Star Wars

This article is about the media franchise. For the film, see Star Wars *(film). For other uses, see* Star Wars (disambiguation).

Star Wars is an American epic space opera media franchise created by George Lucas, which began with the eponymous 1977 film[a] 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.[b] *Star Wars* is one of the highest-grossing media franchises of all time.

The original 1977 film, retroactively 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. Lucas later returned to the series to write and direct a prequel trilogy, consisting of *Episode I: The Phantom Menace* (1999), *Episode II: Attack of the Clones* (2002), and *Episode III: Revenge of the Sith* (2005). In 2012, Lucas sold his production company to Disney, relinquishing his ownership of the franchise. This led to a sequel trilogy, consisting of *Episode VII: The Force Awakens* (2015), *Episode VIII: The Last Jedi* (2017), and *Episode IX: The Rise of Skywalker* (2019).

All nine films, collectively referred to as the "Skywalker Saga", were nominated for Academy Awards, with wins going to the first two releases. Together with the theatrical live action "anthology" films *Rogue One* (2016) and *Solo* (2018), the

combined box office revenue of the films equated to over US$10 billion, making *Star Wars* the third-highest-grossing film franchise of all time.

Premise

The *Star Wars* franchise depicts the adventures of characters "A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away"[2] across multiple fictional eras, in which humans and many species of aliens (often humanoid) co-exist with robots (typically referred to in the films as 'droids'), which may be programmed for personal assistance or battle.[3] Space travel between planets is common due to lightspeed hyperspace technology.[4][5][6] The planets range from wealthy, planet-wide cities to deserts scarcely populated by primitive tribes. Virtually any Earth biome, along with many fictional ones, has its counterpart as a *Star Wars* planet which, in most cases, teem with sentient and non-sentient alien life.[7] The franchise also makes use of other astronomical objects such as asteroid fields and nebulae.[8][9] Spacecraft range from small starfighters to large capital ships, such as the Star Destroyers, as well as space stations such as the moon-sized Death Stars.[10][11][12] Telecommunication includes two-way audio and audiovisual screens, holographic projections, and hyperspace transmission.[13]

The universe of *Star Wars* is generally similar to the real universe but its laws of physics are less strict allowing for more imaginative stories.[14] One result of that is a mystical power known as the Force which is described in the original film as "an energy field created by all living things ... [that] binds the galaxy together".[15] The field is depicted as a kind of pantheistic god.[16] Through training and meditation, those whom "the Force is strong with" exhibit various superpowers (such as telekinesis, precognition, telepathy, and manipulation of

physical energy).[17] It is believed nothing is impossible for the Force.[18] The mentioned powers are wielded by two major knightly orders at conflict with each other: the Jedi, peacekeepers of the Galactic Republic who act on the light side of the Force through non-attachment and arbitration, and the Sith, who use the dark side by manipulating fear and aggression.[19][20] While Jedi Knights can be numerous, the Dark Lords of the Sith (or 'Darths') are intended to be limited to two: a master and their apprentice.[21]

The franchise is set against a backdrop of galactic conflict involving republics and empires, such as the evil Galactic Empire.[22] The Jedi and Sith prefer the use of a weapon called the lightsaber, a blade of plasma that can cut through virtually any surface and deflect energy bolts.[23] The rest of the population, as well as renegades and soldiers, use plasma-powered blaster firearms.[24] In the outer reaches of the galaxy, crime syndicates such as the Hutt cartel are dominant.[25] Bounty hunters are often employed by both gangsters and governments, while illicit activities include smuggling and slavery.[25]

The combination of science fiction and fantasy elements makes *Star Wars* a very universal franchise, capable of telling stories of various genres.[26]

Films

 (left), Emperor Palpatine (center), and Luke Skywalker (right), are the characters in *Star Wars*
The *Star Wars* film series centers around three sets of trilogies, the nine films of which are collectively referred to as the "Skywalker Saga".[43] The saga was produced non-chronologically, beginning *in media res* with the release of the original trilogy between 1977 and 1983. This was followed by the prequel trilogy,

released between 1999 and 2005, and the sequel trilogy, released between 2015 and 2019.[44]

