

Star Trek

This article is about the franchise. For the original television series, see [Star Trek: The Original Series](#). For other uses, see [Star Trek \(disambiguation\)](#).

Star Trek is an American [science fiction media franchise](#) created by [Gene Roddenberry](#), which began with the [eponymous 1960s television series](#) and became a worldwide [pop-culture phenomenon](#). Since its creation, the franchise has expanded into [various films](#), [television series](#), [video games](#), [novels](#), and [comic books](#), and it has become one of the most recognizable and [highest-grossing media franchises of all time](#).^{[1][2][3]}

The franchise began with *[Star Trek: The Original Series](#)*, which debuted in the US on September 8, 1966, and aired for three seasons on [NBC](#). It was first broadcast on September 6, 1966, on Canada's [CTV](#) network.^[4] The series followed the voyages of the crew of the [starship USS Enterprise](#), a space exploration vessel built by the [United Federation of Planets](#) in the 23rd century, on a mission "to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go [where no man has gone before](#)". In creating *Star Trek*, Roddenberry was inspired by [C. S. Forester's Horatio Hornblower](#) series of novels, [Jonathan Swift's](#) 1726 novel *[Gulliver's Travels](#)*, the 1956 film *[Forbidden Planet](#)*, and television [westerns](#) such as *[Wagon Train](#)*.

The *[Star Trek canon](#)* includes the *Original Series*, 11 spin-off television series, and [a film franchise](#); further adaptations also exist in several media. After the conclusion of the *Original Series*, the adventures of its characters continued in the 22-episode *[Star](#)*

Trek: The Animated Series and six feature films. A television revival beginning in the 1980s saw three sequel series and a prequel: *The Next Generation*, following the crew of a new starship *Enterprise* a century after the original series; *Deep Space Nine* and *Voyager*, set in the same era as the *Next Generation*; and *Enterprise*, set before the original series in the early days of human interstellar travel. The adventures of the *Next Generation* crew continued in four additional feature films. In 2009, the film franchise underwent a [reboot](#), creating an alternate continuity known as the *Kelvin* timeline; three films have been set in this continuity. The newest *Star Trek* television revival, beginning in 2017, includes the series *Discovery*, *Picard*, *Short Treks*, *Lower Decks*, *Prodigy*, and *Strange New Worlds*, [streaming](#) on digital platforms.

Star Trek has been a [cult phenomenon](#) for decades.^[5] Fans of the franchise are called "Trekkies" or "Trekkers". The franchise spans a wide range of [spin-offs](#) including [games](#), figurines, [novels](#), toys, and [comics](#). From 1998 to 2008, there was [a *Star Trek*-themed attraction](#) in [Las Vegas](#). At least two museum exhibits of props travel the world. The [constructed language Klingon](#) was created for the franchise. Several *Star Trek* parodies have been made, and viewers have produced several [fan productions](#).

Star Trek is noted for [its cultural influence](#) beyond works of science fiction.^[6] The franchise is also notable for its progressive civil-rights stances.^[7] *The Original Series* included one of the first multiracial casts on US television.

Conception and setting

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Emblem.svg>

The Starfleet emblem as seen in the franchise

As early as 1964, [Gene Roddenberry](#) drafted a proposal for the science fiction series that would become *Star Trek*. Although he

publicly marketed it as a [Western in outer space](#)—a so-called "[Wagon Train](#) to the stars"—he privately told friends that he was modeling it on [Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*](#), intending each episode to act on two levels: as a suspenseful adventure story and as a morality tale.^{[8][9][10][11]}

Most *Star Trek* stories depict the adventures of humans and aliens who serve in [Starfleet](#), the space-borne humanitarian and peacekeeping armada of the [United Federation of Planets](#). The protagonists have [altruistic](#) values, and must apply these ideals to difficult dilemmas.

Many of the conflicts and political dimensions of *Star Trek* are [allegories](#) of contemporary cultural realities. *The Original Series* addressed issues of the 1960s, just as later spin-offs have tackled issues of their respective decades.^[12] Issues depicted in the various series include war and peace, the value of personal loyalty, [authoritarianism](#), [imperialism](#), class warfare, economics, racism, religion, human rights, [sexism](#), feminism, and the role of technology.^{[13]:57} Roddenberry stated: "[By creating] a new world with new rules, I could make statements about sex, religion, [Vietnam](#), politics, and intercontinental missiles. Indeed, we did make them on *Star Trek*: we were sending messages and fortunately they all got by the network.^{[13]:79} If you talked about purple people on a far off planet, they (the television network) never really caught on. They were more concerned about cleavage. They actually would send a censor down to the set to measure a woman's cleavage to make sure too much of her breast wasn't showing."^[14]

Roddenberry intended the show to have a progressive political agenda reflective of the emerging counter-culture of the youth movement, though he was not fully forthcoming to the networks about this. He wanted *Star Trek* to show what humanity might

develop into, if it would learn from the lessons of the past, most specifically by ending violence. An extreme example is the alien species known as the [Vulcans](#), who had a violent past but learned to control their emotions. Roddenberry also gave *Star Trek* an anti-war message and depicted the United Federation of Planets as an ideal, optimistic version of the United Nations.^[15] His efforts were opposed by the network because of concerns over marketability, e.g., they opposed Roddenberry's insistence that *Enterprise* have a racially diverse crew.^[16]

