

Star Wars

Star Wars is an American epic space-opera media franchise created by George Lucas, which began with the eponymous 1977 film and quickly became a worldwide pop-culture phenomenon. The franchise has been expanded into various films and other media, including television series, video games, novels, comic books, theme park attractions and themed areas, comprising an all-encompassing fictional universe. The franchise holds a *Guinness World Records* title for the "Most successful film merchandising franchise."^[1] In 2018, the total value of the *Star Wars* franchise was estimated at US\$65 billion, and it is currently the fifth-highest-grossing media franchise of all time.

The original film, later subtitled *Episode IV – A New Hope*, was followed by the sequels *Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) and *Episode VI – Return of the Jedi* (1983), forming the original *Star Wars* trilogy. A prequel trilogy was later released, consisting of *Episode I – The Phantom Menace* (1999), *Episode II – Attack of the Clones* (2002) and *Episode III – Revenge of the Sith* (2005). Ten years later, a sequel trilogy began with *Episode VII – The Force Awakens* (2015), continued with *Episode VIII – The Last Jedi* (2017), and concludes with *Episode IX – The Rise of Skywalker* (2019). Together, the three trilogies form what has been collectively referred to as the 'Skywalker saga'. The first eight films were nominated for Academy Awards (with wins going to the first two released) and were commercially successful. Together with the theatrical anthology films *Rogue One* (2016) and *Solo: A Star Wars Story* (2018), the combined box office revenue of the films equates to over US\$9 billion,^[2] and is currently the second-highest-grossing film franchise.^[3]

In 2012, Lucas sold his company to Disney, and in April 2014, most existing spin-off media was made non-canon and rebranded as '*Star Wars Legends*'. The episodic 'Skywalker saga' and *The Clone Wars* film and TV series (2008–2014) define the canon, along with most subsequent works.

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Star Wars	
 <div>STAR WARS</div>	
Created by	George Lucas
Original work	<i>Star Wars</i> (1977) ^[a]
Owned by	Lucasfilm (The Walt Disney Company)
Print publications	
Book(s)	List of reference books
Novel(s)	List of novels
Short stories	See list of novels
Comics	List of comics
Magazine(s)	<i>Star Wars Insider</i> (1987–)
Films and television	
Film(s)	<div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Skywalker saga (9 films; 1977–2019)Anthology (2 films; 2016–present)</div> Full list
Short film(s)	<i>Reflections</i> (2018)
Television series	<div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>The Mandalorian</i> (2019)Untitled Cassian Andor series (TBA)Untitled Obi-Wan Kenobi series (TBA)</div>
Animated series	List of animated series
Television special(s)	<i>Holiday Special</i> (1978)
Television film(s)	List of TV films
Games	
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Video game(s)	List of video games
Audio	
Radio program(s)	List of radio dramas
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Miscellaneous	
Toy(s)	Merchandise
Theme park attraction(s)	List of attractions

Premise

The *Star Wars* franchise depicts the adventures of characters "A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away",^[4] in which humans and many species of aliens (often humanoid) co-exist with robots, or 'droids', who may assist them in their daily routines; space travel between planets is common due to hyperspace technology.^{[5][6][7]}

A mystical power known as 'the Force' is described in the original film as "an energy field created by all living things ... [that] binds the galaxy together."^[8] Through training and meditation, those whom "the Force is strong with" are able to perform various superpowers (such as telekinesis, precognition, telepathy, and manipulation of physical energy).^[9] The Force is wielded by two major knighthood orders at conflict with each other: the Jedi, peacekeepers of the Old Republic ruthlessly hunted by Imperial authorities, who act on the light side of the Force through non-attachment and arbitration, and the Sith, ancient enemies of the galactic democracy, who use the dark side by manipulating fear and aggression. While Jedi Knights can be numerous, the Dark Lords of the Sith (or 'Darth') are intended to be limited to two: a master and their apprentice.^[10]

Force-wielders are very limited in numbers in comparison to the rest of the average population. The Jedi and Sith prefer the use of a weapon called lightsaber, which is the cylinder-like hilt of a sword (when turned off), but when turned on ignites a laser blade that can cut through virtually any surface. Fights between the two factions result in duels, which are a mix between sword skills and the use of the Force. The rest of the average population, as well as renegades and soldiers, use laser-powered blaster firearms, which Force-users can deflect using lightsabers.



The lightsaber and the blaster are iconic elements of the franchise.

Fictional timeline

The rises and falls of different regimes are chronicled throughout the saga, which is split into three eras:^[11]

- **The Age of Republic:** The era of the prequel trilogy, in which the democratic Galactic Republic is corrupted by its Supreme Chancellor, Palpatine—secretly the Sith lord Darth Sidious. After orchestrating the Clone Wars between the government and a Separatist confederation, Palpatine overthrows the Republic, and establishes the Galactic Empire, declaring himself Emperor.^{[12][13][14]} The prequels feature a relatively sleek and new design aesthetic in comparison to the original trilogy.^[15]
- **The Age of Rebellion:** The era of the original trilogy, in which the Empire is fought by the Rebel Alliance in a Galactic Civil War that spans several years, climaxing with the apparent death of the Emperor. The surviving Rebellion gives rise to the New Republic.^{[16][13][14]} The original trilogy depicts the galaxy as dirty and grimy in George Lucas's depiction of a "used universe".^[17]
- **The Age of Resistance:** The era of the sequel trilogy, in which the remnants of the Empire reform as the First Order.^[18] Heroes of the former rebellion lead the Resistance against the oppressive dictatorship. Rather than depend on an overabundant use of computer-generated imagery, The Force Awakens director J. J. Abrams determined not to lose "the wonderful preposterousness" of puppetry and practical effects that were used to create the classic trilogy.^[19]

