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The **Punisher** (**Frank Castle**) is a [fictional character](/wiki/Fictional_character), an [antihero](/wiki/Antihero) appearing in [American comic books](/wiki/American_comic_book) published by [Marvel Comics](/wiki/Marvel_Comics). The character was created by writer [Gerry Conway](/wiki/Gerry_Conway) and artist [John Romita, Sr.](/wiki/John_Romita,_Sr.), with publisher [Stan Lee](/wiki/Stan_Lee) green-lighting the name. The Punisher made his first appearance in [*The Amazing Spider-Man*](/wiki/The_Amazing_Spider-Man) #129 ([cover-dated](/wiki/Cover-date) Feb. 1974).

The Punisher is a [vigilante](/wiki/Vigilante) who employs [murder](/wiki/Murder), [kidnapping](/wiki/Kidnapping), [extortion](/wiki/Extortion), [coercion](/wiki/Coercion), [threats of violence](/wiki/Assault_(tort)), and [torture](/wiki/Torture) in his war on crime. Driven by the deaths of his wife and two children, who were killed by the [mob](/wiki/American_Mafia) during a shootout in [New York City's](/wiki/New_York_City) [Central Park](/wiki/Central_Park), the Punisher wages a one-man war on the mob and all criminals in general by using all manner of conventional war weaponry.[[1]](#cite_note-1) His family's killers were the first to be slain.[[2]](#cite_note-2) A war [veteran](/wiki/Veteran) of the U.S. Marine Corps, **Frank Castle** (born **Francis Castiglione**) is a master of [martial arts](/wiki/Martial_arts), stealth tactics, [guerrilla warfare](/wiki/Guerrilla_warfare), and a wide variety of weapons.

The Punisher's brutal nature and willingness to kill made him a novel character in mainstream [American comic books](/wiki/American_comic_book) in 1974. By the late 1980s, he was part of a wave of psychologically troubled antiheroes and at the height of his popularity, was featured in four monthly publications, including *The Punisher*, *The Punisher War Journal*, *The Punisher War Zone*, and *The Punisher Armory*. Despite his violent actions and dark nature, the Punisher has enjoyed some mainstream success on [television](/wiki/Television), making guest appearances on [*Spider-Man: The Animated Series*](/wiki/Spider-Man_(1994_TV_series)), and [*The Super Hero Squad Show*](/wiki/The_Super_Hero_Squad_Show), where the depiction of his violent behavior was toned down for family viewers. In [feature films](/wiki/Feature_film), [Dolph Lundgren](/wiki/Dolph_Lundgren) portrayed the Punisher in [1989](/wiki/The_Punisher_(1989_film)), as did [Thomas Jane](/wiki/Thomas_Jane) in [2004](/wiki/The_Punisher_(2004_film)), and [Ray Stevenson](/wiki/Ray_Stevenson_(actor)) in [2008](/wiki/Punisher:_War_Zone). [Jon Bernthal](/wiki/Jon_Bernthal) portrays the character in the [second season](/wiki/Daredevil_(season_2)) of [*Marvel's Daredevil*](/wiki/Daredevil_(TV_series)) as a part of the [Marvel Cinematic Universe](/wiki/Marvel_Cinematic_Universe). Bernthal is set to reprise the role in the Punisher's own Netflix series.

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## Publication history[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

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### First appearance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

The Punisher was conceived of by Gerry Conway, writer of *The Amazing Spider-Man*, who helped design the character's distinctive costume. As Conway recalled in 2002, that, "In the '70s, when I was writing comics at [DC](/wiki/DC_Comics) and Marvel, I made it a practice to sketch my own ideas for the costumes of new characters — heroes and villains — which I offered to the artists as a crude suggestion representing the image I had in mind. I had done that with the Punisher at Marvel."[[3]](#cite_note-3) Conway had drawn a character with a small [death's head](/wiki/Totenkopf) skull on one breast. Marvel [art director](/wiki/Art_director) [John Romita, Sr.](/wiki/John_Romita,_Sr.), took the basic design, blew the skull up to huge size, taking up most of the character's chest.[[4]](#cite_note-4) *Amazing Spider-Man* [penciller](/wiki/Penciller) Ross Andru was the first artist to draw the character for publication.

