

= Iron Man ( 2008 film ) =

Iron Man is a 2008 American superhero film featuring the Marvel Comics character of the same name , produced by Marvel Studios and distributed by Paramount Pictures.<sup>1</sup> It is the first film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe . The film was directed by Jon Favreau , with a screenplay by Mark Fergus & Hawk Ostby and Art Marcum & Matt Holloway . It stars Robert Downey Jr . , Terrence Howard , Jeff Bridges , Shaun Toub and Gwyneth Paltrow . In Iron Man , Tony Stark , an industrialist and master engineer , builds a powered exoskeleton and becomes the technologically advanced superhero Iron Man .

The film had been in development since 1990 at Universal Pictures , 20th Century Fox , or New Line Cinema at various times , before Marvel Studios reacquired the rights in 2006 . Marvel put the project in production as its first self @-@ financed film , with Paramount Pictures as its distributor . Favreau signed on as director , aiming for a naturalistic feel , and he chose to shoot the film primarily in California , rejecting the East Coast setting of the comics to differentiate the film from numerous superhero films set in New York City @-@ esque environments . During filming , the actors were free to create their own dialogue because pre @-@ production was focused on the story and action . Rubber and metal versions of the armors , created by Stan Winston 's company , were mixed with computer @-@ generated imagery to create the title character .

Iron Man premiered in Sydney on April 14 , 2008 , and was released in theaters on May 2 , 2008 . The film was a critical and commercial success , grossing over \$ 585 million and garnering widespread critical acclaim , with Downey 's performance as Tony Stark particularly praised . The American Film Institute selected the film as one of the ten best of the year , it was also nominated for two Academy Awards for the Best Sound Editing and the Best Visual Effects . A sequel , Iron Man 2 , was released on May 7 , 2010 , and another sequel , Iron Man 3 , was released on May 3 , 2013 .

= = Plot = =

Genius , billionaire , and playboy Tony Stark , who has inherited the defense contractor Stark Industries from his father , is in war @-@ torn Afghanistan with his friend and military liaison , Lieutenant Colonel James Rhodes to demonstrate the new " Jericho " missile . The convoy is ambushed and Stark is critically wounded by one of his own rocket @-@ propelled grenades . He is captured and imprisoned in a cave by a terrorist group , the Ten Rings , and an electromagnet is grafted into his chest by fellow captive Yinsen to keep the shrapnel shards that wounded him from reaching his heart and killing him . Ten Rings leader Raza offers Stark freedom in exchange for building a Jericho missile for the group , but Tony and Yinsen agree Raza will not keep his word .

Stark and Yinsen quietly build a powerful electric generator called an arc reactor to power Stark 's electromagnet and a suit of powered armor to aid in their escape . Although they keep the suit hidden almost to completion , the Ten Rings attack the workshop when they discover their hostages ' intentions . Yinsen sacrifices himself to divert them while the suit powers up . The armored Stark battles his way out of the cave to find the dying Yinsen , then in anger burns the Ten Rings weapons and flies away , crashing in the desert and destroying the suit . After being rescued by Rhodes , Stark returns home and announces that his company will no longer manufacture weapons . Obadiah Stane , his father 's old partner and the company 's manager , advises Stark that this may ruin Stark Industries and his father 's legacy . In his home workshop , Stark builds a sleeker , more powerful version of his improvised armor suit , as well as a more powerful arc reactor for his chest . Personal assistant Pepper Potts places the original reactor inside a small glass showcase . Though Stane requests details , Stark keeps his work to himself .

At a charity event held by Stark Industries , reporter Christine Everhart informs Stark that his company 's weapons , including the Jericho , were recently delivered to the Ten Rings and are being used to attack Yinsen 's home village , Gulmira . Stark also learns Stane is trying to replace him as head of the company . Enraged by these revelations , Stark dons his new armor and flies to Afghanistan , where he saves Yinsen 's village . While flying home , Stark is shot at by two F @-@

22 Raptor fighter jets . He reveals his secret identity to Rhodes over the phone in an attempt to end the attack . Meanwhile , the Ten Rings gather the pieces of Stark 's prototype suit and meet with Stane , who subdues Raza and has the rest of the group killed . Stane has a massive new suit reverse engineered from the wreckage . Seeking to find any other weapons delivered to the Ten Rings , Stark sends Pepper to hack into the company computer system from Stane 's office . She discovers Stane has been supplying the terrorists and hired the Ten Rings to kill Stark , but the group reneged . Potts meets with Agent Phil Coulson of S.H.I.E.L.D. , a counter @-@ terrorism agency , to inform him of Stane 's activities .