Film

Film	U.S. release date	Director	Screenwriter(s)	Story by	Producer(s)
Original trilogy					
<i>Episode IV – A New Hope</i>	May 25, 1977	George Lucas			Gary Kurtz
<i>Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back</i>	May 21, 1980	Irvin Kershner	Leigh Brackett and Lawrence Kasdan	George Lucas	
<i>Episode VI – Return of the Jedi</i>	May 25, 1983	Richard Marquand	Lawrence Kasdan & George Lucas		Howard Kazanjian
Prequel trilogy					
<i>Episode I – The Phantom Menace</i>	May 19, 1999	George Lucas			Rick McCallum
<i>Episode II – Attack of the Clones</i>	May 16, 2002	George Lucas	George Lucas & Jonathan Hales	George Lucas	
<i>Episode III – Revenge of the Sith</i>	May 19, 2005	George Lucas			
Sequel trilogy					
<i>Episode VII – The Force Awakens</i>	December 18, 2015	J. J. Abrams	Lawrence Kasdan & J. J. Abrams and Michael Arndt		Kathleen Kennedy, J. J. Abrams and Bryan Burk
<i>Episode VIII – The Last Jedi</i>	December 15, 2017	Rian Johnson			Kathleen Kennedy and Ram Bergman
<i>Episode IX – The Rise of Skywalker</i>	December 20, 2019	J. J. Abrams	Derek Connolly & Colin Trevorrow and Chris Terrio & J. J. Abrams		Kathleen Kennedy, J. J. Abrams and Michelle Rejwan
Anthology films					
<i>Rogue One: A Star Wars Story</i>	December 16, 2016	Gareth Edwards	Chris Weitz & Tony Gilroy	John Knoll & Gary Whitta	Kathleen Kennedy, Allison Shearmur and Simon Emanuel
<i>Solo: A Star Wars Story</i>	May 25, 2018	Ron Howard	Jonathan Kasdan & Lawrence Kasdan		

The *Star Wars* film series centers around three sets of trilogies, which is collectively referred to as the "Skywalker saga".^[20] They were produced non-chronologically, with *Episodes IV–VI* (the original trilogy) being released between 1977 and 1983, *Episodes I–III* (the prequel trilogy) being released between 1999 and 2005, and *Episodes VII–IX* (the sequel trilogy), being released between 2015 and 2019. Each trilogy focuses on a generation of the Force-sensitive Skywalker family. The original trilogy depicts the heroic development of Luke Skywalker, the prequels tell of the downfall of his father Anakin, while the sequels star Luke's nephew, Kylo Ren.

An anthology series set between the main episodes entered development in parallel to the production of the sequel trilogy,^[21] described by Disney CFO Jay Rasulo as origin stories.^[22] The first entry, *Rogue One* (2016), tells the story of the rebels who steal the Death Star plans directly before *Episode IV*.^{[23][24]} *Solo: A Star Wars Story* (2018) focuses on Han Solo's backstory, also featuring Chewbacca and Lando Calrissian.

Lucasfilm has a number of *Star Wars* movies in development, including a trilogy of films produced and written by *Game of Thrones* creators/showrunners David Benioff and D. B. Weiss.^[25] The installments were scheduled to be released in December 2022, 2024, and 2026.^{[26][27]} This changed in October 2019, when it was announced that the duo had stepped away from their *Star Wars* films, stating that their contract with Netflix made it so that they could not effectively work on the films. Kathleen Kennedy acknowledged that the studio would be open to the pair returning to work on their trilogy when their schedule allows.^[28]

Another trilogy will be written by *The Last Jedi* writer/director Rian Johnson.^[29] It will be independent from the Skywalker saga.^[30] In September 2019, it was announced that Kennedy and Kevin Feige will collaborate to develop an additional *Star Wars* film.^[31]

Skywalker saga

Original trilogy

In 1971, George Lucas wanted to film an adaptation of the *Flash Gordon* serial, but could not obtain the rights, so he began developing his own space opera.^{[32][b]} After directing *American Graffiti* (1973), he wrote a two-page synopsis, which 20th Century Fox decided to invest in.^{[33][34][35]} By 1974, he had expanded the story into the first draft of a screenplay.^[36] The subsequent movie's success led Lucas to make it the basis of an elaborate film serial.^[37] With the backstory he created for the sequel, Lucas decided that the series would be a trilogy of trilogies.^[38] Most of the main cast would return for the two additional installments of the original trilogy, which were self-financed by Lucasfilm.



The main cast of the trilogy includes Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker), Harrison Ford (Han Solo), and Carrie Fisher (Princess Leia), respectively.

Star Wars was released on May 25, 1977, and first subtitled *Episode IV – A New Hope* in the 1979 book *The Art of Star Wars*.^[39] *Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back* was released on May 21, 1980, also achieving wide financial and critical success. The final film in the trilogy, *Episode VI – Return of the Jedi* was released on May 25, 1983. The story of the original trilogy focuses on Luke Skywalker's quest to become a Jedi, his struggle with the evil Imperial agent Darth Vader, and the struggle of the Rebel Alliance to free the galaxy from the clutches of the Empire.

Prequel trilogy



The main cast of the trilogy includes Ewan McGregor (Obi-Wan Kenobi), Natalie Portman (Padmé Amidala), and Hayden Christensen (Anakin Skywalker),^[c] respectively.

According to producer Gary Kurtz, loose plans for a prequel trilogy were developed during the outlining of the original two films.^[40] In 1980, Lucas confirmed that he had the nine-film series plotted,^[41] but due to the stress of producing the original trilogy, he had decided to cancel further sequels by 1981.^[42] In 1983, Lucas explained that "There was never a script completed that had the entire story as it exists now ... As the stories unfolded, I would take certain ideas and save them ... I kept taking out all the good parts, and I just kept telling myself I would make other movies someday."^[43]

Technical advances in the late 1980s and early 1990s, including the ability to create computer-generated imagery (CGI), inspired Lucas to consider that it might be possible to revisit his saga. In 1989, Lucas stated that the prequels would be "unbelievably expensive."^[44] In 1992, he acknowledged that he had plans to create the prequel trilogy.^[45] A theatrical re-release of the original trilogy in 1997 "updated" the 20-year-old films with the style of CGI envisioned for the new trilogy.