[Stan Lee](/wiki/Stan_Lee), then Marvel's editor-in-chief, recalled in 2005 that he had suggested the character's name: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

[thumb|left|Debut of the Punisher: *The Amazing Spider-Man* #129 (Feb. 1974). Cover art by](/wiki/File:Firstappearance.png) [penciler](/wiki/Penciler) [Gil Kane](/wiki/Gil_Kane) and [inker](/wiki/Inker) [John Romita Sr.](/wiki/John_Romita_Sr.) Appearing for the first time in *The Amazing Spider-Man* #129 (Feb. 1974), the Punisher was initially an [antagonist](/wiki/Antagonist) of [the titular hero](/wiki/Spider-Man). He is portrayed as a bloodthirsty vigilante who has no qualms about killing gangsters, something that most superheroes of the time refrain from doing. [J. Jonah Jameson](/wiki/J._Jonah_Jameson) describes him as "the most newsworthy thing to happen to [New York](/wiki/New_York) since [Boss Tweed](/wiki/William_M._Tweed)". In this appearance, the Punisher is determined to kill Spider-Man, who is wanted for the apparent murder of [Norman Osborn](/wiki/Norman_Osborn).[[5]](#cite_note-5) The Punisher is shown as an athletic fighter, a master marksman, and an able strategist. All he reveals about himself is that he is a former [U.S. Marine](/wiki/U.S._Marine_Corps). He has a fierce temper but also shows signs of considerable frustration over his self-appointed role of killer vigilante. He is engaged in extensive soul-searching as to what is the right thing to do: although he has few qualms about killing, he is outraged when his then-associate, the [Jackal](/wiki/Jackal_(Marvel_Comics)),[[6]](#cite_note-6) apparently kills Spider-Man by treacherous means rather than in honorable combat. Spider-Man, who is himself no stranger to such torment, concludes that the Punisher's problems made his own seem like a "birthday party".[[5]](#cite_note-5) The character was a hit with readers and started to appear on a regular basis, teaming up with both Spider-Man and other heroes such as [Captain America](/wiki/Captain_America) and [Nightcrawler](/wiki/Nightcrawler_(comics)) throughout the 1970s and early 1980s.[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[8]](#cite_note-8)[[9]](#cite_note-9) Conway said the Punisher's popularity took him by surprise, as he had intended him only as a second-tier character.[[10]](#cite_note-10) During his acclaimed run on [*Daredevil*](/wiki/Daredevil_(Marvel_Comics)), writer and artist [Frank Miller](/wiki/Frank_Miller_(comics)) made use of the character, contrasting his attitudes and version of vigilante action to that of the more liberal character of Daredevil.[[11]](#cite_note-11)