Stane 's scientists cannot duplicate Stark 's arc reactor , so Stane ambushes Stark at his home and takes the one from his chest . Stark manages to get to his original reactor to replace the taken one . Potts and several S.H.I.E.L.D. agents attempt to arrest Stane , but he dons his suit and attacks them . Stark fights Stane , but is outmatched without his new reactor to run his suit at full capacity . The fight carries Stark and Stane to the top of the Stark Industries building , and Stark instructs Potts to overload the large arc reactor powering the building . This unleashes a massive electrical surge that causes Stane and his armor to fall into the exploding reactor , killing him . The next day , at a press conference , Stark defies suggestions from S.H.I.E.L.D. and publicly admits to being the superhero the press has dubbed " Iron Man " .

In a post @-@ credits scene , S.H.I.E.L.D. Director Nick Fury visits Stark at home , telling him that Iron Man is not " the only superhero in the world " , and explaining that he wants to discuss the " Avenger Initiative " .

= = Cast = =

Robert Downey Jr. as Tony Stark / Iron Man :

An industrialist , genius inventor , and consummate playboy , he is CEO of Stark Industries and a chief weapons manufacturer for the U.S. military . Favreau had planned to cast a newcomer in the role , but ultimately chose Downey , a fan of the comic , because he felt the actor 's past made him an appropriate choice for the part , explaining " The best and worst moments of Robert 's life have been in the public eye . He had to find an inner balance to overcome obstacles that went far beyond his career . That 's Tony Stark . Robert brings a depth that goes beyond a comic book character who is having trouble in high school , or can 't get the girl . " Favreau felt Downey could make Stark a " likable asshole , " but also depict an authentic emotional journey once he won over the audience . Downey had an office next to Favreau during pre @-@ production , which allowed him greater involvement in the screenwriting process . He brought a deeper sense of humor to the film not present in previous drafts of the script . Downey explained , " What I usually hate about these [ superhero ] movies [ is ] when suddenly the guy that you were digging turns into Dudley Do @-@ Right , and then you 're supposed to buy into all his ' Let 's go do some good ! ' That Eliot Ness @-@ in @-@ a @-@ cape @-@ type thing . What was really important to me was to not have him change so much that he 's unrecognizable . When someone used to be a schmuck and they 're not anymore , hopefully they still have a sense of humor . " To prepare , Downey spent five days a week weight training and practiced martial arts to get into shape , which he said benefited him because " it 's hard not to have a personality meltdown [ ... ] after about several hours in that suit . I 'm calling up every therapeutic moment I can think of to just get through the day . "

Terrence Howard as Lt. Colonel James " Rhodey " Rhodes :

A friend of Stark 's , and the liaison between Stark Industries and the United States Air Force in the department of acquisitions , specifically weapons development . Favreau cast Howard because he felt he could play War Machine in a sequel . Howard prepared for the role by visiting Nellis Air Force Base on March 16 , 2007 , where he ate with the pilots and observed HH @-@ 60 Pave Hawk rescue helicopters and F @-@ 22 Raptors . While Rhodes is roguish in the comics after he met Stark , his earlier disciplinarian character forms a dynamic with Stark , and he is unsure whether or not Stark 's actions are acceptable . " Rhodey is completely disgusted with the way Tony has lived his life , but at a certain point he realizes that perhaps there is a different way , " Howard said . " Whose life is the right way ; is it the strict military life , or the life of an independent ? " Howard and

his father are Iron Man fans , partly because Rhodes was one of the few black superheroes when he was a child . He was a Downey fan since he saw him in *Weird Science* , and the two competed physically on set .

