving the world? Reed Richards as the anti-Doom. Emma Frost resistance. => Currently concluding. Leads to Armageddon (2026).

## XIV. CURRENT ONGOINGS

2025 — 2026 | *Post-Doom and Beyond*

The current Marvel landscape post-OWUD. Titles are restructuring around Doom's aftermath. Armageddon by Chip Zdarsky is announced as the next major event for 2026.

Collected Edition	Issues	Creators	Status	Story Summary & Connections
Amazing Spider-Man (current)	ASM ongoing — "Eight Deaths" arc and beyond	Wells / Romita Jr. / Various	ONGOING	Post-Doom Spider-Man. Peter Parker dealing with fallout. Eight Deaths saga: mystical threats. Tombstone arc. => Trade collections ongoing. Check Marvel Unlimited for latest.
Avengers by Jed MacKay	Avengers (2023) ongoing	MacKay / Immonen	ONGOING	Post-Blood Hunt Avengers. Sam Wilson as Captain America. OWUD tie-ins. Team dealing with Doom's world. => Trades collecting ongoing. Strong critical reception.
X-Men: From the Ashes	X-Men (2024) #1+, UXM (2024) #1+, Exceptional X-Men #1+	MacKay / Ewing / Seeley / Various	ONGOING	Post-Krakoia X-Men. Back to school, back to persecution. Scott Summers leading. Cyclops's new team. Rogue in Uncanny X-Men. => New era beginning. Multiple interconnected titles.
Fantastic Four by Ryan North	FF (2022) ongoing (leads into 2025 relaunch)	North / Coello	ONGOING	Ryan North's acclaimed FF run — humor + heart + science. Tyrannosaurus Doom arc. Ties directly into OWUD. => New FF series launched post-OWUD.
Ultimate Universe (2024+)	Ultimate Spider-Man, Ultimate X-Men, Ultimate Black Panther, Ultimates	Hickman / Ewing / Deniz Camp / Bryan Hill	ONGOING	<b>Jonathan Hickman's new Ultimate Universe (Earth-6160).</b> The Maker (evil Reed Richards) created a world without heroes. Heroes now emerging. Tony Stark + Peter Parker as allies. NOT 616 continuity but planned to eventually intersect. => Separate reading track. Hickman's new long-term project.
ARMAGEDDON (2026)	Upcoming event	Zdarsky / TBD	UPCOMING	Next major Marvel event announced by Chip Zdarsky. Details emerging. Expected to follow up on OWUD consequences. => Watch for solicitations starting Spring 2026.

# XV. READING PATHS & RECOMMENDATIONS

*Curated Guides for New Readers*

## PATH 1: THE ABSOLUTE ESSENTIALS (Start Here)

If you want to understand the Marvel Universe in the minimum number of books, read these in order. Approximately 30-35 collected editions covering 60+ years of story.