History and production

Timeline

The *Original Series* era (1965–1969)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Gene_roddenberry_1976.jpg

Star Trek's creator, producer and writer [Gene Roddenberry](#)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Leonard_Nimoy_William_Shatner_Star_Trek_1968.JPG

Commander Spock and Captain James T. Kirk, played by [Leonard Nimoy](#) and [William Shatner](#), pictured here in the original series

In early 1964, Roddenberry presented a brief [treatment](#) for a television series to [Desilu Productions](#), calling it "a *Wagon Train* to the stars".^[17] Desilu studio head [Lucille Ball](#) was instrumental in approving production of the series.^[18] The studio worked with Roddenberry to develop the treatment into a [script](#), which was then pitched to NBC.^[19]

NBC paid to make a pilot, "[The Cage](#)", starring [Jeffrey Hunter](#) as *Enterprise* [Captain Christopher Pike](#). NBC rejected "The Cage", but the executives were still impressed with the concept, and made the unusual decision to commission a second pilot: "[Where No Man Has Gone Before](#)".^[19]

While the show initially enjoyed high ratings, the average rating of the show at the end of its first season dropped to 52nd out of 94

programs. Unhappy with the show's ratings, NBC threatened to cancel the show during its second season.^[20] The show's [fan base](#), led by [Bjo Trimble](#), conducted an unprecedented letter-writing campaign, petitioning the network to keep the show on the air.^{[20][21]} NBC renewed the show, but moved it from primetime to the "[Friday night death slot](#)", and substantially reduced its budget.^[22] In protest, Roddenberry resigned as producer and reduced his direct involvement in *Star Trek*, which led to [Fred Freiberger](#) becoming producer for the show's third and final season.^[b] Despite another letter-writing campaign, NBC canceled the series after three seasons and 79 episodes.^[19]

Post–Original Series rebirth (1969–1991)

After the original series was canceled, Desilu, which by then had been renamed [Paramount Television](#), licensed the [broadcast syndication](#) rights to help recoup the production losses. Reruns began in late 1969, and by the late 1970s the series aired in over 150 domestic and 60 international markets.^[citation needed] This helped *Star Trek* develop a [cult following](#) among [Trekkies](#) greater than during its original run;^[23] by 1976, the cast described *Star Trek* as "the most popular series in the world".^[24]

One sign of the series' growing popularity was the first [Star Trek convention](#), which occurred on January 21–23, 1972 in New York City. Although the original expectation was that a few hundred fans would attend, several thousand turned up. Fans continue to attend similar conventions worldwide.^[25]

The series' newfound success led to the idea of reviving the franchise.^[26] [Filmation](#) with [Paramount Television](#) produced the first post–original series show, *[Star Trek: The Animated Series](#)*, featuring the cast of the original series reprising their roles. It ran on NBC for 22 half-hour episodes over two seasons on Saturday mornings from 1973 to 1974.^{[27]:208} Although short-lived, typical for

animated productions in that time slot during that period, the series garnered the franchise's only [Emmy Award](#) in a "Best Series" category—specifically [Outstanding Entertainment Children's Series](#); later Emmy awards for the franchise would be in technical categories. [Paramount Pictures](#) and Roddenberry began developing a new series, *[Star Trek: Phase II](#)*, in May 1975 in response to the franchise's newfound popularity. Work on the series ended when the proposed [Paramount Television Service](#) folded.^[28]

Following the success of the science fiction movies *[Star Wars](#)* and *[Close Encounters of the Third Kind](#)*, Paramount adapted the planned pilot episode of *Phase II* into the feature film *[Star Trek: The Motion Picture](#)*. The film opened in North America on December 7, 1979, with mixed reviews from critics. The film earned \$139 million worldwide, below expectations but enough for Paramount to create a sequel. The studio forced Roddenberry to relinquish creative control of future sequels.^[29]

The success of the sequel, *[Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan](#)*, reversed the fortunes of the franchise. While the sequel grossed less than the first movie, *The Wrath of Khan*'s lower production costs made it net more profit. Paramount produced six *Star Trek* feature films between 1979 and 1991, each featuring the *Original Series* cast in their original roles.^[30]

In 1987, Paramount responded to the popularity of *Star Trek* feature films by bringing the franchise back to television with *[Star Trek: The Next Generation](#)*. Paramount chose to distribute the new series as a [first-run syndication](#) show rather than a network program.^[10] The series was set a century after the original, following the adventures of a new starship *Enterprise* with a new crew.^[31]

Post-Roddenberry television era (1991–2005)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:QTXP_20121019_Destination_Star_Trek_London_MG_2284.jpg

The actors who played the Captains on the first five *Star Trek* series, together in London at *Destination Star Trek*

Following *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, Roddenberry's role was changed from producer to creative consultant, with minimal input to the films, while being heavily involved with the creation of *The Next Generation*. Roddenberry died on October 24, 1991, giving executive producer [Rick Berman](#) control of the franchise.^{[13]:268[10]:591–}

⁵⁹³ *Star Trek* had become known to those within Paramount as "the franchise", because of its great success and recurring role as a [tent pole](#) for the studio when other projects failed.^[32] *The Next Generation* had the highest ratings of any *Star Trek* series and became the most syndicated show during the last years of its original seven-season run.^[33] In response to the *Next Generation*'s success, Paramount released a spin-off series, *Deep Space Nine*, in 1993. While never as popular as the *Next Generation*, the series had sufficient ratings for it to last seven seasons.