Jeff Bridges as Obadiah Stane :

Stark 's business second @-@ in @-@ command , mentor and friend who turns on him to overtake the company , eventually building a giant exosuit to fight Stark . Bridges read the comics as a boy and liked Favreau 's modern , realistic approach . He shaved his head , something he had wanted to do for some time , and grew a beard for the role . Bridges googled the Book of Obadiah , and was surprised to learn retribution is a major theme in that particular book of the Bible , something which Stane represents . Many of Stane 's scenes were cut to focus more on Stark , but the writers felt Bridges 's performance allowed the application of " less is more " .

Shaun Toub as Yinsen :

Stark 's fellow captive , who grafts an electromagnet to Stark 's chest " to keep the shrapnel shell shards that wounded him from reaching his heart and killing him " , and who helps Stark build the first Iron Man suit .

Gwyneth Paltrow as Pepper Potts :

Stark 's personal assistant and budding love interest . Paltrow asked Marvel to send her any comics they would consider relevant to her understanding of the character , who she considered to be very smart , levelheaded , and grounded . She said she liked " the fact that there 's a sexuality that 's not blatant . " Favreau wanted Potts ' and Stark 's relationship to be reminiscent of a 1940s comedy , something which Paltrow considered to be fun in a sexy , yet innocent way .

Additionally , Faran Tahir appears as Raza , the leader of the Ten Rings ; Paul Bettany voices J.A.R.V.I.S. , Stark 's personal AI system ; Leslie Bibb portrays Christine Everhart , a reporter for *Vanity Fair* ; and Clark Gregg appears as Phil Coulson , an agent of S.H.I.E.L.D . Will Lyman provides the voiceover during the opening award ceremony . Samuel L. Jackson cameos as Nick Fury , director of S.H.I.E.L.D. , in a post @-@ credits scene . Jackson 's face was previously used as the model for the Ultimate Marvel imprint version of Nick Fury . Other cameos in the film include : Stan Lee as himself , being mistaken for Hugh Hefner by Stark at a party ; director Jon Favreau as Happy Hogan , Stark 's bodyguard and chauffeur ; Tom Morello , who also provides additional guitar music for the film , as a terrorist guard ; and Jim Cramer as himself . Ghostface Killah had a cameo in a scene where Stark briefly stays in Dubai , but the scene was cut from the theatrical release for pacing reasons .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

In April 1990 , Universal Studios bought the rights to develop Iron Man for the big screen , with Stuart Gordon to direct a low @-@ budget film based on the property , but by February 1996 , 20th Century Fox had acquired the rights from Universal . In January 1997 , Nicolas Cage expressed interest in portraying the character , while in September 1998 , Tom Cruise expressed interest in producing as well as starring in an Iron Man film . Jeff Vintar and Iron Man co @-@ creator Stan Lee co @-@ wrote a story for Fox , which Vintar adapted into a screenplay . It included a new science @-@ fiction origin for the character , and featured MODOK as the villain . Tom Rothman , President of Production at Fox , credited the screenplay with finally making him understand the character . In May 1999 , Jeffrey Caine was hired to rewrite Vintar and Lee 's script . That October , Quentin Tarantino was approached to write and direct the film . Fox sold the rights to New Line Cinema the following December , reasoning that although the Vintar / Lee script was strong , the studio had too many Marvel superheroes in development , and " we can 't make them all . "

By July 2000 , the film was being written for New Line by Ted Elliott , Terry Rossio , and Tim McCanlies . McCanlies ' script used the idea of a Nick Fury cameo to set up his own film . In June 2001 , New Line entered talks with Joss Whedon , a fan of the character , to direct , and in

December 2002 , McCanlies had turned in a completed script . In December 2004 , the studio attached director Nick Cassavetes to the project for a target 2006 release . Screenplay drafts were written by Alfred Gough , Miles Millar , and David Hayter , and pitted Iron Man against his father Howard Stark , who becomes War Machine . After two years of unsuccessful development , and the deal with Cassavetes falling through , New Line Cinema returned the film rights to Marvel .

In November 2005 , Marvel Studios worked to start development from scratch , and announced Iron Man as their first independent feature , as the character was their only major one not already depicted in live action . According to associate producer Jeremy Latcham , " we went after about 30 writers and they all passed " , saying they were uninterested in the project due to both the relative obscurity of the character and it being a solely Marvel production . Even the rewrites when the film had a script led to many refusals . In order to gain more awareness for Iron Man to the general public , and put him on the same level of popularity as Spider @-@ Man or Hulk , Marvel conducted focus groups to help remove the general thought that the character was a robot , despite a man being inside the armor . After the groups proved successful , the information Marvel received helped them formulate a plan to " build awareness ahead of the movie 's release " , which included three animated short films called " Iron Man Advertorials " , which were produced by Tim Miller and Blur Studio .