Order	Title	Era	Why Essential
1	Fantastic Four Omnibus Vol. 1-2	Silver Age	Origin of Marvel. Doom, Galactus, Silver Surfer.
2	Amazing Spider-Man Omnibus Vol. 1-2	Silver Age	Spidey foundation. Green Goblin, rogues gallery.
3	Avengers Omnibus Vol. 1	Silver Age	Team forms. Cap revived. Kang debut.
4	Warlock by Jim Starlin	Bronze Age	Cosmic Marvel foundation. Thanos defined.
5	UXM Omnibus Vol. 1-2 (Claremont)	1975-1982	X-Men become Marvel's #1. Phoenix. DoFP.
6	FF by John Byrne Omnibus Vol. 1	1981-1985	Best modern FF after Lee/Kirby.
7	Thor by Walt Simonson Omnibus	1983-1987	Definitive Thor. Beta Ray Bill.
8	Daredevil by Frank Miller Omnibus	1979-1986	Born Again. Reinvents street-level comics.
9	Secret Wars (1984) Omnibus	1984	First crossover event. Symbiote. Doom as God.
10	Infinity Gauntlet Omnibus	1991	Thanos snaps. Foundation for MCU climax.
11	Marvels	1994	Marvel history through human eyes. Alex Ross art.
12	New X-Men by Morrison Omnibus	2001-2004	X-Men reinvented. Genosha. Cassandra Nova.
13	Avengers by Busiek & Perez Vol. 1	1998-2001	Classic Avengers restored.
14	Daredevil by Bendis & Maleev Vol. 1-2	2001-2006	Street-level masterpiece.
15	Captain America by Brubaker Vol. 1	2005-2007	Winter Soldier. Cap dies.
16	FF by Waid & Wieringo Omnibus	2002-2005	Unthinkable Doom. Modern FF classic.
17	Civil War	2006-2007	Hero vs. hero. Registration Act.
18	Annihilation Omnibus	2006	Cosmic Marvel reborn.
19	GotG by DnA Omnibus	2008-2010	The Guardians. Star-Lord, Rocket, Groot.
20	FF by Hickman Omnibus Vol. 1-2	2009-2012	Grand cosmic architecture. Council of Reeds.
21	Avengers by Hickman Omnibus Vol. 1-2	2012-2015	Incursions. Time Runs Out.
22	Secret Wars (2015) Omnibus	2015	Multiverse dies. Doom as God. Reed rebuilds.
23	Immortal Hulk Omnibus	2018-2021	Best Hulk ever. Horror masterpiece.
24	House of X / Powers of X	2019	Krakoia. Mutant paradigm shift.
25	Venom by Cates Omnibus	2018-2021	Knull. King in Black. Symbiote mythology.
26	Black Panther by Priest Omnibus	1998-2003	Definitive T'Challa.
27	Mighty Thor by Aaron Vol. 1-2	2014-2018	Jane Foster as Thor. Emotional.
28	Blood Hunt	2024	Doom becomes Sorcerer Supreme.
29	One World Under Doom	2025	Doom rules the world. Current event.

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## **PATH 2: FANTASTIC FOUR COMPLETE THREAD**

Follow the First Family from beginning to current: FF Omnibus Vol. 1-6 => Byrne Vol. 1-2 => [Simonson/DeFalco via Epics] => Waid/Wieringo => Hickman Vol. 1-2 => [Fraction briefly] => Slott (upcoming omni) => Ryan North => Current FF (2025). Approximately 20 collected editions.

## **PATH 3: THE COSMIC MARVEL THREAD**

Follow the big cosmic picture: FF Omnibus Vol. 2 (Galactus) => Silver Surfer Omni => Warlock by Starlin => Captain Marvel by Starlin => Infinity Gauntlet => Annihilation => Conquest => GotG by DnA => FF/Avengers by Hickman => Secret Wars (2015) => King in Black => Eternals by Gillen => Ultimate Universe (2024). Approximately 15 editions.

## **PATH 4: THE X-MEN COMPLETE THREAD**

Follow mutantkind: UXM Vol. 1-4 (Claremont) => Mutant Massacre => Inferno => X-Tinction Agenda => X-Men by Jim Lee => Age of Apocalypse => Onslaught => Morrison's NXM => Whedon's Astonishing => House of M => Messiah Complex => AvX => House of X/Powers of X => Dawn of X => Fall of X => From the Ashes. Approximately 25-30 editions. The longest thread.

## **PATH 5: DOCTOR DOOM — THE COMPLETE VILLAIN/HERO ARC**

For understanding Marvel's greatest character: FF Omnibus Vol. 1 (debut #5) => FF Vol. 2 (#57-60) => FF Vol. 6 (#200) => Byrne FF (#246-247, 258) => Secret Wars 1984 => FF by Waid (Unthinkable) => Books of Doom (mini) => FF by Hickman (Council of Reeds) => Secret Wars 2015 (God Emperor) => Infamous Iron Man => Doctor Doom (2024) => Blood Hunt (Sorcerer Supreme) => One World Under Doom. Doom's arc from tyrant to god to reluctant hero is THE arc of Marvel.