Episode I – The Phantom Menace was released on May 19, 1999, and *Episode II – Attack of the Clones* on May 16, 2002. *Episode III – Revenge of the Sith*, the first PG-13 film in the franchise, was released on May 19, 2005.^[46] The first two movies were met with mixed reviews, with the third being received somewhat more positively. The trilogy begins 32 years before *Episode IV* and follows the Jedi training of Anakin Skywalker, Luke's father, and creation of the Sith lord Darth Vader, as well as the corruption of the Galactic Republic and rise of the Empire of Darth Sidious. Together with the original trilogy, Lucas has collectively referred to the first six episodic films of the franchise as "the tragedy of Darth Vader".^[47]

Sequel trilogy



The main cast of the trilogy includes Adam Driver (Kylo Ren), Daisy Ridley (Rey), John Boyega (Finn), and Oscar Isaac (Poe Dameron), respectively.

Prior to releasing the original film, and made possible by its success, Lucas planned "three trilogies of nine films."^{[38][48]} He announced this to *Time* in 1978,^[49] and confirmed that he had outlined them in 1981.^[50] At various stages of development, the sequel trilogy was to focus on the rebuilding of the Republic,^[51] the return of Luke in a role similar to that of Obi-Wan in the original trilogy,^[48] Luke's sister (not yet determined to be Leia),^[40] Han, Leia,^[52] R2-D2 and C-3PO.^{[38][53]} However, after beginning work on the prequel trilogy, Lucas insisted that *Star Wars* was meant to be a six-part series and that there would be no sequel trilogy.^{[54][55]}

Lucas decided to leave the franchise in the hands of other filmmakers, announcing in January 2012 that he would make no more *Star Wars* films.^[56] In October of that year, The Walt Disney Company agreed to buy Lucasfilm and announced that *Episode VII* would be released in 2015.^[57] The co-chairman of Lucasfilm, Kathleen Kennedy, became president of the company and served as executive producer of new *Star Wars* feature films.^[58] Lucas provided Kennedy his story treatments for the sequels during the 2012 sale,^[59] but in 2015 it was revealed Lucas's sequel outline had been discarded.^{[60][61]} The sequel trilogy also meant the end of the existing *Star Wars* expanded universe, which was discarded to give "maximum creative freedom to the filmmakers and also preserve an element of surprise and discovery for the audience."^[62]

Episode VII – The Force Awakens was released on December 16, 2015, *Episode VIII – The Last Jedi* on December 13, 2017, and *Episode IX – The Rise of Skywalker* on December 18, 2019, in many countries (2 days later for each episode in the U.S.). *Episode VII* was met with both critical and box office success, and *Episode VIII*, while also meeting critical and financial success, had a mixed reception from audiences. The sequel trilogy starts 30 years after *Episode VI* and focuses on the journey of the Force-sensitive orphan Rey, guided by Luke Skywalker. Along with ex-stormtrooper Finn and ace X-Wing pilot Poe Dameron, Rey helps the Resistance led by Leia fight the First Order commanded by Han and Leia's son (Luke's nephew), Kylo Ren.

Anthology films

Before selling Lucasfilm to Disney in 2012, and parallel to his development of a sequel trilogy, George Lucas and original trilogy co-screenwriter Lawrence Kasdan started development on a standalone film about a young Han Solo.^[21] On February 5, 2013, Disney CEO Bob Iger made public the development of the Kasdan film.^[63] Disney CFO Jay Rasulo has described the standalone films as origin stories.^[22]

Lucasfilm and Kennedy have stated that the standalone films would be referred to as the *Star Wars* anthology series^[23] (albeit the word anthology has not been used in any of the titles, instead carrying the promotional "*A Star Wars Story*" subtitle). Focused on how the Rebels obtained the Death Star plans introduced in the 1977 film, the first anthology film, *Rogue One*, was released on December 16, 2016, to favorable reviews and box office success. The second, *Solo: A Star Wars Story*, centered on a young Han Solo with Chewbacca and Lando as supporting characters, was released on May 25, 2018, to mixed reviews and underperformance at the box office. Despite this, more anthology films are expected to be released,^[64] following a hiatus after 2019's *The Rise of Skywalker*.^[65]

Television

The *Star Wars* franchise has been spun off to various television productions, including two animated series released in the mid-1980s. Further animated series began to be released in the 2000s, the first two of which focused on the Clone Wars. After Disney's acquisition of Lucasfilm, only the later one remained canon. Three live-action *Star Wars* series will be released on Disney+. The first, *The Mandalorian*, premiered on November 12.

Series

Series	Season	Episodes	Originally aired / released		Network	Showrunner(s)	Status	
			First	Last				
Animated series								
<i>Star Wars: Droids</i>		1	13	September 7, 1985	June 7, 1986	ABC	Miki Herman & Peter Sauder	Released
<i>Ewoks</i>		1	13	September 7, 1985	November 30, 1985	ABC	Miki Herman & Peter Sauder	Released
		2	22	September 13, 1986	December 13, 1986			
<i>Star Wars: The Clone Wars</i>		Film		August 15, 2008		Theatrical release	Dave Filoni ^[66]	Released
		1	22	October 3, 2008	March 20, 2009	Cartoon Network		
		2	22	October 2, 2009	April 30, 2010			
		3	22	September 17, 2010	April 1, 2011			
		4	22	September 16, 2011	March 16, 2012			
		5	20	September 29, 2012	March 2, 2013			
		6	13	February 15, 2014	March 7, 2014	Netflix		
		7	12 ^[67]	February 2020 ^[68]	TBA	Disney+		In production ^[67]
<i>Star Wars Rebels</i>		Shorts	4	August 11, 2014	September 1, 2014	Disney XD	Dave Filoni ^[66]	Released
		1	15	October 3, 2014	March 2, 2015			
		2	22	June 20, 2015	March 30, 2016			
		3	22	September 24, 2016	March 25, 2017		Justin Ridge ^[66]	
		4	16	October 16, 2017	March 5, 2018		Dave Filoni	
<i>Star Wars Resistance</i>		1	20	October 7, 2018	March 17, 2019	Disney Channel	Justin Ridge ^[69]	Released
		2	19 ^[70]	October 6, 2019	January 26, 2020 ^[70]			Airing
Animated micro-series								
<i>Star Wars: Clone Wars</i>		1	10	November 7, 2003	November 20, 2003	Cartoon Network	Genndy Tartakovsky ^{[71][72]}	Released
		2	10	March 26, 2004	April 8, 2004			
		3	5	March 21, 2005	March 25, 2005			
<i>Star Wars Forces of Destiny</i>		1	16	July 3, 2017	November 1, 2017	YouTube	Carrie Beck and Dave Filoni ^[73]	Released
		2	16	March 19, 2018	May 25, 2018			
<i>Star Wars Galaxy of Adventures</i>		1	TBA	November 30, 2018	TBA	YouTube	Josh Rimes ^[74]	Streaming
<i>Star Wars Roll Out</i>		1	TBA	August 9, 2019	TBA	YouTube	Hideo Itoyanagi ^[75]	Streaming
Live-action series								
<i>The Mandalorian</i>		1	8 ^[76]	November 12, 2019	December 27, 2019 ^[77]	Disney+	Jon Favreau ^[78]	Streaming
		2 ^[79]	TBA	TBA	TBA			Pre-production ^[79]
Untitled Cassian Andor series		1	TBA	2020–2021 ^[80]	TBA	Disney+	Stephen Schiff ^[81]	Pre-production ^[82]
Untitled Obi-Wan Kenobi series		1	6 ^[83]	TBA	TBA	Disney+	Hossein Amini ^[84]	In development