### Initial series[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

In the early 1980s, writer and college student [Steven Grant](/wiki/Steven_Grant) was at a comics convention in New York City over the Christmas break. At the time he was living with Duffy Vohland, an employee in Marvel's production department. Vohland encouraged Grant to pitch story ideas to Marvel, and arranged an interview with then-editor-in-chief [Marv Wolfman](/wiki/Marv_Wolfman), with whom Grant would become good friends. Grant sat at Vohland's typewriter for a day and wrote three ideas: One involved the [Black Knight](/wiki/Black_Knight_(comics)) and one was the Punisher, since those were characters he liked that as far as Grant knew, no other Marvel writer was working with at the time. Unbeknownst to Grant, the Punisher, as it turned out, was the lead in a black and white magazine being written by [Archie Goodwin](/wiki/Archie_Goodwin_(comics)), making the character unavailable for Grant's use. A couple of years later Grant began writing for Marvel after another friend, [Roger Stern](/wiki/Roger_Stern), became a Marvel editor there and asked Grant to write something for him. In 1979, Marvel began considering publishing miniseries, which Grant had been lobbying for some time. Grant began pushing for a *Punisher* miniseries, but this was met with disinterest from editorial, as the character was not thought of as one that readers would care about. The following year, Grant collaborated on [*Marvel Team-Up*](/wiki/Marvel_Team-Up) #94 with artist [Mike Zeck](/wiki/Mike_Zeck). In 1984, Zeck illustrated Marvel's first [*Secret Wars*](/wiki/Secret_Wars) miniseries, which raised his profile in the Marvel offices, where editors were thinking in terms of talent "stables" that worked exclusively for each editor. A new editor, [Carl Potts](/wiki/Carl_Potts), was looking for projects, so Grant and Zeck pitched a *Punisher* miniseries to him, and Potts accepted it, over much objection from Marvel management, who told him that he bore full responsibility for it.[[12]](#cite_note-12) The miniseries premiered with a January 1986 cover date. It was bannered on the cover as the first of four; although the series had always been intended to be five issues long, and the banner was an error that recurred throughout the entire run.[[13]](#cite_note-13) The plot changed from Grant's initial story, though the basic concept remained the same.[[12]](#cite_note-12) An important element of the story was a [retcon](/wiki/Retcon) that explains that many of the Punisher's more extreme actions to this point were the result of being poisoned with mind-altering drugs.[[14]](#cite_note-14) [thumb|right|*The Punisher War Zone* #1 (March 1992). Cover art by](/wiki/File:PunisherWarZone1.jpg) [John Romita, Jr.](/wiki/John_Romita,_Jr.) An ongoing series, also titled [*The Punisher*](/wiki/The_Punisher_(1987_series)), premiered the next year. Initially by writer [Mike Baron](/wiki/Mike_Baron) and artist [Klaus Janson](/wiki/Klaus_Janson), it eventually ran 104 issues (July 1987 – July 1995) and spun off two additional ongoing series — [*The Punisher War Journal*](/wiki/The_Punisher_War_Journal) (80 issues, November 1988 – July 1995) and [*The Punisher War Zone*](/wiki/The_Punisher_War_Zone) (41 issues, March 1992 – July 1995), as well as the black-and-white comics magazine *The Punisher Magazine* (16 issues, November 1989 – September 1990) and *The Punisher Armory* (10 issues, no cover dates, starting 1990), a fictional diary detailing "His thoughts! His feelings! His weapons!" (as stated on the cover of issue #1). The Punisher also appeared in numerous [one-shots](/wiki/One-shot_(comics)) and miniseries, and made frequent guest appearances in other Marvel comics, ranging from superhero series to the [Vietnam War](/wiki/Vietnam_War)-era comic [*The 'Nam*](/wiki/The_'Nam).

During this era, the Punisher was assisted by his then-partner, [Microchip](/wiki/Microchip_(comics)). Serving as a [Q](/wiki/Q_(James_Bond)) type figure, he would supply the Punisher with high-tech vehicles and equipment such as armored combat "battle vans" specially built and customized.

Over the next decade, the Punisher would be shown fighting virtually every known criminal organization including the Italian [Mafia](/wiki/Mafia), the [Russian Mafia](/wiki/Russian_Mafia), the Japanese [Yakuza](/wiki/Yakuza), the Colombian and Mexican [drug cartels](/wiki/Illegal_drug_trade), the [Aryan Brotherhood](/wiki/Aryan_Brotherhood), the Chinese [Triads](/wiki/Triad_(underground_societies)), Jamaican [Yardies](/wiki/Yardie), the [Irish Mob](/wiki/Irish_Mob), [biker gangs](/wiki/Outlaw_motorcycle_club), [street gangs](/wiki/Gang), [gunrunning](/wiki/Arms_trafficking) [militias](/wiki/Militia), [muggers](/wiki/Robbery), [killers](/wiki/Murder), [rapists](/wiki/Rape), [psychopaths](/wiki/Psychopathy), violent [racists](/wiki/Racism), [sadists](/wiki/Sadomasochism), [pedophiles](/wiki/Pedophilia), and [corrupt](/wiki/Political_corruption) city officials. He also assaults criminal business enterprises such as drugs, weapons smuggling, [money laundering](/wiki/Money_laundering), and [human trafficking](/wiki/Human_trafficking).

Due to the Punisher's homicidal nature, few of his foes became recurring antagonists, the most notable of these being the severely scarred enforcer [Jigsaw](/wiki/Jigsaw_(Marvel_Comics)). The Punisher also acquired a nemesis in the form of the [Kingpin](/wiki/Kingpin_(comics)),[[15]](#cite_note-15) a longtime Spider-Man and Daredevil foe, and developed enmity with Daredevil himself, who likewise abhorred and fought against the Punisher's brutal methods. Villains such as the [Jackal](/wiki/Jackal_(Marvel_Comics)), [Bushwacker](/wiki/Bushwacker_(comics)), [Doctor Doom](/wiki/Doctor_Doom),[[16]](#cite_note-16) The [Reavers](/wiki/Reavers_(comics)) and [Bullseye](/wiki/Bullseye_(comics)) would be used to provide more of a challenge for the character. In addition, heroes such as Spider-Man, Captain America, Daredevil, [Ghost Rider](/wiki/Ghost_Rider_(comics)),[[17]](#cite_note-17) the [Hulk](/wiki/Hulk_(comics)), [Wolverine](/wiki/Wolverine_(character)),[[18]](#cite_note-18) [Nick Fury](/wiki/Nick_Fury), and [Moon Knight](/wiki/Moon_Knight)[[19]](#cite_note-19) – and, on at least two occasions, the preadolescent team [Power Pack](/wiki/Power_Pack)[[20]](#cite_note-20) – would appear. Often the stories would use the appearance of those heroes to provide commentary on the difference between the Punisher and those more colourful characters. During Don Daley's run on *The Punisher* title, his version of justice was described by the editor as "an [eye for an eye](/wiki/Eye_for_an_eye)".[[21]](#cite_note-21)