In January 1995, a few months after the *Next Generation* ended, Paramount released a fourth television series, *Voyager*. *Star Trek* production reached a peak in the mid-1990s with *Deep Space Nine* and *Voyager* airing concurrently and three of the four *Next Generation*-based feature films released in 1994, 1996, and 1998. By 1998, *Star Trek* was Paramount's most important property and the profits of "the franchise" funded a significant portion of the studio's operations.^[34] *Voyager* became the flagship show of the new [United Paramount Network](#) (UPN) and thus the first major network *Star Trek* series since the original.^[35]

After *Voyager* ended, UPN produced *Enterprise*, a prequel series. *Enterprise* did not enjoy the high ratings of its

predecessors and UPN threatened to cancel it after the series' third season. Fans launched a campaign reminiscent of the one that saved the third season of the *Original Series*. Paramount renewed *Enterprise* for a fourth season, but moved it to the [Friday night death slot](#).^[36] Like the *Original Series*, *Enterprise*'s ratings dropped during this time slot, and UPN canceled *Enterprise* at the end of its fourth season. *Enterprise* aired its final episode on May 13, 2005.^[37] A fan group, "Save *Enterprise*", attempted to save the series and tried to raise \$30 million to privately finance a fifth season of *Enterprise*.^[38] Though the effort garnered considerable press, the fan drive failed to save the series. The cancellation of *Enterprise* ended an eighteen-year continuous production run of *Star Trek* programming on television. The poor box office performance in 2002 of the film *Nemesis* cast an uncertain light upon the future of the franchise. Paramount relieved Berman, the franchise producer, of control of *Star Trek*.

Reboot (Kelvin timeline) film series (2009–2016)

In 2007, Paramount hired a new creative team to reinvigorate the franchise on the big screen. Writers [Roberto Orci](#) and [Alex Kurtzman](#) and producer [J. J. Abrams](#) had the freedom to reinvent the feel of the franchise. The team created the franchise's eleventh film, *Star Trek*, releasing it in May 2009. The film featured a new cast portraying the crew of the original show. *Star Trek* was a prequel of the original series set in an [alternate timeline](#), later named the *Kelvin* Timeline. This gave the film and sequels freedom from the need to conform to the franchise's canonical timeline and minimized the impact these films would have on CBS's portion of the franchise. The eleventh *Star Trek* film's marketing campaign targeted non-fans, stating in the film's advertisements that "this is not your father's *Star Trek*".^[39]

The film earned considerable critical and financial success, grossing (in inflation-adjusted dollars) more box office sales than any previous *Star Trek* film.^[40] The plaudits include the franchise's first [Academy Award](#) (for [makeup](#)). Two sequels were released. The first sequel, *Star Trek Into Darkness*, premiered in the spring of 2013.^{[c][41]} While the film did not earn as much in the North American box office as its predecessor, internationally, in terms of box office receipts, *Into Darkness* is the most successful of the franchise.^[42] The thirteenth film, *Star Trek Beyond*, was released on July 22, 2016.^[43] The film had many pre-production problems and its script went through several rewrites. While receiving positive reviews, *Star Trek Beyond* disappointed in the box office.^[44]

Expansion of the *Star Trek* Universe (2017–present)

[CBS](#) turned down several proposals in the mid-2000s to restart the franchise on the small screen. Proposals included pitches from film director [Bryan Singer](#), *Babylon 5* creator [J. Michael Straczynski](#), and *Trek* actors Jonathan Frakes and William Shatner.^{[45][46][47]} While CBS was not creating new *Star Trek* for network television, the ease of access to *Star Trek* content on new streaming services such as [Netflix](#) and [Amazon Prime Video](#) introduced a new set of fans to the franchise. CBS eventually sought to capitalize on this trend, and brought the franchise back to the small screen with the series *Star Trek: Discovery* to help launch and draw subscribers to its streaming service [CBS All Access](#).^[48] *Discovery's* first season premiered on September 24, 2017.^[49] While *Discovery* is shown in the United States exclusively on [Paramount+](#) (formerly CBS All Access), for its first three seasons, Netflix, in exchange for funding the production costs of the show, owned the international screening rights for the show.^[50] This Netflix distribution and production deal ended right before the fourth season premiere of *Discovery* in

November 2021.^[51] *Discovery* has since been exclusive to Paramount Global owned platforms.