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# XVI. CONTINUITY CONFLICTS & NOTES

*Where Canon Gets Complicated*

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Marvel's continuity is a living, breathing, sometimes contradictory document. The following are the most significant continuity conflicts, presented with all interpretations. These will be interactive in the web application, with community voting on confidence scores.

## CONFLICT #1: The Sliding Timescale — When Did the FF Form?

**Official Marvel Stance:** Approximately 13-15 years before "now," whenever "now" is. Marvel's Official Handbook and editorial policy since the 1970s maintains a sliding timescale. Cite: Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe, FF #1 (1961), FF (1998) #60.

**Fan-Accepted Interpretation:** Most readers mentally anchor key events to their publication context — the FF are "from the 60s" even if Marvel says otherwise. Some fans prefer a fixed timeline with actual dates.

**Editorial/Retcon Context:** The sliding timescale is an editorial necessity to keep characters young. Without it, Reed Richards would be ~90. It creates oddities: How did Tony Stark get captured in a recent war if his origin was "15 years ago"?

**Confidence Score:** 90% — Well-established policy, minor disagreements on exact years.

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## CONFLICT #2: Spider-Man's Marriage — Did It Happen?

**Official Marvel Stance:** Erased by Mephisto in One More Day (ASM #545, 2007). In current 616 canon, Peter and MJ were never married. Their relationship history is "fuzzy."

**Fan-Accepted Interpretation:** Almost universally rejected by fans. The marriage (ASM Annual #21, 1987) is considered canon by most readers regardless of OMD. Recent writers (Spencer, Wells) have danced around restoring it.

**Editorial/Retcon Context:** Joe Quesada (EIC) felt a married Spider-Man limited stories. OMD was the mechanism. Nick Spencer's run (ASM #1-74, 2018-2021) hinted at undoing it but ultimately didn't. The creative tension continues.

**Confidence Score:** 95% — Very well documented, just very controversial.

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## CONFLICT #3: Was Xorn Really Magneto? (New X-Men)

**Official Marvel Stance:** Marvel editorial (via Excalibur #1-2, 2004) retconned that it was NOT Magneto but a Chinese mutant named Xorn who was impersonating Magneto.

**Fan-Accepted Interpretation:** Morrison wrote it as Magneto, period. The retcon was done after Morrison left because Marvel didn't want Magneto to be a genocidal drug addict. Most fans accept Morrison's intent.

**Editorial/Retcon Context:** Chuck Austen and Chris Claremont wrote the retcon in subsequent issues. Later writers have mostly ignored the confusion. Hickman's HoX/PoX treats Magneto's history as complex but doesn't address Xorn directly.

**Confidence Score:** 50% — Genuinely contested. Valid arguments on both sides.

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## CONFLICT #4: Post-Secret Wars (2015) — Same Universe?

**Official Marvel Stance:** Earth-616 was rebuilt by Reed Richards using Molecule Man/Beyonder power. All prior history "happened." It is the same universe (Secret Wars #9).

**Fan-Accepted Interpretation:** Functionally a soft reboot. Miles Morales, the Maker, and other Ultimate elements are now in 616. Some details are intentionally left vague to allow creative flexibility.

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**Editorial/Retcon Context:** Secret Wars served as Marvel's version of DC's Crisis — a way to relaunch all titles with new #1s without technically rebooting. Hickman's interviews confirm he intended it as a complete story, not a continuity reset.

**Confidence Score:** 80% — General agreement but some ambiguity on specific details.

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## CONFLICT #5: Moira MacTaggert — Always a Mutant?

**Official Marvel Stance:** Yes. House of X #2 (2019) reveals Moira has always been a mutant with reincarnation powers. Her previous lives reframe all X-Men history.

