

Star Wars (1977 film)

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"A New Hope" and "Star Wars IV" redirect here. For the fourth film released, see [Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace](#). For other uses, see [A New Hope \(disambiguation\)](#). For more uses of Star Wars, see [Star Wars \(disambiguation\)](#).

Star Wars (retroactively titled *Star Wars: Episode IV – A New Hope*) is a 1977 American [epic space-opera](#) film written and directed by [George Lucas](#), produced by [Lucasfilm](#) and distributed by [20th Century Fox](#). It stars [Mark Hamill](#), [Harrison Ford](#), [Carrie Fisher](#), [Peter Cushing](#), [Alec Guinness](#), [David Prowse](#), [James Earl Jones](#), [Anthony Daniels](#), [Kenny Baker](#) and [Peter Mayhew](#). It is the first installment of the [original Star Wars trilogy](#), the first of [the franchise](#) to be produced, and the fourth episode of the "[Skywalker saga](#)".

Lucas had the idea for a science-fiction film in the vein of [Flash Gordon](#) around the time he completed his first film, [THX 1138](#) (1971) and began working on a treatment after the release of [American Graffiti](#) (1973). *Star Wars* takes place "a long time ago", in a [fictional universe](#) inhabited by both humans and various alien species; most of the known galaxy is ruled by the tyrannical [Galactic Empire](#), which is only opposed by the [Rebel Alliance](#), a group of [freedom fighters](#). The narrative of the film focuses on the [hero journey](#) of [Luke Skywalker](#) (Hamill), an [everyman](#) who becomes caught in the galactic conflict between the Empire and the Rebellion after coming into possession of two [droids](#), [R2-D2](#) (Baker) and [C-3PO](#) (Daniels), who are carrying the schematics of the Empire's ultimate weapon, the [Death Star](#). While attempting to deliver the droids to the Rebellion, Luke is joined by wizened [Jedi Master Obi-Wan Kenobi](#) (Guinness), who teaches him about the [metaphysical power](#) known as "[the Force](#)", cynical smuggler [Han Solo](#) (Ford), his [Wookiee](#) companion [Chewbacca](#) (Mayhew), and Rebellion leader [Princess Leia](#) (Fisher). Meanwhile, Imperial officers [Darth Vader](#) (Prowse, voiced by Jones), a [Sith Lord](#), and [Grand Moff Tarkin](#) (Cushing), the commander of the Death Star, seek to retrieve the stolen schematics and locate the Rebellion's secret base.

After a turbulent production, *Star Wars* was released in a limited number of theaters in the United States on May 25, 1977, and quickly became a [blockbuster](#) hit, leading to it being expanded to a much wider release. The film opened to critical acclaim, most notably for its groundbreaking visual effects. It grossed a total of \$775 million (over \$550 million during its initial run), surpassing [Jaws](#) (1975) to become the [highest-grossing film at the time](#) until the release of [E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial](#) (1982). When adjusted for inflation, *Star Wars* is the [second-highest-grossing film in North America](#) (behind [Gone with the Wind](#)) and the [fourth-highest-grossing film in the world](#). It received ten [Oscar](#) nominations (including [Best Picture](#)), winning seven. In 1989, it became one of the first 25 films that was selected by the U.S. [Library of Congress](#) for preservation in the [National Film Registry](#) for being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant".^{[5][6]} At the time, it was the most recent film in the registry and the only one chosen from the 1970s. In 2004, [its soundtrack](#) was added to the U.S. [National Recording Registry](#), and was additionally listed by the [American Film Institute](#) as [the best movie score of all time](#) a year later. Today, it is widely regarded by many in the motion picture industry as [one of the greatest and most important films](#) in [cinema history](#).

The film has been reissued multiple times with Lucas's support—most significantly with its 20th-anniversary theatrical "Special Edition"—incorporating [many changes](#) including modified [computer-generated](#) effects, altered dialogue, re-edited shots, remixed soundtracks and added scenes. The film became a [pop-cultural phenomenon](#) and launched an industry of tie-in products, including [novels](#), [comics](#), [video games](#), [amusement park attractions](#), and [merchandise](#) including toys, games, clothing and many other spin-off works. The film's success led to two critically and commercially successful sequels, [The Empire Strikes Back](#) (1980) and [Return of the Jedi](#) (1983), and later to both a [prequel](#) and [sequel trilogy](#), two [anthology films](#), and various [spin-off TV series](#).



Theatrical release poster by [Tom Jung](#)

Directed by	George Lucas
Written by	George Lucas
Produced by	Gary Kurtz
Starring	Mark Hamill Harrison Ford Carrie Fisher Peter Cushing Alec Guinness
Cinematography	Gilbert Taylor
Edited by	Paul Hirsch Marcia Lucas Richard Chew
Music by	John Williams
Production company	Lucasfilm Ltd.
Distributed by	20th Century Fox
Release date	May 25, 1977 (United States)
Running time	121 minutes ^[1]
Country	United States ^[2]
Language	English
Budget	\$11 million ^{[3][4]}
Box office	\$775.8 million ^[5]