### Decline[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

In 1995, Marvel canceled all three ongoing Punisher series due to poor sales. The publisher attempted a re-launch almost immediately, with a new ongoing series [*Punisher*](/wiki/Punisher_(1995_series)), under the new [Marvel Edge](/wiki/Marvel_Edge) [imprint](/wiki/Imprint_(trade_name)), by writer [John Ostrander](/wiki/John_Ostrander), in which the Punisher willingly joined and became the boss of an organized crime family, and later confronted the [X-Men](/wiki/X-Men) and [Nick Fury](/wiki/Nick_Fury). The series ran for 18 issues, from November 1995 to April 1997. Writer [Christopher Golden's](/wiki/Christopher_Golden) four-issue Marvel Knights miniseries [*The Punisher: Purgatory*](/wiki/The_Punisher:_Purgatory) (November 1998 – February 1999) posited a deceased Punisher resurrected as a [supernatural](/wiki/Supernatural) agent of various [angels](/wiki/Angel) and [demons](/wiki/Demon). This version of the character also appeared in a 4-issue mini-series co-starring Wolverine.

### Revivals[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

A 12-issue miniseries by writer [Garth Ennis](/wiki/Garth_Ennis) and artist [Steve Dillon](/wiki/Steve_Dillon), again titled [*The Punisher*](/wiki/The_Punisher_(2000_series)) (April 2000 – March 2001), under the [Marvel Knights](/wiki/Marvel_Knights) imprint, revived the character's popularity. An ongoing series (37 issues, August 2001 – February 2004), primarily by Ennis and Dillon, followed, succeeded in 2004 by an ongoing Ennis series under Marvel's mature-readers imprint, [MAX](/wiki/MAX_(comics)). Returning the character to his lone vigilante roots, those series combined crime focused stories with black humor. The look of the Punisher was modified further removing the white gloves and pairing his traditional skull imprinted shirt with combat trousers, black combat boots and a black trench coat. Castle has used this costume on occasion in mid-2000s stories before *The Punisher War Journal* vol. 2.

### MAX imprint[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|right|Promotional art for *Punisher* vol. 6, #44 (March 2007), by](/wiki/File:PunMax44.jpg) [Tim Bradstreet](/wiki/Tim_Bradstreet). Continuing his run on the character, [Garth Ennis](/wiki/Garth_Ennis) used the freedom of the [MAX](/wiki/MAX_(comics)) [imprint](/wiki/Imprint_(trade_name)) to write more realistic and hard-edged stories than had previously been seen.[[22]](#cite_note-22)[[23]](#cite_note-23) Ennis has stated that he would "like to see less superheroes";[[24]](#cite_note-24) this desire is reflected in the gritty, realistic tone and the anti-heroic portrayals of both the title character and [Nick Fury](/wiki/Nick_Fury), who made two guest appearances in the series. *Punisher* also made it explicit that Castle's timeline was fixed, while Marvel adjusted those of its other characters, with his history never altered or moved up in time. Promotional art for the cover of *Punisher* vol. 6, #44 (March 2007), gave his birth date as February 16, 1950, but that was removed for the published issues.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed). The last issue (#22) of [*PunisherMAX*](/wiki/PunisherMAX) gives his birth year as 1947. After the departure of Ennis as writer, the series was renamed *Punisher: Frank Castle* with issue #66.