= = = Pre @-@ production = = =

Jon Favreau was hired in April 2006 to direct the film . Favreau had wanted to work with Marvel producer Avi Arad on another film after they both worked on Daredevil . Favreau celebrated getting the job by going on a diet , and lost seventy pounds . The director found the opportunity to create a politically ambitious " ultimate spy movie " in Iron Man , citing inspiration from Tom Clancy , James Bond , and RoboCop . Favreau described his approach as similar to an independent film ? " [ i ] f Robert Altman had directed Superman " ? and also cited Batman Begins as an inspiration . He wanted to make Iron Man a story of an adult man literally reinventing himself after discovering the world is far more complex than he originally believed . Favreau changed the Vietnam War origin of the character to Afghanistan , as he did not want to do a period piece . Art Marcum & Matt Holloway were hired to write the script , while Mark Fergus & Hawk Ostby wrote another version , with Favreau compiling both team 's scripts , and John August then ' polishing ' the combined version . Comic book staff Mark Millar , Brian Michael Bendis , Joe Quesada , Tom Brevoort , Axel Alonso , and Ralph Macchio were also called upon by Favreau to give advice on the script . Favreau , as he prepared to film Iron Man in a complex that once belonged to Hughes Aircraft , got a tour with Robert Downey Jr. of SpaceX from Elon Musk , Downey said " Elon was someone Tony probably hung out with and partied with , or more likely they went on some weird jungle trek together to drink concoctions with the shamans . "

Choosing a villain was difficult , because Favreau felt Iron Man 's archnemesis , the Mandarin , would not feel realistic , especially after Mark Millar gave his opinion on the script . He felt only in a sequel , with an altered tone , would the fantasy of the Mandarin 's rings be appropriate . The decision to push him into the background is comparable to Sauron in The Lord of the Rings , or Palpatine in Star Wars . Favreau also wanted Iron Man to face a giant enemy . The switch from Mandarin to Obadiah Stane was done after Bridges was cast , with Stane originally intended to become a villain in the sequel . The Crimson Dynamo was also a villain in early drafts of the script . Favreau felt it was important to include intentional inside references for fans of the comics , such as giving the two fighter jets that attack Iron Man the call signs of " Whiplash 1 " and " Whiplash 2 , " a reference to the comic book villain Whiplash , and including Captain America 's shield in Stark 's workshop . The post @-@ credits sequence that introduces Samuel L. Jackson as Nick Fury was written by comics writer Brian Michael Bendis .

= = = Filming = = =

Production was based in the former Hughes Company soundstages in Playa Vista , Los Angeles ,

California . Howard Hughes was one of the inspirations for the comic book , and the filmmakers acknowledged the coincidence that they would film Iron Man creating the flying Mark III where the Hughes H @-@ 4 Hercules was built . Favreau rejected the East Coast setting of the comic books because many superhero films had already been set there . Filming began on March 12 , 2007 , with the first few weeks spent on Stark 's captivity in Afghanistan . The cave where Stark is imprisoned was a 150- to 200 @-@ yard ( 150 ? 200 m ) long set , which had movable forks in the caverns to allow greater freedom for the film 's crew . Production designer J. Michael Riva saw footage of a Taliban fighter in Afghanistan , and saw the cold breath as he spoke : realizing remote caves are actually very cold , Riva placed an air conditioning system in the set . He also sought Downey 's advice about makeshift objects in prison , such as a sock being used to make tea . Afterwards , Stark 's capture was filmed at Lone Pine , and other exterior scenes in Afghanistan were filmed at Olancho Sand Dunes , where the crew endured two days of 40 to 60 @-@ mile per hour ( 60 to 100 km / h ) winds . Filming at Edwards Air Force Base began in mid @-@ April , and ended on May 2 . Exterior shots of Stark 's home were digitally added to footage of Point Dume in Malibu , while the interior was built at Playa Vista , where Favreau and Riva aimed to make Stark 's home look less futuristic and more " grease monkey " . Filming concluded on June 25 , 2007 , at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas , Nevada . Favreau , a newcomer to action films , remarked , " I 'm shocked that I [ was ] on schedule . I thought that there were going to be many curveballs " . He hired " people who are good at creating action " , so " the human story [ felt ] like it belongs to the comic book genre " .