Films

Film	U.S. release date	Director(s)	Screenwriter(s)	Producer(s)	Network
<i>Star Wars Holiday Special</i>	November 17, 1978	<u>Steve Binder</u>	<u>Pat Proft</u> , <u>Leonard Ripps</u> , <u>Bruce Vilanch</u> , <u>Rod Warren</u> , and <u>Mitzie Welch</u>	Joe Layton, Jeff Starsh, Ken Welch, and Mitzie Welch	<u>CBS</u>
<i>The Ewok Adventure</i>	November 25, 1984	<u>John Korty</u>	<u>George Lucas</u> (story), <u>Bob Carrau</u> (screenplay)	Thomas G. Smith and Patricia Rose Duignan	<u>ABC</u>
<i>Ewoks: The Battle for Endor</i>	November 24, 1985	Jim Wheat & Ken Wheat	George Lucas (story), Jim Wheat & Ken Wheat (screenplay)	Thomas G. Smith and <u>Ian Bryce</u>	

In other media

From 1976 to 2014, the term *Expanded Universe* (EU) was an umbrella term for all officially licensed *Star Wars* storytelling material set outside the events depicted within the theatrical films, including novels, comics, and video games.^[85] Lucasfilm maintained internal continuity between the films and television content and the EU material until April 25, 2014, when the company announced all of the EU works would cease production. Existing works would no longer be considered canon to the franchise and subsequent reprints would be rebranded under the *Star Wars Legends* label,^[85] with downloadable content for the massively multiplayer online game *The Old Republic* the only *Legends* material to still be produced. The *Star Wars* canon was subsequently restructured to only include the existing six feature films, the animated film *The Clone Wars* (2008), and its companion animated series. All future projects and creative developments across all types of media would be overseen and coordinated by the story group, announced as a division of Lucasfilm created to maintain continuity and a cohesive vision on the storytelling of the franchise.^[62] Multiple comics series from Marvel and novels published by Del Rey were produced after the announcement.

Print media

Star Wars in print predates the release of the first film, with the December 1976 novelization of *Star Wars*, initially subtitled "*From the Adventures of Luke Skywalker*". Credited to Lucas, it was ghostwritten by Alan Dean Foster.^[86] The first "Expanded Universe" story appeared in Marvel Comics' *Star Wars* #7 in January 1978 (the first six issues being an adaptation of the film), followed by Foster's sequel novel *Splinter of the Mind's Eye* the following month.

Novels

After penning the novelization of the original film, Foster followed it with the sequel *Splinter of the Mind's Eye* (1978). The novelizations of *The Empire Strikes Back* (1980) by Donald F. Glut and *Return of the Jedi* (1983) by James Kahn followed, as well as *The Han Solo Adventures* trilogy (1979–1980) by Brian Daley,^[87] and *The Adventures of Lando Calrissian* trilogy (1983) by L. Neil Smith.^{[88][89]}

Timothy Zahn's bestselling *Thrawn* trilogy (1991–1993) reignited interest in the franchise and introduced the popular characters Grand Admiral Thrawn, Mara Jade, Talon Karrde, and Gilad Pellaeon.^{[90][91][92][93]} The first novel, *Heir to the Empire*, reached #1 on the *New York Times* Best Seller list,^[94] and the series finds Luke, Leia, and Han facing off against tactical genius Thrawn, who is plotting to retake the galaxy for the Empire.^[95] In *The Courtship of Princess Leia* (1994) by Dave Wolverton, set immediately before the *Thrawn* trilogy, Leia considers an advantageous political marriage to Prince Isolder of the planet Hapes, but she and Han ultimately marry.^{[96][97]} Steve Perry's *Shadows of the Empire* (1996), set between *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*, was part of a multimedia campaign that included a comic book series and video game.^{[98][99]} The novel introduced the crime lord Prince Xizor, another popular character who would appear in multiple other works.^{[98][100]} Other notable series from Bantam include the *Jedi Academy* trilogy (1994) by Kevin J. Anderson,^{[101][102]} the 14-book *Young Jedi Knights* series (1995–1998) by Anderson and Rebecca Moesta,^{[102][103]} and the *X-wing* series (1996–2012) by Michael A. Stackpole and Aaron Allston.^{[104][105][106]}


 Timothy Zahn authored the *Thrawn* trilogy, which was widely credited with revitalizing the dormant *Star Wars* franchise.

