

Practical Exam

ICT WORKSHOP

RUSHIK RATHOD
20DCS103 DEPSTAR CSE

The Avengers, American comic strip superhero team who's frequently changing roster often included some of the most popular characters in the Marvel Comics universe. Billed as "Earth's mightiest super-heroes," the team was created by writer Stan Lee and artist Jack Kirby, and it debuted in *The Avengers* no. 1 (September 1963).

Inspired by the success of DC Comics' *Justice League of America*, which featured characters such as Superman, Batman, and Wonder Woman, Marvel sought to unite its biggest names in a single book. *The Avengers*, however, was anything but a carbon copy of *Justice League*. Marvel's team was characterized by internal conflict, and it owed its existence largely to the machinations of a villain. Loki, the Norse god of mischief, maneuvers his half-brother, the thunder god Thor, into a battle against the Hulk. This fracas also attracts the attention of Iron Man and the crime-fighting duo of Ant-Man and the Wasp. Although this quartet at first believes the Hulk to be the villain responsible for an act of railway sabotage, Loki quickly emerges as the real culprit and suffers a decisive defeat. Before the heroes disperse, Ant-Man suggests that they make their association a permanent one, and the Avengers (a name suggested by the Wasp) are born.



The team's lineup changed almost immediately, with the departure of the Hulk and the induction of Captain America, who had been frozen in a block of ice since the end of the World War II.

In its next roster shuffle, *The Avengers* further distinguished itself from *Justice League of America* by questioning the idea of heroism itself. Whereas the JLA members were all unambiguously heroic, more than a few Avengers started their careers as villains. When Thor, Giant-Man (the former Ant-Man, who would later change his name again to Goliath), and the Wasp simultaneously leave the team, Captain America finds himself heading a new squad of Avengers, each of whom has a checkered past. The bow-wielding Hawkeye previously fought against Iron Man, whereas Quicksilver, a mutant speedster reminiscent of DC's Flash, and the Scarlet Witch, a young woman with the power to alter probabilities, had been members of the Brotherhood of Evil Mutants along with their father, Magneto. The theme of redemption is reinforced when Wonder Man, introduced as a villain in *The Avengers* no. 9 (October 1964), returns from the dead as a hero and takes his place in the Avengers' ranks.

From its inception, *The Avengers* was a hit, and the series' initial success doubtless owes much to the power-packed renderings of Kirby, who had not only cocreated Captain America with writer Joe Simon in 1941 but had also collaborated with Lee on such Marvel mainstay titles as *The Fantastic Four*, *The Incredible Hulk*, and *Journey into Mystery*. Artist Don Heck ably took over the penciling reins after Kirby's departure, and Lee continued writing the book until he handed the series off to Roy Thomas in 1966. Over the next several years Thomas worked with such notable Marvel artists as Heck, John Buscema, Gene Colan, Barry Windsor-Smith, Sal Buscema, and Neal Adams, whose brief run on the title in 1971 is widely regarded as among the finest *Avengers* work ever done.

Under Thomas's direction, story arcs in *The Avengers* became increasingly complex and character-oriented, flowering into a superpowered melodrama of operatic proportions. The "Kree-Skrull War," an intergalactic saga that placed the Avengers at the centre of a battle between two alien races, was perhaps the finest expression of this trend. Among the many notable characters introduced during Thomas's tenure were such team members as the Vision (an emotionally tortured android with the ability to make himself intangible) and such villains as the Grim Reaper (the vengeance-crazed brother of Wonder Man) and Ultron (a world-conquering robot who sought to destroy his creator, Hank Pym, the former Ant-Man). Thomas left the series after issue no. 104 (October 1972), to be succeeded by Steve Englehart, who authored a seminal time-travel arc involving the villain Kang the Conqueror and his time-displaced doppelgangers Rama-Tut and Immortus. Other writers in this period included Jim Shooter—who crafted "the Korvac Saga," a massive tale involving cosmic forces that span the entire Marvel Universe—Roger Stern, and John Byrne.

During the 1970s and '80s, the Avengers' membership would turn over several times while growing dramatically. By the mid-1980s the New York-based team had reached such unwieldy proportions that a second squad—the West Coast Avengers—was formed in Los Angeles, under the initial leadership of Hawkeye. In 1989 a team of misfits styling itself as the Great Lakes Avengers debuted, but it never achieved official standing with either of the bicoastal teams. The 1990s was replete with *Avengers* miniseries and other ancillary titles executed by various creative teams, including Kurt Busiek's hugely popular, time-spanning *Avengers Forever* (1998–99). Busiek chronicled most of the team's adventures in *The Avengers* from 1997 to 2002, collaborating with artists such as George Pérez, Stuart Immonen, and John Romita, Jr., before leaving the series in the hands of writer Geoff Johns. In 2002 writer Mark Millar and artist Bryan Hitch collaborated on a reinvention of the Avengers for Marvel's "Ultimate" line. Titled *the Ultimates*, the book boasted strong sales throughout its run, but initial critical enthusiasm waned as the series progressed.

A young team of superheroes bands together in *Young Avengers*, a series that debuted in 2005. The book was praised for its light tone and its realistic depiction of relationships, particularly that of same-sex couple Hulkling and Wiccan. During Marvel's "Civil War" event (2006–07), two rival teams of Avengers emerged. Iron Man organized the official team, the Mighty Avengers, who supported and enforced the Superhuman Registration Act, a law that mandated that superheroes divulge their identities to the government. In contrast, the New Avengers were an underground team of heroes who opposed the act and included Luke Cage, Spider-Man, and Wolverine as members. Later, Norman Osborn, the original Green Goblin, became a high ranking government official and organized his own Dark Avengers, including disguised supervillains. After Osborn fell from power, there was again one Avengers team, although it was not long before secondary Avengers squads emerged once more. Debuting in 2010 were *Avengers Academy*, which detailed the Avengers' training program for young superhumans; *Secret Avengers*, about a superhuman team of covert operatives; and a relaunched New Avengers. Following the events of the Avengers vs. X-Men crossover in 2012, *Uncanny Avengers* launched with a lineup that included members of both of Marvel's premier super teams.

The Avengers were depicted in numerous animated films and television series, and the team made its live-action film debut in *The Avengers* (2012). Directed and cowritten by Joss Whedon, the creator of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, the film united the various properties in the Marvel Cinematic Universe in a blockbuster production that was a hit with both fans and critics. *The Avengers* earned more than \$1.5 billion worldwide, making it one of the top-grossing films of all time. Whedon and cast reunited for the sequel, *The Avengers: Age of Ultron* (2015), which was the screen debut of one of the group's most-implacable foes. Joe and Anthony Russo, who had helmed the Marvel films *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014) and *Captain America: Civil War* (2016), took over in the director's chair for *Avengers: Infinity War* (2018). Eighteen films over the span of 10 years had built up to *Avengers: Infinity War*, whose story

pitted virtually every major character in the Marvel Cinematic Universe against the Mad Titan, Thanos. That massive narrative arc was concluded with Avengers: Endgame (2019).

❖ List of Avengers :

1. Iron Man
2. Thor
3. Hulk
4. Captain America
5. Wasp
6. Ant Man
7. Black Panther

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Thank you... :)