Each trilogy focuses on a generation of the Force-sensitive Skywalker family and their struggle against the evil Sith lord Palpatine (Darth Sidious).[45] The original trilogy depicts the heroic development of Luke Skywalker as a Jedi and his fight against Palpatine's Galactic Empire alongside his sister, Leia.[46] The prequels tell the tragic backstory of their father, Anakin, who is corrupted by Palpatine and becomes Darth Vader.[47] The sequels follow the conflict between Leia's son, Ben Solo, and Luke and Leia's protegé, Rey, and their eventual alliance against Palpatine after the fall of the Empire.[48]

Original trilogy

Main article: Star Wars original trilogy

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Mark_Hamill_by_Gage_Skidmore_2.jpg
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Harrison_Ford_by_Gage_Skidmore_3.jpg
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Carrie_Fisher_2013_cropped_retouched.jpg
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:David_Prowse_2013_(cropped).jpg

The original trilogy's main cast includes (from left to right) Mark Hamill (Luke Skywalker), Harrison Ford (Han Solo), Carrie Fisher (Princess Leia), and David Prowse (Darth Vader).

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.[49][c] After directing *American Graffiti* (1973), he wrote a two-page synopsis, which 20th Century Fox decided to invest in.[50][51] By 1974, he had expanded the story into the first draft of a screenplay.[52] Fox expected the film would be of limited financial success, and so it was given a relatively low budget, with production being moved to Elstree Studios in England to help save on cost.[53]

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.[54] The film's success led Lucas to make it the basis of an elaborate film serial.[55] With the backstory he created for the sequel, Lucas decided that the series would be a trilogy of trilogies.[56] *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.

Prequel trilogy
Main article: Star Wars prequel trilogy

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ewan_McGregor_2012.jpg
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Natalie_Portman_2023.jpg
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Hayden-cfda2010-0004(1)_(cropped).jpg
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ian_McDiarmid_Brussels_Comic_Con_2020.jpg

The prequel trilogy's main cast includes (from left to right) Ewan McGregor (Obi-Wan Kenobi), Natalie Portman (Padmé Amidala), Hayden Christensen (Anakin Skywalker),[d] and Ian McDiarmid (Palpatine). According to producer Gary Kurtz, loose plans for a prequel trilogy were developed during the outlining of the original two films.[57] In 1980, Lucas confirmed that he had the nine-film series plotted,[58] but due to the stress of producing the original trilogy, he had decided to cancel further sequels by 1981.[59] 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."[60]

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".[61] In 1992, he acknowledged that he had plans to create the prequel trilogy.[62] A theatrical rerelease of the original

trilogy in 1997 "updated" the 20-year-old films with the style of CGI envisioned for the new trilogy.[63]

Episode I: The Phantom Menace was released on May 19, 1999, *Episode II: Attack of the Clones* on May 16, 2002, and *Episode III: Revenge of the Sith* on May 19, 2005.[64] The first two films were met with mixed reviews, with the third being received somewhat more positively. Together with the original trilogy, Lucas has referred to the first six episodic films of the franchise as "the tragedy of Darth Vader".[65]

Sequel trilogy

Main article: Star Wars sequel trilogy

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Star_Wars-_The_Last_Jedi_Japan_Premiere_Red_Carpet-_Adam_Driver_(27163437599)_(cropped).jpg
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Daisy_Ridley_2018_(cropped).jpg
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:John_Boyega_by_Gage_Skidmore.jpg
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Oscar_Isaac_by_Gage_Skidmore.jpg

The sequel trilogy's main cast includes (from left to right) Adam Driver (Kylo Ren), Daisy Ridley (Rey), John Boyega (Finn), and Oscar Isaac (Poe Dameron).