In June 2018, after becoming sole showrunner of *Discovery*, Kurtzman signed a five-year overall deal with CBS Television Studios to expand the *Star Trek* franchise beyond *Discovery* to several new series, miniseries, and animated series.^[52] Kurtzman wanted to "open this world up" and create multiple series set in the same universe but with their own "unique storytelling and distinct cinematic feel",^[53] an approach that he compared to the [Marvel Cinematic Universe](#).^[54] However, the franchise would not tell a single story across multiple series, allowing audiences to watch each series without having to see all of the others.^[55] CBS and Kurtzman refer to this expanded franchise as the ***Star Trek Universe***.^[56]

The second series of the expansion of the *Star Trek Universe*, [Star Trek: Picard](#), features [Patrick Stewart](#) reprising the character [Jean-Luc Picard](#) from *The Next Generation*. *Picard* premiered on CBS All Access on January 23, 2020. Unlike *Discovery*, Amazon Prime Video streams *Picard* internationally.^[57] CBS has also released two seasons of [Star Trek: Short Treks](#), a series of standalone mini-episodes which air between *Discovery* and *Picard* seasons. A new live-action series, [Star Trek: Strange New Worlds](#), a spinoff of the second season of *Discovery* and prequel to the original series, premiered on May 5, 2022. [Lower Decks](#), an animated adult comedy series, was released on August 6, 2020, on CBS All Access. Another animated series, [Star Trek: Prodigy](#), premiered on the rebranded service [Paramount+](#) first on October 28, 2021, and on December 17, 2021, on [Nickelodeon](#).^[58] *Prodigy* is the first *Star Trek* series to specifically target younger audiences, and is the franchise's first fully computer animated series. *Star Trek*

saturation would hit a new peak in 2022, with five *Star Trek* series airing in the same year.^[d]

The *Star Trek: Picard* series finale aired in April 2023.^[59] Discovery's series finale aired in May 2024.^[60] A *Star Trek: Starfleet Academy* series is in pre-production to take the place of one of these series.^[61] *Star Trek: Prodigy* was removed from Paramount+ in June 2023.^[62] The series was picked up by Netflix, and season 1 was made available on December 25, 2023. A new second season will air later in 2024.^[63]

Paramount is also planning to create television films for Paramount+ every two years.^[64] The first of these movies, *Section 31*, will star [Michelle Yeoh](#), reprising her role as Empress Georgiou from *Discovery*.^[65]

Television series

Main article: [List of Star Trek television series](#)

Twelve television series make up the *Star Trek* franchise: *The Original Series*, *The Animated Series*, *The Next Generation*, *Deep Space Nine*, *Voyager*, *Enterprise*, *Discovery*, *Short Treks*, *Picard*, *Lower Decks*, *Prodigy*, and *Strange New Worlds*. All series in total amount to 930 episodes across 48 seasons of television.^[e]

Films

Main article: [List of Star Trek films](#)

Paramount Pictures has produced thirteen *Star Trek* feature films. The first six films continue the adventures of the cast of the *Original Series*; the seventh film, *Generations*, was intended as a transition from original cast to the cast of the *Next Generation*; the next three films focused completely on the *Next Generation* cast.^[f] The eleventh film was widely considered to be

a [reboot](#) of the franchise, though it is actually a continuation set in an [alternate timeline](#) known as the "Kelvin Timeline". Additionally, streaming service Paramount+ intends to release a television film every two years starting with *Section 31*.

Merchandise

Main article: [Star Trek spin-off fiction](#)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:STTNG_pinball.png

A pinball machine themed for *Star Trek: The Next Generation*

Many licensed products are based on the *Star Trek* franchise.

Merchandising is very lucrative for both studio and actors; by 1986 Nimoy had earned more than \$500,000 from royalties.^[67] Products include novels, comic books, video games, and other materials, which are generally considered [non-canon](#). *Star Trek* merchandise generated \$4 billion for Paramount by 2002.^[68]

Books

Main articles: [List of Star Trek novels](#) and [tie-in fiction](#)

Since 1967, hundreds of original novels, short stories, and television and movie adaptations have been published. The first original *Star Trek* novel was [Mission to Horatius](#) by [Mack Reynolds](#), which was published in hardcover by [Whitman Books](#) in 1968.^{[69]:131}

In 1968, Gene Roddenberry cooperated with Stephen Edward Poe, writing as Stephen Whitfield, on the nonfiction book *The Making of Star Trek* for [Ballantine Books](#).^[70]

Among the most recent is the [Star Trek Collection of Little Golden Books](#). Three titles were published by Random House in 2019, a fourth is scheduled for July 2020.