The imprint depicts the Punisher being active for almost 30 years, with *Punisher* vol. 6, #19 (June 2005), specifying he had killed approximately 2,000 people. Whereas the traditional Punisher stories remained within the United States and involved antagonists and settings of conventional domestic crime, stories of the MAX Punisher often focus on current events, ranging from [corporate fraud](/wiki/Accounting_scandals) to [sexual slavery](/wiki/Sexual_slavery) and the [War on Terror](/wiki/War_on_Terrorism). Many characters are past or current intelligence and military operatives from governmental agencies like the [CIA](/wiki/Central_Intelligence_Agency), [KGB](/wiki/KGB), [SIS](/wiki/Secret_Intelligence_Service), [SAS](/wiki/Special_Air_Service), militaries and militias from the [Balkans](/wiki/Balkans) and [Middle East](/wiki/Middle_East), also including the [IRA](/wiki/Irish_Republican_Army), all with agendas rooted in past conflicts like the [Cold War](/wiki/Cold_War) or the [Yugoslav wars](/wiki/Yugoslav_wars).

The miniseries [*Born*](/wiki/The_Punisher:_Born) by Garth Ennis and [Darick Robertson](/wiki/Darick_Robertson) further examines Castle's roots, tracing them back to his third tour of the Vietnam War, where he undergoes a psychological and possibly supernatural transformation into the Punisher to survive a massive assault on his fortification by the combined forces of the [Viet Cong](/wiki/Viet_Cong) and the [North Vietnamese Army](/wiki/Vietnam_People's_Army). The one-shot *Punisher: The Tyger*, by Ennis and [John Severin](/wiki/John_Severin), went even further and showed that Castle had lived with murders, deaths and criminals from his childhood.

The *MAX* version of the Punisher ends with the character's death : after killing the [Kingpin](/wiki/Kingpin_(comics)), Castle dies from his own wounds in issue #21 of [*PunisherMAX*](/wiki/PunisherMAX). He is buried in issue #22, as his death sparks a public uprising, killing of the city's criminals.

### ''Punisher War Journal'' (vol. 2)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

In November 2006, a new [*The Punisher War Journal*](/wiki/The_Punisher_War_Journal) series, written by [Matt Fraction](/wiki/Matt_Fraction) and penciled by [Ariel Olivetti](/wiki/Ariel_Olivetti), was released. The first three issues of the book are set during Marvel's "[Civil War](/wiki/Civil_War_(comics))" event. It involves Castle taking on supervillains rather than his traditional non-super-powered criminal antagonists. He has also made appearances in the main *Civil War* series (issues #5–7). Wearing both his traditional costume and his Marvel Knights/MAX attire, and a new costume designed to look like his costume and Captain America's combined, the series pitted the character against a series of super-powered foes while also being involved in crossover events such as "[World War Hulk](/wiki/World_War_Hulk)" and "[Secret Invasion](/wiki/Secret_Invasion)".

### ''The Punisher'' and ''Punisher: Frank Castle''[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[thumb|Cover to *Punisher* vol. 7, #11 (January 2010). Art by Dave Wilkins.](/wiki/Image:Frankencastle.PNG) Marvel relaunched [*The Punisher War Journal*](/wiki/The_Punisher_War_Journal) in 2009 as simply [*Punisher*](/wiki/Punisher_(2009_series)), with a thematic link tied to the events of the "[Dark Reign](/wiki/Dark_Reign_(comics))" storyline and, following the departure of writer [Garth Ennis](/wiki/Garth_Ennis), retitled the Marvel MAX series (formerly *Punisher MAX*) as *Punisher: Frank Castle MAX* and, more recently, as *Punisher: Frank Castle*[[25]](#cite_note-25) or *Frank Castle: The Punisher*[[26]](#cite_note-26) (depending on the source); launching a new series called *PunisherMAX* by [Jason Aaron](/wiki/Jason_Aaron) and [Steve Dillon](/wiki/Steve_Dillon).[[27]](#cite_note-27) As part of his work on the character, [Rick Remender](/wiki/Rick_Remender) wrote the one-shot title *Dark Reign: The List – Punisher*, which, as part of the "Dark Reign" storyline, shows the character dismembered and decapitated by [Daken](/wiki/Daken).[[28]](#cite_note-28) Following this, the main *Punisher* series was renamed *FrankenCastle* and featured a Castle who is resurrected by [Morbius](/wiki/Morbius,_the_Living_Vampire) and the Legion of Monsters as a patchwork [Frankenstein](/wiki/Frankenstein's_Monster_(Marvel_Comics))-like creature.[[29]](#cite_note-29)[[30]](#cite_note-30) He joins up with the Legion of Monsters to help protect the monsters of Monster Metropolis from the Hunter of Monster Special Force.[[31]](#cite_note-31) At the conclusion of the series, the character was transformed back into a normal human.