Prior to releasing the original 1977 film, and made possible by its success, Lucas planned "three trilogies of nine films".[56][66] However, he announced to *Time* in 1978 that he planned "10 sequels".[67] He confirmed that he had outlined the prequels and sequels in 1981.[68] At various stages of development, the sequel trilogy was to focus on the rebuilding of the Republic,[69] the return of Luke as a Jedi Master (a role similar to that of Obi-Wan Kenobi in the original trilogy),[66] Luke's sister (not yet determined to be Leia),[57] Han, Leia,[70] R2-D2 and C-3PO.[56][71] 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.[72][73]

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.[74] That October, the Walt Disney Company agreed to buy Lucasfilm and announced that *Episode VII* would be released in 2015.[75] The co-chairman of Lucasfilm, Kathleen Kennedy, became president and served as executive producer of new *Star Wars* feature films.[76] Lucas provided Kennedy his story treatments for the sequels during the 2012 sale,[77] but in 2015 it was revealed Lucas's sequel outline had been discarded.[78][79] The sequel trilogy also meant the end of the *Star Wars* Expanded Universe stories, which were discarded from canon to give "maximum creative freedom to the filmmakers and also preserve an element of surprise and discovery for the audience."[1]

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.[e] *The Force Awakens* and *The Last Jedi* were both critical and box office successes.[80][81] *Episode IX* received a mixed reception from critics and audiences.[82]

Standalone films

Several *Star Wars* films have been produced separately from the Skywalker Saga. In 2008, Lucasfilm released the animated film *The Clone Wars*, which is set during the prequel trilogy and serves as the theatrical pilot of the television series of the same name.[85] Following Disney's acquisition of Lucasfilm in 2012, an "anthology" film series set between the main episodes of the Skywalker Saga entered development in parallel with the production of the sequel trilogy,[86] described by Disney chief financial officer Jay Rasulo as origin stories.[87]

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Felicity_Jones_DEC_2016.jpg

The anthology films' main casts include (from left to right) Felicity Jones (Jyn Erso) and Diego Luna (Cassian Andor) from *Rogue One* and Alden Ehrenreich (Han Solo) and Woody Harrelson (Tobias Beckett) from *Solo*.

The first film released was *Rogue One* in 2016, which tells the story of the rebels who steal the plans for the Death Star, the Galactic Empire's superweapon, just before the events of the original *Star Wars* film.[88][89] A second film, *Solo*, was released in 2018 and tells the backstory of original trilogy character Han Solo several years prior to the original *Star Wars* film.[90] The television series *Obi-Wan Kenobi* was originally planned as a film, but changed to a limited series due to *Solo* underperforming at the box office.[91]

Upcoming films

In April 2023, three new *Star Wars* films were announced to be set within different eras of the franchise.[96] An untitled film written and directed by James Mangold will be set during the "dawn of the Jedi".[96] Dave Filoni will direct a film set between the original and sequel trilogies during the New Republic era, serving as the climax of the various live-action television series that began with *The Mandalorian* in 2019.[96] Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy will direct a third film about a new Jedi Order, set fifteen years after the sequel trilogy.[94][97]

In January 2024, it was announced that Jon Favreau would direct a new *Star Wars* film, titled *The Mandalorian & Grogu*.[98] In February of the same year, Bob Iger announced that the film would be the first release of the next slate of *Star Wars* movies.[99] *The Mandalorian & Grogu* is scheduled for release on May 22, 2026.[93]

Other potential projects

Lucasfilm has a number of *Star Wars* films in various stages of development, including:

- **Untitled Rian Johnson trilogy**: In November 2017, a trilogy of movies written by *The Last Jedi* writer/director Rian Johnson was announced to be in development.[100][101] In April 2023, Kennedy stated that trilogy of films is still in open development at the studio, with the writer/director working on the story, although it is not currently a priority.[102]

- **Untitled David Benioff & D. B. Weiss trilogy**: In February 2018, it was announced that David Benioff and D. B. Weiss would serve as writers and producers on a trilogy of new *Star Wars* movies.[103] The plot would take place chronologically before the prequel trilogy, and center around the origin of the Jedi.[104] By May 2019, the duo were also slated to serve as co-directors of the first installment in their three films.[105] In October of the same year however, the filmmaking duo exited development of the projects due to scheduling conflicts with projects they are developing for Netflix. Kennedy stated that the studio is open to working with the duo, and developing their films once their schedule allows it.[106] In January 2024, the filmmaking duo announced that the working title was *The First Jedi* and would have followed the titular ancient protagonist. The pair cast doubt on returning to their planned trilogy, commenting on its apparent influence on James Mangold's similarly premised *Dawn of the Jedi* movie.[107]