There was much improvisation in dialogue scenes , because the script was not completed when filming began ( the filmmakers had focused on the story making sense and planning the action ) . Favreau acknowledged that improvisation would make the film feel more natural . Some scenes were shot with two cameras to capture lines said on the spot . Multiple takes were done , as Downey wanted to try something new each time . It was Downey 's idea to have Stark hold a news conference on the floor , and he created the speech Stark makes when demonstrating the Jericho weapon . Brian Michael Bendis wrote three pages of dialogue for the Nick Fury cameo scene , with the filmmakers choosing the best lines for filming . The cameo was filmed with a skeleton crew in order to keep it a secret , but rumors appeared on the Internet only days later . Marvel Studios 's Kevin Feige subsequently had the scene removed from all preview prints in order to maintain the surprise and keep fans guessing .

== = Post @-@ production == =

Favreau wanted the film to be believable by showing the construction of the suit in its three stages . Stan Winston , a fan of the comic book , and his company built metal and rubber versions of the armors . They had previously worked on Favreau 's Zathura . Favreau 's main concern with the effects was whether the transition between the computer @-@ generated and practical costumes would be too obvious . Industrial Light & Magic ( ILM ) was hired to create the bulk of the visual effects , with additional work being completed by The Orphanage and The Embassy ; Favreau trusted ILM after seeing Pirates of the Caribbean : At World 's End and Transformers . The Mark I design was intended to look like it was built from spare parts . The back is less armored than the front , because Stark would use his resources for a forward attack . It also foreshadows the design of Stane 's armor . A single 90 @-@ pound ( 41 kg ) version was built , causing concern when a stuntman fell over inside it , though both the stuntman and the suit were unscathed . The armor was also designed to only have its top half worn at times . The Embassy created a digital version of the Mark I. Stan Winston Studios built a 10 @-@ foot ( 3 @-@ 0 m ) , 800 @-@ pound ( 360 kg ) animatronic version of " Iron Monger " ( Obadiah Stane ) , a name which Obadiah Stane calls Tony Stark and himself earlier in the film as a reference , but is never actually used for the suit itself in the film . The animatronic required five operators for the arm , and was built on a gimbal to simulate walking . A scale model was used for the shots of it being built .

The Mark II resembles an airplane prototype , with visible flaps . Iron Man comic book artist Adi Granov designed the Mark III with illustrator Phil Saunders . Granov 's designs were the primary

inspiration for the film 's , and he came on board the film after he recognized his work on Jon Favreau 's MySpace page . Saunders streamlined Granov 's concept art , making it stealthier and less cartoonish in its proportions . Sometimes , Downey would only wear the helmet , sleeves and chest of the costume over a motion capture suit . For shots of the Mark III flying , it was animated to look realistic by taking off slowly , and landing quickly . To generate shots of Iron Man and the F @-@ 22 Raptors battling , cameras were flown in the air to provide reference for physics , wind and frost on the lenses . For further study of the physics of flying , skydivers were filmed in a vertical wind tunnel . Phil Saunders created concept art for the War Machine armor and said that it was originally intended to be used in the film but was " cut from the script about halfway through pre @-@ production . " Saunders said that the War Machine armor " was going to be called the Mark IV armor and would have had weaponized swap @-@ out parts that would be worn over the original Mark III armor , " and that it " would have been worn by Tony Stark in the final battle sequence . "

= = Music = =

Composer Ramin Djawadi , an Iron Man fan who still has issues of the comic from the late 1970s , has also been into heavy metal music since the early 1990s . While he normally composes after watching an assembly cut , Djawadi began work after seeing the teaser trailer . Favreau clearly envisioned a focus on " heavy " guitar in the score , and Djawadi composed the music on that instrument before arranging it for orchestra . The composer said Downey 's performance inspired the several Iron Man themes ( for his different moods ) , as well as Stark 's playboy leitmotif . Djawadi 's favorite of the Iron Man themes is the " kickass " because of its " rhythmic pattern that is a hook on its own . Very much like a machine . " The other themes are " not so much character based but rather plot based that carry you through the movie " . Tom Morello of Rage Against the Machine and Audioslave contributed additional guitar work to the film 's soundtrack .