Del Rey took over *Star Wars* book publishing in 1999, releasing what would become a 19-installment novel series called *The New Jedi Order* (1999–2003). Written by multiple authors, the series was set 25 to 30 years after the original films and introduced the Yuuzhan Vong, a powerful alien race attempting to invade and conquer the entire galaxy.^{[107][108]} The bestselling multi-author series *Legacy of the Force* (2006–2008) chronicles the crossover of Han and Leia's son Jacen Solo to the dark side of the Force; among his evil deeds, he kills Luke's wife Mara Jade as a sacrifice to join the Sith. Although no longer canon, the story is paralleled in *The Force Awakens* with Han and Leia's son Ben Solo, who has become the dark Kylo Ren.^{[109][110][111][112]}

Three series set in the prequel era were introduced for younger audiences: the 18-book *Jedi Apprentice* (1999–2002) chronicles the adventures of Obi-Wan Kenobi and his master Qui-Gon Jinn in the years before *The Phantom Menace*; the 11-book *Jedi Quest* (2001–2004) follows Obi-Wan and his own apprentice, Anakin Skywalker in between *The Phantom Menace* and *Attack of the Clones*; and the 10-book *The Last of the Jedi* (2005–2008), set almost immediately after *Revenge of the Sith*, features Obi-Wan and the last few surviving Jedi.

Although Thrawn had been designated a *Legends* character in 2014, he was reintroduced into the canon in the 2016 third season of *Rebels*, with Zahn returning to write more novels based in the character, and set in the new canon.^{[113][114]}

Comics

Marvel Comics published a *Star Wars* comic book series from 1977 to 1986.^{[115][116][117][118]} Original *Star Wars* comics were serialized in the Marvel magazine *Pizzazz* between 1977 and 1979. The 1977 installments were the first original *Star Wars* stories not directly adapted from the films to appear in print form, as they preceded those of the *Star Wars* comic series.^[119] From 1985–1987, the animated children's series *Ewoks*

and *Droids* inspired comic series from Marvel's Star Comics line.^{[120][121][122]} According to Marvel comics former Editor-In-Chief Jim Shooter, the strong sales of *Star Wars* comics saved Marvel financially in 1977 and 1978.^[123] Marvel's *Star Wars* series was one of the industry's top selling titles in 1979 and 1980.^[124] The only downside for Marvel was that the 100,000 copy sales quota was surpassed quickly, allowing Lippincott to renegotiate the royalty arrangements from a position of strength.^[125]

In the late 1980s, Marvel dropped a new *Star Wars* comic it had in development, which was picked up by Dark Horse Comics and published as the popular *Dark Empire* series (1991–1995).^[126] Dark Horse subsequently launched dozens of series set after the original film trilogy, including *Tales of the Jedi* (1993–1998), *X-wing Rogue Squadron* (1995–1998), *Star Wars: Republic* (1998–2006), *Star Wars Tales* (1999–2005), *Star Wars: Empire* (2002–2006), and *Knights of the Old Republic* (2006–2010).^{[127][128]}

After Disney's acquisition of Lucasfilm, it was announced in January 2014 that in 2015 the *Star Wars* comics license would return to Marvel Comics,^[129] whose parent company, Marvel Entertainment, Disney had purchased in 2009.^[130] Launched in 2015, the first three publications were titled *Star Wars*, *Darth Vader*, and the limited series *Princess Leia*.^{[131][132][133]}

Audio

Soundtracks and singles

John Williams composed the soundtracks for the nine episodic films; he has stated that he will retire from the franchise with *The Rise of Skywalker*.^[134] He also composed the theme "The Adventures of Han" for *Solo: A Star Wars Story*, which John Powell composed the rest of the score of.^[135] Michael Giacchino composed the score of *Rogue One*.^[135]

Audio novels

Radio

Radio adaptations of the films were also produced. Lucas, a fan of the NPR-affiliated campus radio station of his alma mater the University of Southern California, licensed the *Star Wars* radio rights to KUSC-FM for US\$1. The production used John Williams' original film score, along with Ben Burtt's sound effects.^{[136][137]}

The first was written by science-fiction author Brian Daley and directed by John Madden. It was broadcast on National Public Radio in 1981, adapting the original 1977 film into 13-episodes.^{[138][136][137]} Mark Hamill and Anthony Daniels reprised their film roles.^{[138][136]}

The overwhelming success, led to a 10-episode adaptation of *The Empire Strikes Back* debuted in 1983.^[139] Billy Dee Williams joined the other two stars, reprising his role as Lando Calrissian.^[140]

In 1983, Buena Vista Records released an original, 30-minute *Star Wars* audio drama titled *Rebel Mission to Ord Mantell*, written by Daley.^{[137][141]} In the 1990s, Time Warner Audio Publishing adapted several *Star Wars* series from Dark Horse Comics into audio dramas: the three-part *Dark Empire* saga, *Tales of the Jedi*, *Dark Lords of the Sith*, the *Dark Forces* trilogy, and *Crimson Empire* (1998).^[141] *Return of the Jedi* was adapted into 6-episodes in 1996, featuring Daniels.^{[136][141]}

Video games

The *Star Wars* franchise has spawned over one hundred^[142] computer, video, and board games, dating back to some of the earliest home consoles. Some are based directly on the movie material, while others rely heavily on the non-canonical Expanded Universe (rebranded as *Star Wars Legends* and removed from the canon in 2014). *Star Wars* games have gone through three significant development eras, marked by a change in leadership among the developers: the early licensed games, those developed after the creation of LucasArts, and those created after the closure of the Lucasfilm division by Disney and the transfer of the license to Electronic Arts.

Early licensed games (1979–1993)

The first era began with the first officially licensed electronic *Star Wars* game: Kenner's 1979 table-top *Star Wars Electronic Battle Command*.^{[143][144]} In 1982, Parker Brothers published the first *Star Wars* video game for the Atari 2600, *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*.^[145] It was followed in 1983 by Atari's rail shooter arcade game *Star Wars*, which used vector graphics to replicate the Death Star trench run scene from the 1977 film.^[146] The next game, *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1984), used more traditional raster graphics,^[147] while the following *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1985) returned to vector graphics.^[148] *Star Wars* was released for the Nintendo Entertainment System in 1991, followed by a sequel the following year. *Super Star Wars* was also released in 1992, followed by two sequels over the next two years.