- **Untitled Taika Waititi film**: In May 2020, Taika Waititi signed onto the project which was stated to be the first priority for the studio, with the filmmaker Waititi serving as director from a script he is co-writing with Krysty Wilson-Cairns.[108] In May 2022, the movie was named as the next *Star Wars* film to

begin production ahead of *Rogue Squadron*, with Kennedy stating that the studio was tentatively looking towards late 2023 for a debut, but had not yet officially set a release date.[109][110] By April 2023, she stated that the project is still in development, with Waititi continuing to work on the script.[111][102]

- ***Rogue Squadron***: An anthology film, following the events of *Rogue One*, will be directed by Patty Jenkins with a script written by Matthew Robinson.[112] In April 2023, Kennedy stated that the script is still in development, with the studio considering changing the project into a television series.[113] In March 2024, Jenkins announced that she had once again commenced working on the script; confirming that developments for the project are ongoing.[114]

- **Untitled J.D. Dillard film**: In February 2020, a film was announced to be in development from director J. D. Dillard and writer Matt Owens;[115] although, Dillard announced he was no longer to direct that film in November 2022.[116]

- ***Star Wars: A Droid Story***: In December 2020, an animated film centered around the adventures of R2-D2 and C-3PO was announced as being in development; the story will introduce a new heroic character to the franchise, alongside the two returning droids. The project will be a joint-venture production between Lucasfilm Animation, and Industrial Light & Magic. The film is being developed to debut via streaming, exclusively through Disney+.[117][118][119]

- **Untitled Shawn Levy film**: In November 2022, Shawn Levy entered talks to direct a *Star Wars* film, following his work on *Deadpool & Wolverine* (2024) and the fifth and final season of *Stranger Things*.[120] In September 2023, Levy said that development on his *Star Wars* film began, but would not

continue until after the conclusion of the 2023 Writers Guild of America strike.[121]

- **Lando**: In December 2020, a spin-off series to *Solo: A Star Wars Story* was announced as being in development. The limited series which was being developed exclusively for Disney+ was revealed to be centered around Landonis "Lando" Calrissian III, titled *Lando*. Donald Glover was confirmed at that time to be reprising the lead role, while Justin Simien was named as the series creator and showrunner. By July 2020 however, Donald and Stephen Glover were hired to replace Simien, write and redevelop the show.[122] In September 2023, the show was repurposed to be released as a theatrical film instead.[123]

Television

Main article: List of Star Wars television series

Animated series

The first two animated series, *Droids* and *Ewoks*, were produced in the 1980s.[124] They were followed by the *Clone Wars* animated micro-series in 2003 and the 2008 series of the same name. Following Disney's acquisition of Lucasfilm, all animated series released prior to 2014, apart from the 2008 series, were discarded from the franchise's canon.[1] Subsequent animated series include *Rebels*, released in 2014; *Resistance*, released in 2018; and *The Bad Batch*, released in 2021.

Several micro-series and shorts have also been released by Lucasfilm since Disney's acquisition, with the earlier animated series falling under Disney's "Vintage" collection of *Star Wars* content.[125][126]

Live-action series

The *Star Wars* franchise includes several live-action series. The first series, *The Mandalorian*, was released in 2019 for the

streaming service Disney+ and is set between the original and sequel trilogies of the Skywalker Saga.[127] Due to its success, the series spawned multiple live-action spin-offs set during the same fictional era, including *The Book of Boba Fett*, released in 2021; *Ahsoka*, released in 2023; and the upcoming *Skeleton Crew*.[128][129][130] These series follow the plight of the New Republic and its allies against the remnants of the fallen Galactic Empire.[131]

A story focused on Obi-Wan Kenobi, a character from the original *Star Wars* trilogy, was planned as a film before becoming a live-action series after the box office failure of *Solo* in 2018.[91] The series was released on Disney+ in 2022 and is set between the prequel and original trilogy films.[132] It was followed by the live-action series *Andor* in the same year; both series follow their titular characters during the reign of the Empire.[132][133]