### ''Punisher: In the Blood''[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

In 2010, a Punisher series was released titled [*Punisher: In the Blood*](/wiki/Punisher:_In_the_Blood). It is a five-part series that is meant to take place after *FrankenCastle*. In this series, the Punisher faces Jigsaw once again.[[32]](#cite_note-32)

### The Punisher (2011)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

A violent gang war resulted in the murders of nearly 30 people at a wedding reception, including the groom, leaving the bride, U.S. Marine Sergeant [Rachel Cole-Alves](/wiki/Rachel_Cole-Alves), a widow just hours after getting married. Frank had connections with one of the detectives on the case and used the information he gave him to kill members of the Exchange, the group responsible, before the police had a chance to question them.

Later, the Punisher loses an eye while fighting a new version of the [Vulture](/wiki/Vulture_(comics)).[[33]](#cite_note-33) The Punisher later confronts a recuperated Rachel Cole-Alves in a Hotel where members of the Exchange were meeting. Together they kill the members. It is later revealed to be part of a plan to lure the Punisher to 727 Varick level 19 suite A. Both Rachel Cole-Alves and the Punisher go to the location only to find it to be a trap. They later find out that [Daredevil](/wiki/Daredevil_(Marvel_comics)) has the Omega Drive.[[34]](#cite_note-34) Later Rachel Cole-Alves and the Punisher find Daredevil and [Spider-Man](/wiki/Spider-Man). They then work together to destroy the drive.[[35]](#cite_note-35)[[36]](#cite_note-36) The Punisher and Cole-Alves later succeed in killing the heads of the Exchange, but in the process, Cole-Alves accidentally kills NYPD Homicide Detective Walter Bolt.[[37]](#cite_note-37) On the run from the NYPD, Cole-Alves eventually tries to commit suicide by police, only to be captured and sent to prison. Castle eluded capture.[[38]](#cite_note-38) Cole-Alves is sentenced to death for her crimes. Meanwhile, Spider-Man confronts Castle, but he manages to escape. Spider-Man then talks to the Avengers, stating that Castle is a problem and needs to be taken care of. Wolverine, believing that lethal methods are sometimes justified, refuses to assist.[[39]](#cite_note-39) Black Widow tracks Castle to South America, where they fight to a standstill before Widow gets distracted by a group of mercenaries guarding a town full of sick villagers, abandoning the fight to help them.[[40]](#cite_note-40) Thor pursues Castle next, although all he wants is to talk Castle into turning himself in.[[41]](#cite_note-41) Castle sneaks back into the US to try and break Cole-Alves out of prison. The Avengers set a trap, figuring Castle would target a transport unit. Castle sees through the deception, and rescues the real Cole-Alves by disguising himself as Iron Man.[[42]](#cite_note-42) Wolverine was later revealed to be the source of his information, and Logan helps Cole-Alves escape while Castle stays behind to battle the Avengers and buy time. Castle ends up in a special underwater prison, while Cole-Alves resurfaces in Los Angeles, shooting a mugger while wearing the Skull insignia.[[43]](#cite_note-43)

### Thunderbolts[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

As part of the [*Marvel NOW!*](/wiki/Marvel_NOW!) event, Punisher becomes a member of [Red Hulk's](/wiki/Thunderbolt_Ross) [Thunderbolts](/wiki/Thunderbolts_(comics)). Their first mission is to take down the civilian-murdering dictator of an island nation.[[44]](#cite_note-44)

### The Punisher (2014)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

As a part of [All New Marvel Now](/wiki/Marvel_NOW!), *The Punisher* solo series is written by [Nathan Edmondson](/wiki/Nathan_Edmondson) and illustrated by Mitch Gerads. The Punisher moves to Los Angeles following a drug trail, and he is being targeted by a military hit squad.[[45]](#cite_note-45)