LucasArts and modern self-published games (1993–2014)

The beginning of the second era is marked by the prominence of LucasArts and modern self-published games. LucasArts was founded after *Star Wars* creator George Lucas took interest in the increasing success of the video game market. Wanting to have more creative control over the games and their narratives, Lucas founded his own video-game development company, LucasArts. During this era, improved video game graphics allowed games to tell complex narratives, which allowed for the retelling of the films, and eventually original narratives set in the same continuity as the films, with voice-overs and CGI cutscenes. Lucasfilm had founded its own video game company in 1982, becoming best known

for adventure games and World War II flight combat games. In 1993, LucasArts released *Star Wars: X-Wing*, the first self-published *Star Wars* video game and the first space flight simulator based on the franchise.^[149] It was one of the best-selling video games of 1993 and established its own series of games.^[149] The *Rogue Squadron* series was released between 1998 and 2003, also focusing on space battles set during the films.

Dark Forces (1995), a hybrid adventure game incorporating puzzles and strategy,^[150] was the first *Star Wars* first-person shooter.^[151] It featured gameplay and graphical features not then common in other games, made possible by LucasArts' custom-designed game engine, the Jedi.^{[151][150][152][153]} The game was well received,^{[154][155][156]} and it was followed by four sequels.^{[157][158]} The series introduced Kyle Katarn, who would appear in multiple games, novels, and comics.^[159] Katarn is a former stormtrooper who joins the rebellion and becomes a Jedi,^{[151][160][161]} a plot arc similar to that of Finn in *The Force Awakens*.^[109] A massively multiplayer online role-playing game, *Star Wars Galaxies*, was in operation from 2003 until 2011. After Disney bought Lucasfilm in 2012, the games developed during the first two eras were discarded from the canon in 2014 and reassigned to the non-canonical *Star Wars Legends* label. LucasArts ceased its role as a developer in 2013, although it still operates as a licensor.^[162]

***EA Star Wars* (2014–present)**

After its acquisition by Disney, LucasArts ceased being a developer and video game rights were reassigned to Electronic Arts, marking the start of the third era. Games made during this era are considered canonical, and feature more influence from the *Star Wars* filmmakers. Disney partnered with Lenovo to create the augmented reality video game *Jedi Challenges*, released in November 2017.^{[163][164]} In August 2018, it was announced that Zynga would publish free-to-play *Star Wars* mobile games.^[165] The *Battlefront* games received a canonical reboot in 2017. *Jedi: Fallen Order* was released in November 2019.

Theme park attractions

In addition to the Disneyland ride Star Tours (1987) and its successor, Star Tours — The Adventures Continue (2011), many live attractions have been held at Disney parks, including the travelling exhibition Where Science Meets Imagination, the Space Mountain spin-off Hyperspace Mountain, a walkthrough Launch Bay, and the night-time *A Galactic Spectacular*. An immersive themed area called Galaxy's Edge (2019) opened at Disneyland and opened at Walt Disney World in mid-2019.^[166] A themed hotel, *Star Wars: Galactic Starcruiser*, is currently under construction at Walt Disney World.^[167]

Title	Park(s)	Opening date	Closing date	Status		
<u>Star Tours</u>	<u>Disneyland</u>	January 9, 1987	July 27, 2010	Closed		
	<u>Tokyo Disneyland</u>	July 12, 1989	April 2, 2012			
	<u>Disney's Hollywood Studios</u>	December 15, 1989	September 7, 2010			
	<u>Disneyland Paris</u>	April 12, 1992	March 16, 2016			
<u>Star Wars Weekends</u>	Disney's Hollywood Studios	1997	2015			
<u>Star Wars: Where Science Meets Imagination</u>	<u>Multiple locations</u>	October 19, 2005	March 23, 2014			
<u>Jedi Training Academy</u>	Disneyland	July 1, 2006	November 15, 2015	Operating		
	Disney's Hollywood Studios	October 9, 2007	October 5, 2015			
<u>Star Tours: The Adventures Continue</u>	Disney's Hollywood Studios	May 20, 2011	N/A			
	Disneyland	June 3, 2011				
	Tokyo Disneyland	May 7, 2013				
	Disneyland Paris	March 26, 2017				
<u>Star Wars: Hyperspace Mountain</u>	Disneyland	November 14, 2015	May 31, 2017	Closed		
	<u>Hong Kong Disneyland</u>	June 11, 2016	N/A	Operating		
	Disneyland Paris	May 7, 2017				
<u>Star Wars Launch Bay</u>	Disneyland	November 16, 2015				
	Disney's Hollywood Studios	December 4, 2015				
	<u>Shanghai Disneyland Park</u>	June 16, 2016				
<u>Jedi Training: Trials of the Temple</u>	Disney's Hollywood Studios	December 1, 2015				
	Disneyland	December 8, 2015				
	Disneyland Paris	July 11, 2015				
	Hong Kong Disneyland	June 25, 2016				
<u>Star Wars: A Galactic Spectacular</u>	Disney's Hollywood Studios	June 17, 2016				
<u>Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge</u>	Disneyland	May 31, 2019				
	Disney's Hollywood Studios	August 29, 2019				
<u>Star Wars: Millennium Falcon - Smugglers Run</u>	Disneyland	May 31, 2019				
	Disney's Hollywood Studios	August 29, 2019				
<u>Star Wars: Rise of the Resistance</u>	Disney's Hollywood Studios	December 5, 2019				

Multimedia projects

A multimedia project involves works released across multiple types of media. *Shadows of the Empire* (1996) was a multimedia project set between *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* that included a novel by Steve Perry, a comic book series, a video game, and action figures.^{[98][99]} *The Force Unleashed* (2008—2010) was a similar project set between *Revenge of the Sith* and *A New Hope* that included a novel, a 2008 video game and its 2010 sequel, a graphic novel, a role-playing game supplement, and toys.^{[168][169]}

Merchandising

The success of the *Star Wars* films led the franchise to become one of the most merchandised franchises in the world. While filming the original 1977 film, George Lucas decided to take a \$500,000 pay cut to his salary as director in exchange for full ownership of the franchise's merchandising rights. By 1987, the first three films have made US\$2.6 billion in merchandising revenue.^[170]By 2012, the first six films produced approximately US\$20 billion in merchandising revenue.^[171]