Films and specials
Fictional timeline
See also: Star Wars in other media § Legends fictional timeline

The *Star Wars* canon fictional universe spans multiple eras, of which three are focused around each of the film trilogies.[134] The following eras were defined in January 2021,[135] and further refined and expanded in April 2023:[136]

- Dawn of the Jedi: The first Jedi wields the Force, which will be depicted in an upcoming untitled film.[96][137][134]
- The Old Republic: The Galactic Republic is founded and the Jedi Order emerges to protect it. A schism within the Jedi leads to the creation of the Sith.[134]

- The High Republic: Under the protection of the Jedi, the Republic grows into a golden age. This era includes *The Acolyte*, *The High Republic* literary works and the animated series *Young Jedi Adventures*.[134]
- Fall of the Jedi: The Republic's Supreme Chancellor, Palpatine (secretly the Sith lord Darth Sidious), orchestrates the Clone Wars, overthrows the Republic, exterminates the Jedi Order and corrupts Anakin Skywalker.[134][138] This era includes the prequel trilogy films, the beginning of the episodic Skywalker Saga, and the animated series *Tales of the Jedi* and *The Clone Wars*.[134]
- Reign of the Empire: Palpatine's Galactic Empire rules the galaxy and the remaining Jedi are hunted down.[134] This era includes *Solo: A Star Wars Story*, *Obi-Wan Kenobi*, *Andor*, *Rogue One*, the animated series *The Bad Batch* and *Rebels*, and the video games *Star Wars Jedi: Fallen Order*, *Star Wars Jedi: Survivor* and *Vader Immortal*.[134]
- Age of Rebellion: The Rebellion against the Empire spreads across the galaxy, while the Jedi return with the emergence of Luke Skywalker.[134][139] This era includes the original trilogy films[f] and the video games *Star Wars Battlefront II* and *Star Wars: Squadrons*.[134]
- The New Republic: Following the Empire's defeat, the emergent New Republic attempts to reunite the galaxy, while threatened by the remnants of the Empire.[134] This era includes *The Mandalorian*, *The Book of Boba Fett*, and *Ahsoka*.[134]
- Rise of the First Order: The remnants of the Empire transform into the First Order but are fought by the Resistance, climaxing with the defeat of Palpatine and the Sith by the Jedi Rey.[134][138] This era includes the sequel trilogy films, the

animated series *Star Wars Resistance* and the video
game *Star Wars: Tales from the Galaxy's Edge*.[134]
- New Jedi Order: Rey builds a new Jedi Order, which will be
depicted in an upcoming untitled film.[96][134]

The Expanded Universe of spin-off media depicts different levels
of continuity, which were deemed non-canonical and rebranded
as *Legends* on April 25, 2014, to make most subsequent works
align to the episodic films, *The Clone Wars* film, and television
series.[1]

Other media

Main article: Star Wars 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.[141] 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,[141] 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.[1] Multiple comics series
from Marvel and novels published by Del Rey were produced
after the announcement. Since the new canon has been

introduced, there has been a multitude of pieces of Expanded Universe continuity that have become a part of canon.[142]

Print media

Star Wars in print predates the release of the first film, with the November 1976 novelization of *Star Wars*, initially subtitled "*From the Adventures of Luke Skywalker*". Credited to Lucas, it was ghostwritten by Alan Dean Foster.[143] 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

Further information: List of Star Wars books

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Timothy Zahn authored the *Thrawn* trilogy, which was widely credited with revitalizing the dormant *Star Wars* franchise in the early 1990s.