### Original Sin[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

During his time in Los Angeles, the Punisher becomes involved in [the investigation](/wiki/Original_Sin_(comics)) of the murder of [Uatu](/wiki/Uatu) when he is recruited by an unknown agent – later revealed to be [Nick Fury](/wiki/Nick_Fury) – to track various deceased eldritch creatures with [Doctor Strange](/wiki/Doctor_Strange), their combined occult and firearm knowledge allowing them to determine what killed various creatures that Fury had killed in his career as 'the Man on the Wall'.[Template:Issue](/wiki/Template:Issue)

### Secret Wars[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

During the [*Secret Wars*](/wiki/Secret_Wars_(2015_comic_book)) storyline, the Punisher crashes the Kingpin's viewing party of the incursion between [Earth-616](/wiki/Earth-616) and [Earth-1610](/wiki/Ultimate_Marvel). He informs the villains present that since he cannot take them with him, he is going to have to do something with all of his bullets.[[46]](#cite_note-46) After massacring the supervillain gathering, the Punisher is approached by the [Howling Commandos](/wiki/Howling_Commandos#Black_Ops_version), who request his aid in completing one final mission before the world ends. The Punisher agrees to help, and is airlifted to [Tikrit](/wiki/Tikrit), where he works on "punishing" the Black Dawn, a terrorist group that had been filming themselves executing American hostages, including a former associate of the Punisher's.[[47]](#cite_note-47) The Punisher decimates the Black Dawn, and dies from gunshot wounds as the Earth is destroyed by the Incursions.[[48]](#cite_note-48)

## Characterization[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

The character has been described as being obsessed with vengeance;[[49]](#cite_note-49) [Garth Ennis](/wiki/Garth_Ennis) noted that the character of the Punisher "sees the world in very black and white terms, he solves his problems with utter finality" and that "his response to any problem: when in doubt, hit back hard."[[50]](#cite_note-50) The writer Steven Grant noted that: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

Punisher co-creator [Gerry Conway](/wiki/Gerry_Conway) stated that "He's a great [Rorschach test](/wiki/Rorschach_test). What's given him some sustainability is, you can put into him whatever you want, as opposed to Spider-Man, who truly is who he is and shouldn't be changed. The Punisher is a thin character on his own merits, but that allows for a lot of interpretations and different angles of approach."[[10]](#cite_note-10)

## Skills, weapons, and abilities[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

The Punisher is the recipient of multi-disciplinary military training from the [United States Marine Corps](/wiki/United_States_Marine_Corps), [United States Marine Corps Force Reconnaissance](/wiki/United_States_Marine_Corps_Force_Reconnaissance). While a Marine, he also received training from the [Airborne School](/wiki/United_States_Army_Airborne_School) and [U.S. Navy SEALs](/wiki/United_States_Navy_SEALs) as well as cross-training with the [Australian Special Air Service Regiment](/wiki/Australian_Special_Air_Service_Regiment) during the [Vietnam War](/wiki/Vietnam_War). In addition, since beginning his work as the Punisher, Castle has used his military discipline and training techniques to update and expand his skills in areas that aid in his mission (disguise, acting, use of non-military weapons, etc.). From this training, Punisher is proficient in not only basic infantry skills, but in special operations, which includes the use and maintenance of specialized firearms and explosive ordnance. He is highly trained in infiltration into heavily guarded enemy territories and structures for the purpose of assassination, capture, and military intelligence. Also, he is trained in various forms of camouflage and stealth. He is also highly adept at [hand-to-hand combat](/wiki/Hand-to-hand_combat), and has been trained in multiple forms of [martial arts](/wiki/Martial_arts) such as Nash [Ryu](/wiki/Ryū_(school)) [Jujutsu](/wiki/Jujutsu), [Ninjutsu](/wiki/Ninjutsu), [Shorin-ryu Karate](/wiki/Shōrin-ryū), [Hwa Rang Do](/wiki/Hwa_Rang_Do), and [Chin Na](/wiki/Chin_Na).[[51]](#cite_note-51) Both [Nick Fury](/wiki/Nick_Fury) and [Tony Stark](/wiki/Iron_Man) have commented on how extraordinarily high his pain tolerance is.[Template:Cn](/wiki/Template:Cn) He does not take painkillers, as he feels that their benefit of dulling pain is not worth the side effects of drowsiness and slowed reflexes.