Kenner made the first *Star Wars* action figures to coincide with the release of the film, and today the original figures are highly valuable. Since the 1990s, Hasbro holds the rights to create action figures based on the saga. Pez dispensers began to be produced in 1997.^[172] *Star Wars* was the first intellectual property to be licensed in Lego history.^[173] Lego has produced animated parody short films and mini-series to promote their *Star Wars* sets.^[174] The Lego *Star Wars* video games are critically acclaimed bestsellers.^{[175][176]}

In 1977, the board game *Star Wars: Escape from the Death Star* was released,^[177] not to be confused with the board game with the same name published in 1990.^[178] A *Star Wars Monopoly* and themed versions of *Trivial Pursuit* and *Battleship* were released in 1997, with updated versions released in subsequent years. The board game *Risk* has been adapted in two editions by Hasbro: *The Clone Wars Edition* (2005)^[179]

and the *Original Trilogy Edition* (2006).^[180] Three *Star Wars* tabletop role-playing games have been developed: a version by West End Games in the 1980s and 1990s, one by Wizards of the Coast in the 2000s, and one by Fantasy Flight Games in the 2010s.

Star Wars trading cards have been published since the first "blue" series, by Topps, in 1977.^[181] Dozens of series have been produced, with Topps being the licensed creator in the United States. Some of the card series are of film stills, while others are original art. Many of the cards have become highly collectible with some very rare "promos", such as the 1993 Galaxy Series II "floating Yoda" P3 card often commanding US\$1,000 or more. While most "base" or "common card" sets are plentiful, many "insert" or "chase cards" are very rare.^[182] From 1995 until 2001, Decipher, Inc. had the license for, created and produced a collectible card game based on the franchise.

Themes

Star Wars features elements such as knighthood, chivalry, and Jungian archetypes such as 'the shadow'.^[183] There are also many references to Christianity, such as in the appearance of Darth Maul, whose design draws heavily from traditional depictions of the devil.^[184] Anakin was conceived of a virgin birth, and is assumed to be the "Chosen One", a messianic individual. However, unlike Jesus, Anakin falls from grace, remaining evil as Darth Vader until *Return of the Jedi*. According to Adam Driver, sequel trilogy villain Kylo Ren, who idolizes Vader, believes he is "doing what he thinks is right".^[185] George Lucas has said that the theme of the saga is redemption.^[186]

The saga draws heavily from the hero's journey, an archetypal template developed by comparative mythologist Joseph Campbell.^[184] Each character—primarily Anakin, Luke, and Rey—follows the steps of the cycle or undergoes its reversal, becoming the villain.^[187] A defining step of the journey is "Atonement with the Father".^[188] Obi-Wan's loss of a father figure could have impacted his relationship with Anakin,^[189] whom both Obi-Wan and Palpatine are fatherlike mentors to.^[190] Luke's discovery that Vader is his father has strong repercussions on the saga and is regarded as one of the most influential plot twists in cinema.^[191] Supreme Leader Snoke encourages Kylo Ren to kill his father, Han Solo.^[185] Kylo uses the fact that Rey is an orphan to tempt her into joining the dark side.^[192] According to *Inverse*, the final scene in *The Last Jedi*, which depicts servant children playing with a toy of Luke and one boy using the Force, symbolizes that "the Force can be found in people with humble beginnings."^[193]

Historical influences

Political science has been an important element of *Star Wars* since the franchise launched in 1977, focusing on a struggle between democracy and dictatorship. Darth Vader's design, initially inspired by Samurai armor, also incorporated a German military helmet.^{[194][195]} Originally, Lucas conceived of the Sith as a group that served the Emperor in the same way that the *Schutzstaffel* served Adolf Hitler; this was condensed into one character in the form of Darth Vader.^[196] Stormtroopers borrow the name of Nazi "shock" troopers. Imperial officers wear uniforms resembling those of German forces during World War II,^[197] and political and security officers resemble the black-clad SS down to the stylized silver death's head on their caps. World War II terms were used for names in the films; e.g. the planets Kessel (a term that refers to a group of encircled forces) and Hoth (after a German general who served on the snow-laden Eastern Front).^[198] Shots of the commanders looking through AT-AT walker viewscreens in *The Empire Strikes Back* resemble tank interiors,^[199] and space battles in the original film were based on World War I and World War II dogfights.^[200]

Palpatine being a chancellor before becoming the Emperor in the prequel trilogy alludes to Hitler's role before appointing himself *Führer*.^[197] Lucas has also drawn parallels to historical dictators such as Julius Caesar, Napoleon Bonaparte, and politicians like Richard Nixon.^{[201][202][d]} The Great Jedi Purge mirrors the events of the Night of the Long Knives.^[204] The corruption of the Galactic Republic is modeled after the fall of the democratic Roman Republic and the formation of an empire.^{[205][206]}

On the inspiration for the First Order formed "from the ashes of the Empire", *The Force Awakens* director J. J. Abrams spoke of conversations the writers had about how the Nazis could have escaped to Argentina after WWII and "started working together again."^[18]

Cultural impact

The *Star Wars* saga has had a significant impact on popular culture,^[207] with references to its fictional universe deeply embedded in everyday life.^[208] Phrases like "evil empire" and "May the Force be with you" have become part of the popular lexicon.^[209] The first *Star Wars* film in 1977 was a cultural unifier,^[210] enjoyed by a wide spectrum of people.^[211] The film can be said to have helped launch the science-fiction boom of the late 1970s and early 1980s, making science-fiction films a mainstream genre.^[212] The widespread impact made it a prime target for parody works and homages, with popular examples including *Hardware Wars*, *Spaceballs*, *The Family Guy Trilogy* and *Robot Chicken: Star Wars*.