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,[144] and *The Adventures of Lando Calrissian* trilogy (1983) by L. Neil Smith.[145][146]

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.[147][148][149][150] The first novel, *Heir to the Empire*, reached #1 on the *New York Times* Best Seller list,[151] and the series finds Luke, Leia, and Han facing off against tactical genius Thrawn, who is plotting to retake the galaxy for the Empire.[152] 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.[153][154] 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.[155][156] The novel introduced the crime lord Prince Xizor, another popular character who would appear in multiple other works.[155][157] Other notable series from Bantam include the *Jedi Academy* trilogy (1994) by Kevin J. Anderson,[158][159] the 14-book *Young Jedi Knights* series (1995–1998) by Anderson and Rebecca Moesta,[159][160] and the *X-wing* series (1996–2012) by Michael A. Stackpole and Aaron Allston.[161][162][163]

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.[164][165] 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 becomes the evil Kylo Ren.[166][167][168][169]

Three series set in the prequel era were published by Scholastic 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. In 2019, a new prequel era novel, starring Qui-Gon and the young Obi-Wan, was published by Del Rey under the title *Star Wars: Master and Apprentice*.[170]

Although Thrawn had been designated a *Legends* character in 2014, he was reintroduced into the canon in 2016 for the third season of the *Rebels* animated series, with Zahn returning to write more novels based on the character and set in the new canon.[171][172]

Comics

Main articles: Star Wars comics and List of Star Wars comic books

Marvel Comics published a *Star Wars* comic book series from 1977 to 1986.[173][174][175][176] 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.[177] From 1985 to 1987, the animated children's series *Ewoks* and *Droids* inspired comic series from Marvel's Star Comics line.[178][179][180] According to Marvel Comics former Editor-In-Chief Jim Shooter, the strong sales of *Star Wars* comics saved Marvel financially in 1977 and 1978.[181] Marvel's *Star Wars* series was one of the industry's top selling titles in 1979 and 1980.[182] 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.[183]

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).[184] 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).[185][186]

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,[187] whose parent company, Marvel Entertainment, Disney had purchased in 2009.[188] Launched in 2015, the first three publications were titled *Star Wars*, *Darth Vader*, and the limited series *Princess Leia*.[189][190][191]

First announced as *Project Luminous* at Star Wars Celebration in April 2019, the *Star Wars: The High Republic* publishing initiative were revealed in a press conference in February 2020. Involving the majority of the then current officially licensed publishers, a new era set 200 years before the Skywalker Saga was explored in various books and comics. Including ongoing titles by Marvel and IDW Publishing, written by Cavan Scott and Daniel José Older respectively.[192]

Audio
Soundtracks and singles
Further information: Music of Star Wars

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*.[193] He also composed Han Solo's theme for *Solo: A Star Wars Story*; John Powell adapted and composed the rest of the score.[194] Michael Giacchino composed the score of *Rogue One*.[194] Ludwig Göransson scored and composed the

music of *The Mandalorian*.[195] Williams also created the main theme for *Galaxy's Edge*.[196]

Audio novels

Further information: The Story of Star Wars and List of Star Wars books

The first *Star Wars* audio work is *The Story of Star Wars*, an LP using audio samples from the original film and a new narration to retell the story, released in 1977. Most later printed novels were adapted into audio novels, usually released on cassette tape and re-released on CD. As of 2019, audio-only novels have been released not directly based on printed media.[197]

Radio

Further information: Star Wars (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's original film score, along with Ben Burtt's sound effects.[198][199]

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.[200][198][199] Mark Hamill and Anthony Daniels reprised their film roles.[200][198]

The overwhelming success, led to a 10-episode adaptation of *The Empire Strikes Back* debuted in 1983.[201] Billy Dee Williams joined the other two stars, reprising his role as Lando Calrissian.[198]

In 1983, Buena Vista Records released an original, 30-minute *Star Wars* audio drama titled *Rebel Mission to Ord*

Mantell, written by Daley.[199][202] 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).[202] *Return of the Jedi* was adapted into 6-episodes in 1996, featuring Daniels.[198][202]

Video games

Further information: Star Wars video games and List of Star Wars video games

The *Star Wars* franchise has spawned over one hundred[203] 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 officially licensed electronic *Star Wars* game was Kenner's 1979 table-top *Star Wars Electronic Battle Command*.[204][205] In 1982, Parker Brothers published the first *Star Wars* video game for the Atari 2600, *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*,[206] followed soon the year later by *Star Wars: Jedi Arena*, the first video game to depict lightsaber combat. They were followed in 1983 by Atari's rail shooter arcade game *Star Wars*, with vector graphics to replicate the Death Star trench run scene from the 1977 film.[207] The next game, *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi* (1984), has more traditional raster graphics,[208] while the

following *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1985) has vector graphics.[209]

Platform games were made for the Nintendo Entertainment System, including the Japan-exclusive *Star Wars* (1987), an international *Star Wars* (1991), and *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* (1992). *Super Star Wars* (1992) was released for the Super Nintendo Entertainment System, with two sequels over the next two years.

