

# The Lord of the Rings Reading Guide

## Skip the Damned Prologue

I'm not kidding. If this is your first or fiftieth read, skip it.

It belongs in the appendices. Tonally it doesn't match the text and it provides you no useful knowledge for starting out. Skip straight to chapter 1 and know that all you've missed is the lore of pipeweed and a joke about golf. If you care enough to read the appendices after you're done, loop back and read it then.

This is my number one tip for new LotR readers.

## Structure

Lord of the Rings is six books in three volumes and those book are structured very decisively.

Volume	Book	Summary
The Fellowship of the Ring	1	The four hobbits journey from the Shire to Rivendell
The Fellowship of the Ring	2	The Fellowship journeys from Rivendell to Amon Hen
The Two Towers	3	Aragorn, Gimli, Legolas, Merry, and Pippin in Rohan
The Two Towers	4	Parallel to book 3, Sam and Frodo head for Mordor
The Return of the King	5	Aragorn, Gimli, Legolas, Merry, Pippin, etc etc head to war in Gondor
The Return of the King	6	Parallel to book 5, Sam and Frodo continue their journey

## Audiobooks

I strongly recommend the versions read by Andy Serkis, who played Gollum in the Peter Jackson movies, over the other version.