= = Release = =

The premiere was held at the Greater Union theater at George Street , Sydney , on April 14 , 2008 . The film was released in the United States on May 2 , 2008 , while the international release was pushed up to April 30 , 2008 .

= = = Marketing = = =

Marvel and Paramount modeled their marketing campaign for Iron Man on that of Transformers . In May 2008 , Sega released an official tie @-@ in video game based on the film on multiple gaming platforms . Downey , Howard and Taub reprise their roles from the film . A 30 @-@ second spot for the film aired during a Super Bowl XLII break . 6 @,@ 400 7 @-@ Eleven stores in the United States helped promote the film , and LG Group also made a deal with Paramount . Hasbro created figures of armors from the film , as well as Titanium Man ( who appears in the video game ) and the armor from the World War Hulk comics . Worldwide , Burger King and Audi promoted the film . Jon Favreau was set to direct a commercial for the fast @-@ food chain , as Michael Bay did for Transformers . In the film , Tony Stark drives an Audi R8 , and also has an " American cheeseburger " from Burger King after his rescue from Afghanistan , as part of the studio 's product placement deal with the respective companies . Three other vehicles , the Audi S6 sedan , Audi S5 sports coupe and the Audi Q7 SUV , also appear in the film . Audi created a tie @-@ in website , as General Motors did for Transformers . Oracle Corporation also promoted the film on its site . Several tie @-@ in comics were released for the film .

= = = Home media = = =

The film was released on DVD and Blu @-@ ray Disc on September 30 , 2008 , in North America , and October 27 , 2008 in Europe . DVD sales were very successful , selling over 4 million copies the

first week and generating a gross of over US \$ 93 million . There were a total of 9 million copies sold and an accumulated total sales of over \$ 160 million ( not including Blu-ray ) . For the home releases of the film , the image on the newspaper Stark reads before he announces he is Iron Man had to be altered because of amateur photographer Ronnie Adams filing a lawsuit against Paramount and Marvel for using his on-location spy photo in the scene . A Wal-Mart exclusive release included a preview of Iron Man : Armored Adventures .

The film was also collected in a 10-disc box set titled " Marvel Cinematic Universe : Phase One ? Avengers Assembled " which includes all of the Phase One films in the Marvel Cinematic Universe . It was released on April 2 , 2013 .

== Reception ==

== Box office ==

Iron Man earned \$ 318 million in North America and \$ 266 million in other territories , for a worldwide gross of \$ 585 million .

=== North America ===

In its opening weekend , Iron Man grossed \$ 98 million in 4,105 theaters in the United States and Canada , ranking No. 1 at the box office , giving it the eleventh biggest opening weekend at the time , ninth widest release in terms of theaters , and the third highest grossing opening weekend of 2008 behind Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull and The Dark Knight . It grossed \$ 35 million on its first day , giving it the thirteenth biggest opening day at the time . Iron Man had the second best premiere for a non-sequel , behind Spider-Man , and the fourth biggest opening for a superhero film . Iron Man was also the No. 1 film in the U.S. and Canada in its second weekend , grossing \$ 51 million , giving it the twelfth best second weekend and the fifth best for a non-sequel . On June 18 , 2008 , Iron Man became that year 's first film to pass the \$ 300 million mark for the domestic box office .

=== Critical response ===

In May 2008 , Iron Man was identified as the " best reviewed film of the year so far " by Jen Yamato of review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes , with the site reporting that at that time the film had received a rating of 95 % based on 107 reviews , a rating that held its place to January 2010 . The review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes reported a 94 % approval rating with an average rating of 7.7 / 10 based on 266 reviews . The website 's consensus reads , " Director Jon Favreau and star Robert Downey make this smart , high impact superhero movie one that even non-comics fans can enjoy . " On Metacritic , the film achieved an average score of 79 out of 100 , based on 38 critics , signifying " generally favorable reviews " .