LucasArts and modern self-published games (1993–2014)
Main article: LucasArts
Lucasfilm founded its own video game company in 1982, becoming best known for adventure games and World War II flight combat games, but as George Lucas took more interest in the increasing success of the video game market, he wanted to have more creative control over the games and founded his own development company, LucasArts. Improved graphics allowed games to tell complex narratives, which allowed for the retelling of the films, and eventually original narratives set in the same continuity, with voice-overs and CGI cutscenes. 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.[210] It was one of the bestselling video games of 1993 and established its own series of games.[210] 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,[211] was the first *Star Wars* first-person shooter.[212] It featured gameplay and graphical features not then common in other games, made possible by LucasArts' custom-designed game engine, the Jedi.[212][211][213][214] The game was well

received,[215][216][217] and it was followed by four sequels.[218][219] The series introduced Kyle Katarn, who would appear in multiple games, novels, and comics.[220] Katarn is a former stormtrooper who joins the Rebellion and becomes a Jedi,[212][221][222] a plot arc similar to that of Finn in the sequel trilogy films.[166] A massively multiplayer online role-playing game, *Star Wars Galaxies*, was in operation from 2003 until 2011. After Disney bought Lucasfilm, LucasArts ceased its role as a developer in 2013, although it still operates as a licensor.[223]

EA Star Wars (2014–present)

Following its acquisition of the franchise, Disney reassigned video game rights to Electronic Arts. 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.[224][225] In August 2018, it was announced that Zynga would publish free-to-play *Star Wars* mobile games.[226] The *Battlefront* games received a canonical reboot with *Star Wars: Battlefront* in November 2015, which was followed by a sequel, *Battlefront II*, in November 2017. A single-player action-adventure game, *Star Wars Jedi: Fallen Order*, with an original story and cast of characters, was released in November 2019. A space combat game titled *Star Wars: Squadrons*, which builds upon the space battles from *Battlefront*, was released in October 2020.

Theme park attractions

Main article: List of Star Wars theme parks 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 traveling 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.[227] A themed hotel, *Star Wars*: Galactic Starcruiser, operated from 2022 to 2023 at Walt Disney World.

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.[155][156] *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.[230][231]

Merchandising

Main articles: Kenner Star Wars action figures, List of Kenner Star Wars action figures, Star Wars: The Vintage Collection, Lego Star Wars, Star Wars trading card, and Star Wars role-playing games

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:George_Lucas_cropped_2009.jpg

George Lucas made much of his fortune by retaining his rights to the franchise's 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.[232] By 2012, the first six films produced approximately US$20 billion in merchandising revenue.[233]

Kenner made the first *Star Wars* action figures to coincide with the release of the original 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.[234] *Star Wars* was the first intellectual property to be licensed in Lego history.[235] Lego has produced animated parody short films and mini-series to promote their *Star Wars* sets.[236] The Lego *Star Wars* video games are critically acclaimed bestsellers.[237][238]

In 1977, the board game *Star Wars: Escape from the Death Star* was released.[239][g] 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)[241] and the *Original Trilogy Edition* (2006).[242] 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.[243] Dozens of series have been produced, with Topps being the licensed creator in the United States. Each card series are of film stills or 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.[244] From 1995 until 2001, Decipher, Inc. had the license for, created, and produced the *Star Wars Customizable Card Game*.