He maintains multiple safehouses and vehicles around the greater [New York City](/wiki/New_York_City) area as well as multiple forged identities and bank accounts (most of the funds and equipment aiding him in his work being taken from the criminals he hunts). The Punisher has a [Kevlar](/wiki/Kevlar) uniform which protects him from most gunfire, though he can still suffer concussive injury or penetration from sufficient or repeated impacts. The bright white skull in his chest is used both to intimidate his enemies and to lure their fire to the more heavily protected area of his armor. The design was supposedly taken from either a [Vietcong](/wiki/Vietcong) [sniper](/wiki/Sniper),[[52]](#cite_note-52) or the demon [Olivier](/wiki/Olivier_(comics)).[[53]](#cite_note-53) The Punisher has been using technology derived from super-villains and other costumed characters, such as the [Green Goblin's](/wiki/Green_Goblin) pumpkin bombs,[[54]](#cite_note-54) a modified [Goblin Glider](/wiki/Goblin_Glider),[[55]](#cite_note-55) and a [Doctor Octopus](/wiki/Doctor_Octopus) tentacle that he can shrink down for easy storage via [Pym Particles](/wiki/Henry_Pym#Powers_and_abilities).

Aside from his physical prowess, the Punisher also has complete control of his mind and consciousness, providing a strong resistance against psychic and telepathic powers that are used against him. When [Letha](/wiki/Letha) and [Lascivious](/wiki/Lascivious_(comics)) tried to control Punisher's mind, Punisher scoffs at their attempt saying "It doesn't feel different from any other day".[[56]](#cite_note-56)

## Reception[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

The Punisher was named the 19th Greatest Comic Book Character of All Time by [movie](/wiki/Movie) magazine [*Empire*](/wiki/Empire_(magazine)), saying that he is the "grimmest and most compelling of characters" and praising the [*Punisher MAX*](/wiki/The_Punisher:_Frank_Castle) series.[[57]](#cite_note-57) [IGN](/wiki/IGN) ranked Punisher at #27 in Top 100 Comic Book Heroes, describing him as "no superhero".

"Frank Castle has spent years exacting vengeance for the deaths of his family by punishing criminals everywhere. His skull insignia inspires fear throughout the underworld. But Punisher's appeal rests on more than his ability to do what the rest of Marvel's heroes won't. He's a tragic figure – even a profoundly selfish one in some ways. The sad truth is that Frank Castle can't survive without killing, and his new job fulfills him in ways his family never could."[[58]](#cite_note-58)

He is ranked #39 in [*Wizard Magazine*](/wiki/Wizard_(magazine))***s Top 200 Comic Book Characters.***[***Template:Citation needed***](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[IGN](/wiki/IGN) later listed the *Punisher* series #15 in their 25 Best Comic Runs of the Decade, praising [Garth Ennis's](/wiki/Garth_Ennis) ten-year timeline of the character.[[59]](#cite_note-59) Writer and director [Joss Whedon](/wiki/Joss_Whedon) has been critical of the character, referring to the Punisher as "a coward" in an issue of [*Wizard*](/wiki/Wizard_(magazine)),[[60]](#cite_note-60) and stating in an interview with Jeff Jensen of [*Entertainment Weekly*](/wiki/Entertainment_Weekly),

"One of the things I like about the [X-Men](/wiki/X-Men) is they're not killing people. I miss the idea of... heroes who stop that kind of thing from happening. Here's why I'm not running Marvel: If I was, I would kill the Punisher. I don't believe in what he does. The Punisher just shoots up places. And if you're telling me he's never hit an innocent, then I'm telling you, that's fascist crap".[[61]](#cite_note-61)

## Supporting characters[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Despite wanting to work alone, the Punisher has a few supporting characters to help fight crime. [Microchip](/wiki/Microchip_(comics)) assisted Castle by building and supplying weapons and technology and providing friendship. During the "Civil War", he was aided by [Stuart Clarke](/wiki/Rampage_(Marvel_Comics)) for a short time. Various police officers and detectives have assisted the Punisher, most notably [Lynn Michaels](/wiki/Lynn_Michaels) and [Lt. Martin Soap](/wiki/Martin_Soap). Lynn Michaels was a police officer who teamed up with Castle to take down a serial rapist and later quit the force to become a vigilante. Martin Soap was secretly allied with the Punisher and gave him information on his targets from the police database.

## Other versions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

## In other media[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) The character of the Punisher has appeared in many types of media. Since his first appearance in 1974, he has appeared in television, films, and video games — each on multiple occasions — and his name, symbol, and image have appeared on products and merchandise.

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

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* [Template:Comicbookdb](/wiki/Template:Comicbookdb)

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