The first publisher of *Star Trek* fiction aimed at adult readers was [Bantam Books](#). [James Blish](#) wrote [adaptations](#) of episodes of the original series in twelve volumes from 1967 to 1977; in 1970, he wrote the first original *Star Trek* novel published by Bantam, *[Spock Must Die!](#)*.^{[69]:xi}

[Pocket Books](#) published subsequent *Star Trek* novels. Prolific *Star Trek* novelists include [Peter David](#), [Diane Carey](#), [Keith DeCandido](#), [J.M. Dillard](#), [Diane Duane](#), [Michael Jan Friedman](#), and [Judith and Garfield Reeves-Stevens](#). Several actors from the television series have also written or co-written books featuring their respective characters: [William Shatner](#), [John de Lancie](#), [Andrew J. Robinson](#), [J. G. Hertzler](#) and [Armin Shimerman](#). *Voyager* producer [Jeri Taylor](#) wrote two novels detailing the personal histories of *Voyager* characters. Screenplay writers [David Gerrold](#), [D. C. Fontana](#), and [Melinda Snodgrass](#) have also penned books.^{[69]:213}

A 2014 scholarly work [Newton Lee](#) discussed the actualization of *Star Trek*'s holodeck in the future by making extensive use of artificial intelligence and cyborgs.^[71]

Comics

Main article: [Star Trek \(comics\)](#)

Star Trek-based comics have been issued almost continuously since 1967, published by [Marvel](#), [DC](#), [Malibu](#), [Wildstorm](#), and [Gold Key](#), among others. In 2009, [Tokyopop](#) produced an anthology of *Next Generation*-based stories presented in the style of Japanese [manga](#).^[72] In 2006, [IDW Publishing](#) secured publishing rights to *Star Trek* comics and issued a prequel to the 2009 film, *[Star Trek: Countdown](#)*.^[73] In 2012, IDW published the first volume of *Star Trek – The Newspaper Strip*, featuring the work of Thomas Warkentin.^[74] As of 2020, IDW continues to produce new titles.^[75]

Games

Main article: [List of Star Trek games](#)

The *Star Trek* franchise has numerous games in many formats. Beginning in 1967 with a [board game](#) based on the original series and continuing through today with online and DVD games, *Star Trek* games continue to be popular among fans.

Video games based on the series include [Star Trek: Legacy](#) and [Star Trek: Conquest](#). An MMORPG based on *Star Trek* called [Star Trek Online](#) was developed by [Cryptic Studios](#) and published by [Perfect World](#). It is set during the *Next Generation* era, about 30 years after the events of [Star Trek: Nemesis](#).^[76] The most recent video game was set in the alternate timeline from Abrams's [Star Trek](#). On April 23, 2023, *Star Trek: Resurgence*, a narrative adventure video game set in the *Next Generation* era, was released by Dramatic Labs.^[77]

Magazines

Star Trek has led directly or indirectly to the creation of a number of magazines which focus either on science fiction or specifically on *Star Trek*. [Starlog](#) was a magazine which was founded in the 1970s.^{[69]:13} Initially, its focus was on *Star Trek* actors, but then it expanded its scope.^{[69]:80} [Star Trek: The Magazine](#) was a magazine published in the U.S. that ceased publication in 2003. [Star Trek Magazine](#), originally published as ***Star Trek Monthly*** by [Titan Magazines](#) for the United Kingdom market, began in February 1995. The magazine has since expanded to worldwide distribution under the name *Star Trek Explorer*.

Other magazines through the years included professional, as well as magazines published by fans, or [fanzines](#).

Cultural impact

Main article: [Cultural influence of Star Trek](#)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_Shuttle_Enterprise_-_GPN-2000-001363.jpg

Testbed Space Shuttle *Enterprise*, named after the fictional starship with *Star Trek* television cast members and creator Gene Roddenberry in 1976

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:ISS-](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:ISS-42_Samantha_Cristoforetti_Leonard_Nimoy_tribute.jpg)

[42_Samantha_Cristoforetti_Leonard_Nimoy_tribute.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:ISS-42_Samantha_Cristoforetti_Leonard_Nimoy_tribute.jpg)

ISS-42 astronaut [Samantha Cristoforetti](#) pays tribute to actor Leonard Nimoy, with a Vulcan salute in 2015 from space.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Borg_dockingstation.jpg

An occupied Borg "alcove" prop on display at the Hollywood Entertainment Museum

The *Star Trek* media franchise is a multibillion-dollar industry, owned by Paramount Global.^[78] Gene Roddenberry sold *Star Trek* to [NBC](#) as a classic adventure drama; he pitched the show as "*Wagon Train* to the Stars" and as *[Horatio Hornblower](#) in Space*.^[79] The opening line, "to boldly go where no man has gone before", was taken almost verbatim from a U.S. [White House](#) booklet on space produced after the [Sputnik](#) flight in 1957.^[80]

Star Trek and its spin-offs have proven highly popular in syndication and was broadcast worldwide.^[81] The show's cultural impact goes far beyond its longevity and profitability. *Star Trek* [conventions](#) have become popular among its fans, who call themselves "[trekkies](#)" or "trekkers".^[82] An entire subculture has grown up around the franchise, which was documented in the film *[Trekkies](#)*. *Star Trek* was ranked most popular cult show by *[TV Guide](#)*.^[83] The franchise has also garnered [many comparisons](#) of the *[Star Wars](#)* franchise being rivals in the science fiction genre with many fans and scholars.^{[84][85][86]}