Themes

Star Wars features elements such as knighthood, chivalry, and Jungian archetypes such as "the shadow".[245] 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.[246] 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".[247] George Lucas has said that the theme of the saga is redemption.[248]

The saga draws heavily from the hero's journey, an archetypical template developed by comparative mythologist Joseph Campbell.[246] Each character—primarily Anakin, Luke, and Rey—follows the steps of the cycle or undergoes its reversal, becoming the villain.[249] A defining step of the journey is "Atonement with the Father".[250] Obi-Wan's loss of a father figure could have impacted his relationship with Anakin,[251] whom both Obi-Wan and Palpatine are fatherlike mentors to.[252] 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.[253] Supreme Leader Snoke encourages Kylo Ren to kill his father, Han Solo.[247] Kylo uses the fact that Rey is an orphan to tempt her into joining the dark side.[254] 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."[255]

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. Battles featuring the Ewoks and Gungans against the Empire and Trade Federation, respectively, represent the clash between a primitive society and a more advanced one, similar to the Vietnam-American War.[256][257] Darth Vader's design was initially inspired by Samurai armor, and also incorporated a German military helmet.[258][259] 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 Vader.[260] Stormtroopers borrow the name of World War I German "shock" troopers. Imperial officers wear uniforms resembling those of German forces during World War II,[261] 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).[262] Shots of the commanders looking through AT-AT walker viewscreens in *The Empire Strikes Back* resemble tank interiors,[263] and space battles in the original film were based on World War I and World War II dogfights.[264]

Palpatine being a chancellor before becoming the Emperor in the prequel trilogy alludes to Hitler's role before appointing himself *Führer*.[261] Lucas has also drawn parallels to historical dictators such as Julius Caesar, Napoleon Bonaparte, and politicians like Richard Nixon.[265][266][h] The Great Jedi Purge mirrors the events of the Night of the Long Knives.[268] The corruption of the Galactic Republic is modeled after the fall of the democratic Roman Republic and the formation of an empire.[269][270]

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."[271]

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• The aerial warfare of WWII inspired the space fights.
• The flag and iconography of the Empire resembles those of the Nazi Party and Germany during its rule.

Cultural impact

Main article: Cultural impact of Star Wars

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Lightsaber_blue.svg
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:StormTrooper_Blaster.jpg

The lightsaber and the blaster are iconic elements of the franchise. The *Star Wars* saga has had a significant impact on popular culture,[272] with references to its fictional universe deeply embedded in everyday life.[273] Phrases like "evil empire" and "May the Force be with you" have become part of the popular lexicon.[274] The first *Star Wars* film in 1977 was a cultural unifier,[275] enjoyed by a wide spectrum of people.[276] 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.[277] 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."[278] *The Empire Strikes Back* was selected in 2010,[279][280] and *Return of the Jedi* was selected in 2021.[281] 35 mm reels of the 1997 Special Editions were the versions initially presented for preservation

because of the difficulty of transferring from the original prints,[282][283] but it was later revealed that the Library possesses a copyright deposit print of the original theatrical releases.[284]

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.[264] The franchise helped Fox to change from an almost bankrupt production company to a thriving media conglomerate.[285] With over $10.3 billion in worldwide box office receipts, *Star Wars* is the second-highest-grossing film franchise of all time.[286][287]

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.[288] The commercial success of *Star Wars* created a boom in state-of-the-art special effects in the late 1970s.[285] 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.[289][276] 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.[275]

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.[290] 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.[264][291][292]

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.[293] 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."[293][294] 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".[292]

The original *Star Wars* trilogy is widely considered one of the best film trilogies in history.[295] Numerous filmmakers have been influenced by *Star Wars*, including Damon Lindelof, Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, John Lasseter,[296] David Fincher, Joss Whedon, John Singleton, Kevin Smith,[290] and later *Star Wars* directors J. J. Abrams and Gareth Edwards.[297] 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* (1981), and Peter

Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy (2001–2003).[290] Christopher Nolan cited *Star Wars* as an influence when making the 2010 blockbuster film *Inception*.[298]

Fan works
Main article: Star Wars fan films
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.[299] Lucasfilm has allowed but not endorsed the creation of fan fiction, as long as it does not attempt to make a profit.[300]

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.[301] Others have used the films to encourage second-level students to integrate technology in the science classroom by making prototype lightsabers.[302] Similarly, psychiatrists in New Zealand and the U.S. have advocated their use in the university classroom to explain different types of psychopathology.[303][304]