In 1989, the Library of Congress selected the original *Star Wars* film for preservation in the U.S. National Film Registry, as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant."^[213] *The Empire Strikes Back*, was selected in 2010.^{[214][215]} 35mm reels of the 1997 Special Editions were the versions initially presented for preservation because of the difficulty of transferring from the original prints,^{[216][217]} but it was later revealed that the Library possesses a copyright deposit print of the original theatrical releases.^[218]

Industry

The original *Star Wars* film was a huge success for 20th Century Fox, and was credited for reinvigorating the company. Within three weeks of the film's release, the studio's stock price doubled to a record high. Prior to 1977, 20th Century Fox's greatest annual profits were \$37 million, while in 1977, the company broke that record by posting a profit of \$79 million.^[200] The franchise helped Fox to change from an almost



George Lucas made much of his fortune by retaining his rights to the franchise's merchandising.

bankrupt production company to a thriving media conglomerate.^[219]

Star Wars fundamentally changed the aesthetics and narratives of Hollywood films, switching the focus of Hollywood-made films from deep, meaningful stories based on dramatic conflict, themes and irony to sprawling special-effects-laden blockbusters, as well as changing the Hollywood film industry in fundamental ways. Before *Star Wars*, special effects in films had not appreciably advanced since the 1950s.^[220] The commercial success of *Star Wars* created a boom in state-of-the-art special effects in the late 1970s.^[219] Along with *Jaws*, *Star Wars* started the tradition of the summer blockbuster film in the entertainment industry, where films open on many screens at the same time and profitable franchises are important.^{[221][211]} It created the model for the major film trilogy and showed that merchandising rights on a film could generate more money than the film itself did.^[210]

The original *Star Wars* trilogy is widely considered one of the best film trilogies in history.^[222] Numerous filmmakers have been influenced by *Star Wars*, including Damon Lindelof, Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, John Lasseter,^[223] David Fincher, Joss Whedon, John Singleton, Kevin Smith,^[224] and later *Star Wars* directors J. J. Abrams and Gareth Edwards.^[225] Christopher Nolan cited *Star Wars* as an influence when making the 2010 blockbuster film *Inception*.^[226] Lucas's concept of a "used universe" particularly influenced Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (1982) and *Alien* (1979), James Cameron's *Aliens* (1986) as well as *The Terminator* (1984), George Miller's *Mad Max 2*, and Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy.^[224]

Regarding the return and expansion of the franchise, Lawrence Kasdan noted that the spin-offs were expanding the franchise into more of a shared universe beyond the previously linear saga, adding that one of the strengths of the franchise was how it all fell under the same continuity in comparison to other franchises. Kasdan also contrasted *Star Wars* to the Marvel Cinematic Universe, noting that *Star Wars* features less comedy than the latter, and adding that he felt a more comedic approach would "not be *Star Wars*" to him.^{[227][228]}

Film critic Roger Ebert wrote in his book *The Great Movies*, "Like *The Birth of a Nation* and *Citizen Kane*, *Star Wars* was a technical watershed that influenced many of the movies that came after." It began a new generation of special effects and high-energy motion pictures. The film was one of the first films to link genres together to invent a new, high-concept genre for filmmakers to build upon.^[224] Finally, along with Steven Spielberg's *Jaws*, it shifted the film industry's focus away from personal filmmaking of the 1970s and towards fast-paced, big-budget blockbusters for younger audiences.^{[200][229][230]}

Some critics have blamed *Star Wars* and *Jaws* for "ruining" Hollywood by shifting its focus from "sophisticated" films such as *The Godfather*, *Taxi Driver*, and *Annie Hall* to films about spectacle and juvenile fantasy, and for the industry shift from stand-alone, one and done films, towards blockbuster franchises with multiple sequels and prequels.^[231] One such critic, Peter Biskind, complained, "When all was said and done, Lucas and Spielberg returned the 1970s audience, grown sophisticated on a diet of European and New Hollywood films, to the simplicities of the pre-1960s Golden Age of movies... They marched backward through the looking-glass."^{[231][232]} In an opposing view, Tom Shone wrote that through *Star Wars* and *Jaws*, Lucas and Spielberg "didn't betray cinema at all: they plugged it back into the grid, returning the medium to its roots as a carnival sideshow, a magic act, one big special effect", which was "a kind of rebirth".^[230]

Fan works

The *Star Wars* saga has inspired many fans to create their own non-canon material set in the *Star Wars* galaxy. In recent years, this has ranged from writing fan fiction to creating fan films. In 2002, Lucasfilm sponsored the first annual Official *Star Wars* Fan Film Awards, officially recognizing filmmakers and the genre. Because of concerns over potential copyright and trademark issues, however, the contest was initially open only to parodies, mockumentaries, and documentaries. Fan fiction films set in the *Star Wars* universe were originally ineligible, but in 2007, Lucasfilm changed the submission standards to allow in-universe fiction entries.^[233] Lucasfilm has allowed but not endorsed the creation of fan fiction, as long as it does not attempt to make a profit.^[234]

Academia

As the characters and the storyline of the original trilogy are so well known, educators have used the films in the classroom as a learning resource. For example, a project in Western Australia honed elementary school students storytelling skills by role-playing action scenes from the movies and later creating props and audio/visual scenery to enhance their performance.^[235] Others have used the films to encourage second-level students to integrate technology in the science classroom by making prototype lightsabers.^[236] Similarly, psychiatrists in New Zealand and the US have advocated their use in the university classroom to explain different types of psychopathology.^{[237][238]}

See also

- Architecture of *Star Wars*
- Jedi census phenomenon
- Jediism
- List of *Star Wars* creatures
- Physics and *Star Wars*
- Wookieepedia: The Star Wars Wiki
- 501st Legion
- Star Wars Celebration
- Star Wars* Day
- Music of *Star Wars*

- Star Wars documentaries
- The Story of Star Wars
- Technology in Star Wars
- List of space science fiction franchises

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Informational notes

- The film's release was preceded by its novelization in November 1976.
- Lucas started by researching the inspiration behind Alex Raymond's *Flash Gordon* comic, leading him to the works of author Edgar Rice Burroughs—the *John Carter of Mars* series in particular.
- Played by Jake Lloyd as a kid in *Episode I*
- In his early drafts, Lucas used the plot point of a dictator staying in power with the support of the military. In his comment (made in the prequel trilogy era) Lucas attributed this to Nixon's supposed intention to defy the 22nd Amendment,^[203] but the president was actually impeached and never ran for a third term.

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External links

- Official website (http://www.starwars.com/)
- "Star Wars" (http://sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/star_wars_franchise). The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction.

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