The *Star Trek* franchise inspired some designers of technologies, the [Palm PDA](#) and the handheld mobile phone.^{[87][88]} Michael Jones, Chief technologist of [Google Earth](#), has cited

the [tricorder](#)'s mapping capability as one inspiration in the development of Keyhole/Google Earth.^[89] The [Tricorder X Prize](#), a contest to build a medical tricorder device was announced in 2012. Ten finalists were selected in 2014, and the winner was to be selected in January 2016. However, no team managed to reach the required criteria. *Star Trek* also brought [teleportation](#) to popular attention with its depiction of "matter-energy transport", with the famously misquoted phrase "[Beam me up, Scotty](#)" entering the vernacular.^[90] The *Star Trek* replicator is credited in the scientific literature with inspiring the field of [diatom nanotechnology](#).^[91] In 1976, following a letter-writing campaign, [NASA](#) named its prototype [Space Shuttle Enterprise](#), after the [fictional starship](#).^[92] Later, the introductory sequence to *Star Trek: Enterprise* included footage of this shuttle which, along with images of a naval sailing vessel called [Enterprise](#), depicted the advancement of human transportation technology.

Beyond *Star Trek*'s fictional innovations, its contributions to television history included a multicultural and multiracial cast. While more common in subsequent years, in the 1960s it was controversial to feature an *Enterprise* crew that included a Japanese helmsman, a Russian navigator, and a black female communications officer. Captain Kirk's and Lt. Uhura's kiss, in the episode "[Plato's Stepchildren](#)", was also daring, and is often mis-cited as being American television's first scripted, interracial kiss, even though several other interracial kisses (e.g. on [The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour](#)^[93]) predated this one. Nichelle Nichols, who played the communications officer, said that the day after she told Roddenberry of her plan to leave the series, she was told a big fan wanted to meet her while attending a [NAACP](#) dinner party:

I thought it was a Trekkie, and so I said, 'Sure.' I looked across the room, and there was Dr. [Martin Luther King](#) walking towards

me with this big grin on his face. He reached out to me and said, 'Yes, Ms. Nichols, I am your greatest fan.' He said that *Star Trek* was the only show that he, and his wife Coretta, would allow their three little children to stay up and watch. [She told King about her plans to leave the series.] I never got to tell him why, because he said, 'You can't. You're part of history.'

— [Nichelle Nichols](#), *Detroit Free Press* (2016)^[94]

After the show, Nichols used this public standing to speak for women and [people of color](#) and against their exclusion from the US human space program; NASA reacted by asking her to find people for its future Space Shuttle program. Nichols proceeded and successfully brought the first non-white people and [women into the US space program](#), working in this quality for NASA from the late 1970s until the late 1980s.^{[95][96]}

In 2020, the US effort to develop a vaccine to protect against [COVID-19](#) was named [Operation Warp Speed](#), which was suggested by a *Star Trek* fan, Peter Marks. Marks leads the unit at the [Food and Drug Administration](#) which approves vaccines and therapies.^[97]

Parodies

Early parodies of *Star Trek* included a famous sketch on [Saturday Night Live](#) titled "[The Last Voyage of the Starship Enterprise](#)", with [John Belushi](#) as Kirk, [Chevy Chase](#) as Spock and [Dan Aykroyd](#) as McCoy.^[98] In the 1980s, *Saturday Night Live* did a sketch with William Shatner reprising his Captain Kirk role in *The Restaurant Enterprise*, preceded by a sketch in which he played himself at a *Trek* convention angrily telling fans to "Get a Life", a phrase that has become part of *Trek* folklore.^[99] [In Living Color](#) continued the tradition in a sketch where Captain Kirk is played by a fellow Canadian [Jim Carrey](#).^[100]

A feature-length film that indirectly parodies *Star Trek* is [Galaxy Quest](#). This film is based on the premise that aliens monitoring the broadcast of an Earth-based television series called *Galaxy Quest*, modeled heavily on *Star Trek*, believe that what they are seeing is real.^[101] Many *Star Trek* actors have been quoted saying that *Galaxy Quest* was a brilliant parody.^{[102][103]}

Star Trek has been blended with [Gilbert and Sullivan](#) at least twice. [The North Toronto Players](#) presented a *Star Trek* adaptation of Gilbert & Sullivan titled *H.M.S. Starship Pinafore: The Next Generation* in 1991 and an adaptation by [Jon Mullich](#) of Gilbert and Sullivan's *H.M.S. Pinafore* that sets the operetta in the world of *Star Trek* has played in Los Angeles and was attended by series luminaries Nichelle Nichols,^[citation needed] D.C. Fontana and David Gerrold.^[104] A similar blend of Gilbert and Sullivan and *Star Trek* was presented as a benefit concert in San Francisco by the Lamplighters in 2009. The show was titled *Star Drek: The Generation After That*. It presented an original story with Gilbert and Sullivan melodies.^[105]

[The Simpsons](#) and [Futurama](#) television series and others have had many individual episodes parodying *Star Trek* or with *Trek* allusions.^[106] [Black Mirror](#)'s *Star Trek* parody episode, "USS Callister", won four [Emmy Awards](#), including the [Outstanding Television Movie](#) and [Writing for a Limited Series, Movie or Drama](#), and was nominated for three more.^[107]