Among the major trade journals , Todd McCarthy of Variety called the film an " expansively entertaining special effects extravaganza " with " fresh energy and stylistic polish " , while Kirk Honeycutt of The Hollywood Reporter praised the film , while nonetheless finding " disappointment [ in ] a climatic battle between different Iron Man prototypes [ ... ] how did Tony 's nemesis learn how to use the suit ? " In one of the first major daily newspaper reviews , Frank Lovece of Newsday lauded the film 's " emotional truth [ ... ] pitch perfect casting and plausibly rendered super science " that made it " faithful to the source material while updating it ? and recognizing what 's made that material so enduring isn 't just the high tech cool of a man in a metal suit , but the human condition that got him there " . A. O. Scott of The New York Times called the film " an unusually good superhero picture . Or at least ? since it certainly has its problems ? a superhero movie that 's good in unusual ways . " Among the specialty press , Garth Franklin of Dark Horizons

commended the "impressive sets and mechanics that combine smoothly with relatively seamless CG", and said, "Robert Downey Jr., along with director Jon Favreau [...] help this rise above formula. The result is something that, whilst hardly original or groundbreaking, is nevertheless refreshing in its earnestness to avoid dark dramatic stylings in favor of an easy @-@ going, crowd @-@ pleasing action movie with a sprinkle of anti @-@ war and redemption themes".

Among major metropolitan weeklies, David Edelstein of New York magazine called the film "a shapely piece of mythmaking [...] Favreau doesn't go in for stylized comic @-@ book frames, at least in the first half. He gets real with it? you'd think you were watching a military thriller", while conversely, David Denby of The New Yorker put forth a negative review, claiming "a slightly depressed, going @-@ through @-@ the @-@ motions feel to the entire show [...] Gwyneth Paltrow, widening her eyes and palpitating, can't do much with an antique role as Stark's girl Friday, who loves him but can't say so; Terrence Howard, playing a military man who chases around after Stark, looks dispirited and taken for granted". IGN's Todd Gilchrist recognized Downey as "the best thing" in a film that "functions on autopilot, providing requisite story developments and character details to fill in this default 'origin story' while the actors successfully breathe life into their otherwise conventional roles". Noting the cultural elements of the film, Cristobal Giraldez Catalan of Bright Lights Film Journal wrote, "Iron Man is far more than playboy fantasy; it is American foreign policy realized without context [...] and [...] with narrative and directorial precision, once again provides the high @-@ fidelity misogyny and anti @-@ Muslim rhetoric Hollywood is known for."

== = Accolades == =

Roger Ebert and Richard Corliss named Iron Man as among their favorite films of 2008. It was selected by the American Film Institute as one of the ten best films of the year, and by Empire magazine as one of The 500 Greatest Movies of All Time. Tony Stark was also selected by Empire as one of The 100 Greatest Movie Characters of All Time, and on their list of the 100 Greatest Fictional Characters, Fandomania.com ranked him at number 37.

== Sequels ==

== = Iron Man 2 == =

The sequel, Iron Man 2, was released in the United States on May 7, 2010 with Jon Favreau and Robert Downey Jr. returning as director and lead, respectively, with a screenplay by Justin Theroux. Don Cheadle replaces Terrence Howard in the role of Colonel Rhodes, who is also seen as War Machine. Also starring is Gwyneth Paltrow as Pepper Potts; Mickey Rourke as villain Ivan Vanko; Sam Rockwell as Justin Hammer; Scarlett Johansson as S.H.I.E.L.D. agent Natasha Romanoff; and Samuel L. Jackson as S.H.I.E.L.D. director Nick Fury.

== = Iron Man 3 == =

Disney, Marvel Studios, and Paramount Pictures announced a May 3, 2013 release date for Iron Man 3. Favreau said in December 2010 that he would not direct Iron Man 3, opting to direct Magic Kingdom, but reprised his role as Happy Hogan. Shane Black directed Iron Man 3, from a screenplay by Drew Pearce. Robert Downey Jr. returned as Tony Stark, as did Gwyneth Paltrow as Pepper Potts and Don Cheadle as Colonel Rhodes, who uses the moniker Iron Patriot. Guy Pearce starred as Aldrich Killian and Ben Kingsley as Trevor Slattery.