**Fan-Accepted Interpretation:** Divisive. Some fans love the retcon as brilliant recontextualization. Others feel it undermines decades of stories where Moira was explicitly human.

**Editorial/Retcon Context:** Hickman designed this as the key to his entire X-Men reimagining. The Inferno (2021) mini-series "depowered" Moira, somewhat walking back the retcon. Rise/Fall of the Powers of X concluded her arc.

**Confidence Score:** 85% — Official canon is clear, but the retcon's long-term impact is still settling.

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## XVII. RESOURCES & RETAILERS

*Where to Buy, Watch, and Learn More*

### RETAILERS — Where to Buy Collected Editions

Retailer	URL	Notes
InStockTrades (IST)	instocktrades.com	Best discount prices for in-print books. Free shipping over \$50.
Discount Comic Book Service (DCBS)	dcbsservice.com	Best for pre-orders. 40-50% off cover price.
Cheap Graphic Novels (CGN)	cheapgraphicnovels.com	Good prices, reliable shipping.
Amazon	amazon.com	Widest availability, variable pricing. Check for 3rd party sellers.
Organic Priced Books (OPB)	organicpricedbooks.com	UK-based, good international shipping.
Tales of Wonder	talesofwonder.com	Occasional deep discounts on backlist.
eBay	ebay.com	Only reliable option for OOP books. Check seller ratings.
Marvel Unlimited	marvel.com/unlimited	Digital subscription. ~\$10/month. 3-month delay on new issues. Nearly complete library.
Comixology/Kindle	amazon.com/kindle-dbs	Digital purchases. Permanent access. Frequent sales.
Hoopla/Libby	hoopladigital.com	FREE with library card. Variable selection.

### YOUTUBE CHANNELS & PODCASTS — Best Marvel Education

Channel / Podcast	Focus	Best For
Comics Explained (YouTube)	Deep-dive storyline explanations	Event summaries, character histories. Great for "what happened in X?"
NerdSync (YouTube)	Cultural/historical analysis	Understanding WHY stories matter. Academic approach.
Near Mint Condition (YouTube)	Collected edition market	What's in print, what to buy, market analysis.
GemMintCollectibles (YouTube)	Omnibus reviews & unboxings	Visual look at physical editions before buying.
ComicPOP (YouTube)	Back Issues reviews	Individual issue analysis and reactions.
Comic Tom (YouTube)	Market/collecting advice	Price tracking, speculation, investment.
Jay & Miles X-Plain the X-Men (Podcast)	X-Men deep dive	Issue-by-issue X-Men coverage. Exhaustive and hilarious.
Crushing Krisis (Website)	Collected edition guides	Best per-character collected edition guides online. <a href="https://crushingkrisis.com">crushingkrisis.com</a> .
Comic Book Herald (Website)	Reading order guides	Comprehensive reading orders. <a href="https://comicbookherald.com">comicbookherald.com</a> .

### MCU CONNECTIONS — Films & Shows Adapting Comics Above

Upcoming MCU adaptations of stories covered in this guide: **Fantastic Four: First Steps** (July 2025) — First Family in MCU. **Avengers: Doomsday** (May 2026) — Robert Downey Jr. as Doctor Doom. **Spider-Man: Brand New Day** (July 2026) — Spider-Man in MCU. **Avengers: Secret Wars** (May 2027) — Adapting Hickman's Secret Wars. Reading the corresponding comics will enrich your experience of these films enormously.

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**THE MARVEL CARTOGRAPHER'S GUIDE** — Version 1.0, February 2026

This is a living document. The interactive web application (coming soon) will feature:

Interactive timeline visualization with filterable reading paths

"What's Next?" engine — select any book and see the recommended path forward

Continuity conflict viewer with community confidence voting

Collection tracker with availability alerts

Mobile app (planned)

*Excelsior.*