In August 2010, the members of the [Internal Revenue Service](#) created a *Star Trek* themed training video for a conference. Revealed to the public in 2013, the spoof along with parodies of other media franchises was cited as an example of the misuse of taxpayer funds in a congressional investigation.^{[108][109]}

Star Trek has been parodied in several non-English movies, including the German *Traumschiff Surprise – Periode 1* which features a gay version of the *Original Series* bridge crew and a Turkish film that spoofs that same series' episode "The Man Trap" in one of the series of films based on the character *Turist Ömer*.^[*citation needed*] An entire series of films and novel parodies titled *Star Wreck* has been created in Finnish.^[110]

The Orville is a comedy-drama science fiction television series created by Seth MacFarlane that premiered on September 10, 2017, on Fox. MacFarlane, a longtime fan of the franchise who previously guest-starred on an episode of *Enterprise*, created the series with a similar look and feel as the *Star Trek* series.^[111] MacFarlane has made references to *Star Trek* on his animated series *Family Guy*, where the *Next Generation* cast guest-starred in the episode "Not All Dogs Go to Heaven".

Other Space is a science fiction comedy streaming series which premiered on Yahoo! Screen on April 14, 2015. Created by Paul Feig, it is set in the 22nd century and follows the dysfunctional crew of an exploratory spaceship who become trapped in an unknown universe.

Fan productions

Main article: Star Trek fan productions

Until 2016, Paramount Pictures and CBS permitted fan-produced films and episode-like clips to be produced. Several veteran *Star Trek* actors and writers participated in many of these productions. Several producers turned to crowdfunding, such as Kickstarter, to help with production and other costs.^[112]

Popular productions include: *New Voyages* (2004–2016) and *Star Trek Continues* (2013–2017). Additional productions include: *Of Gods and Men* (2008), originally released as a three-part web

series, and *Prelude to Axanar*.^[citation needed] Audio dramatizations such as *The Continuing Mission* (2007–2016) have also been published by fans.

In 2016, CBS published guidelines which restricted the scope of fan productions, such as limiting the length of episodes or films to fifteen minutes, limiting production budgets to \$50,000, and preventing actors and technicians from previous *Star Trek* productions from participating.^[113] A number of highly publicized productions have since been canceled or have gone abeyant.^[114]

Documentaries

Star Trek has been a popular subject for [documentaries](#) reviewing the history of the franchise.^{[115][116]} Some examples include:

- *Journey's End: Saga of Star Trek Next Generation*, hosted by Jonathon Frakes, it reviewed the final season of the series and the upcoming *Generations*.^{[117][118]}
- *Trekkies* (1997), exploring the subculture of Star Trek fandom.
- *Star Trek: Beyond the Final Frontier* (2007), exploring a giant [Christie's](#) auction of tens of thousand of *Star Trek* props, hosted by actor Leonard Nimoy.^[119]
- *The Center Seat* (2016), an 85-minute special on *Star Trek* for its 50th anniversary, aired by the [History](#) network.^[116]
- *For the Love of Spock* (2016), focusing on the history and impact of the character [Spock](#).
- *What We Left Behind* (2019), about the production and legacy of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*.^{[115][120]}
- *The Center Seat: 55 Years of Star Trek* (2021), an eight-episode documentary series ordered by the cable network [History](#) covering the franchise's decades-long

history.^{[116][121]} It was narrated by [Gates McFadden](#), who was also one of the [executive producers](#).

Some documentaries have been funded by the community by money raised by [crowdfunding](#).^[122] *What We Left Behind* raised nearly \$650,000 in this way, and a planned Voyager documentary raised \$450,000 in 24 hours.^{[122][123]}

Awards and honors

Main article: [List of Star Trek awards](#)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Jeri_Ryan_2010.jpg

[Jeri Ryan](#), appearing at the [Creation Star Trek](#) convention in 2010; she was nominated for three Saturn awards and won for Best Supporting Actress in 2001.

Of the various science fiction awards for drama, only the [Hugo Award for Best Dramatic Presentation](#) dates back as far as the original series.^[9] In 1968, all five nominees for a Hugo Award were individual episodes of *Star Trek*, as were three of the five nominees in 1967, one of which won.^{[h][27]:231} *The Next Generation* won Hugo awards in 1993 and 1995. Nominations have also been received by *Deep Space Nine*, *Enterprise*, *Discovery*, and *Lower Decks*, as well as several of the *Star Trek* feature films and, in 2008, an episode of the [fan-made](#) series *Star Trek: Phase II*.

One of the most successful films was *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*, which grossed a global total of \$133 million against a \$21 million budget.^{[124][125]} *The Voyage Home* garnered 11 nominations at the 14th annual [Saturn Awards](#), tying *Aliens* for number of nominations. Nimoy and Shatner were nominated for best actor for their roles,^[126] and Catherine Hicks was nominated for best supporting actress. At the [59th Academy Awards](#), *The Voyage Home* was nominated for Best Cinematography, Sound (Terry Porter, [David J. Hudson](#), [Mel Metcalfe](#) and [Gene Cantamessa](#)), Sound Effects Editing, and Original Score.^[127]

The episode "[The Big Goodbye](#)" in the first season of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, in recognition of its "new standard of quality for first-run syndication", the episode was honored with a [Peabody Award](#) in 1987. "The Big Goodbye" was also nominated for two [Emmy Awards](#) in the categories of Outstanding Cinematography for a Series and [Outstanding Costumes for a Series](#), with costume designer [William Ware Theiss](#) winning the award in the latter category.^[128]

Star Trek (2009) won the [Academy Award for Best Makeup and Hairstyling](#), the franchise's first Academy Award. In 2016, the franchise was listed in the [Guinness World Records](#) as the most successful science fiction television franchise in the world.^[129]

In 2024, the entire *Star Trek* franchise was awarded the Peabody Institutional Award for its enduring body of work and lasting impact on media and society at large.^[130]

Corporate ownership

Star Trek began as a joint-production of [Norway Productions](#), owned by Roddenberry, and [Desilu](#), owned by [Desi Arnaz](#) and [Lucille Ball](#). The profit-sharing agreement for the series split proceeds between Norway, Desilu (later [Paramount Television](#)), William Shatner's production company, and the broadcast network, [NBC](#). However, *Star Trek* lost money during its initial broadcast, and NBC did not expect to recoup its losses by selling the series into syndication, nor did Paramount. With NBC's approval, Paramount offered its share of the series to Roddenberry sometime in 1970. However, Roddenberry could not raise the \$150,000 (equivalent to \$1,176,864 in 2023) offered by the studio.^[19] Paramount would go on to license the series to television syndicators worldwide. NBC's remaining broadcast and distribution rights eventually returned to Paramount and

Roddenberry sometime before 1986, which coincided with the development of what would become *The Next Generation*.

As for Desilu, the studio was acquired by [Gulf+Western](#). It was then reorganized as the [television production division](#) of [Paramount Pictures](#), which Gulf+Western had acquired in 1966. Gulf+Western sold its remaining industrial assets in 1989, renaming itself Paramount Communications. Sometime before 1986, [Sumner Redstone](#) had acquired a controlling stake of [Viacom](#) via his family's theater chain, [National Amusements](#). Viacom was established in 1952 as a division of [CBS](#) responsible for syndicating the network's in-house productions, originally called [CBS Films](#). In 1994, Viacom and Paramount Communications were merged.^[19] Viacom then merged with its former parent, [CBS Corporation](#), in 1999. National Amusements and the Redstone family increased their stake in the combined company between 1999 and 2005.

Split ownership (2005–2019)

In 2005, the Redstone family reorganized Viacom, spinning off the conglomerate's assets as two independent groups: the new [Viacom](#), and the new [CBS Corporation](#). National Amusements and the Redstone family retained approximately 80% ownership of both CBS and Viacom.^[131] *Star Trek* was split between the two entities. The terms of this split were not known. However, CBS held all copyrights, marks, production assets, and film negatives, to all *Star Trek* television series. CBS also retained the rights to all likenesses, characters, names and settings, and stories, and the right to license *Star Trek*, and its spin-offs, to merchandisers, and publishers, etc.^[132] The rights were exercised via the new [CBS Television Studios](#), which was carved out of the former [Paramount Television](#).

Viacom, which housed [Paramount Pictures](#), retained the feature film library, and exclusive rights to produce new feature films for a limited time.^[citation needed] Viacom also retained home video distribution rights for all television series produced before 2005.^{[19][133]} However, home video editions of the various television series released after the split, as well as streaming video versions of episodes available worldwide, carried variants of the new CBS Television Studios livery in addition to the original Paramount Television Studios livery. It was unclear who retained the [synchronization](#) or [streaming](#) rights.^[citation needed]

Rights and distribution issues, and the fraught relationship between the leadership at CBS, Viacom, and the National Amusements' board of directors, resulted in a number of delayed and canceled *Star Trek* productions between 2005 and 2019.^[134] Additionally, the development and release of the new *Star Trek* film, in 2009, was met with resistance by executives at CBS, as was *Into Darkness* (2013) and *Beyond* (2016), which affected merchandising, tie-in media, and promotion for the new films.^[135] During this period, both CBS and Viacom continued to list *Star Trek* as an important asset in their prospectus to investors, and in corporate filings made to the [Securities and Exchange Commission](#).

Current ownership

While several attempts were made to merge Viacom and CBS, power struggles between the major stakeholders of the companies prevented this from happening. In 2019, after the resignation of CBS CEO [Leslie Moonves](#), negotiations to merge CBS and Viacom began in earnest. These negotiations were led by [Shari Redstone](#), chairman of National Amusements, and Joe Ianniello, CEO of CBS.^[136] On August 13, 2019, CBS and Viacom boards of directors reached an agreement to [reunite the](#)

conglomerates as a single entity called ViacomCBS.^[137] National Amusements' board of directors approved the merger on October 28, 2019, which was finalized on December 4, bringing the *Star Trek* franchise back under one roof.^{[138][139][140]} ViacomCBS was renamed **Paramount Global** on February 16, 2022.^[141]