

While spending the summer with the [Dursleys](#), the twelve-year-old [Harry Potter](#) is visited by [Dobby](#), a [house-elf](#). Dobby says Harry is in danger and must promise not to return to [Hogwarts](#). When Harry refuses, Dobby uses magic to destroy a pudding made by Aunt Petunia. Believing that Harry created the mess, Uncle Vernon locks him in his room. The [Ministry of Magic](#) sends a notice accusing Harry of performing underage magic and threatening to expel him from Hogwarts.

The Weasley brothers [Ron](#), [Fred](#), and [George](#) arrive in their father's [flying car](#) and take Harry to their home. When Harry and the Weasleys go to [Diagon Alley](#) for school supplies, they meet [Gilderoy Lockhart](#), a celebrity author who is the new [Defence Against the Dark Arts](#) professor. At [King's Cross station](#), Harry and Ron cannot enter [Platform 9¾](#) to board the [Hogwarts Express](#), so they fly to Hogwarts in the enchanted car.

During the school year, Harry hears a strange voice emanating from the castle walls. [Argus Filch](#)'s cat is found Petrified, along with a warning scrawled on the wall: "The Chamber of Secrets has been opened. Enemies of the heir, beware". Harry learns that the Chamber supposedly houses a monster that attacks [Muggle-born](#) students, and which only the Heir of Slytherin can control. During a [Quidditch](#) match, a rogue [Bludger](#) strikes Harry, breaking his arm. Professor Lockhart botches an attempt to mend it, which sends Harry to the hospital wing. Dobby visits Harry and reveals that he jinxed the Bludger and sealed the portal at King's Cross. He also tells Harry that house-elves are bound to serve a master, and cannot be freed unless their master gives them clothing.

After another attack from the monster, students attend a defensive duelling class. During the class, Harry displays the rare ability to speak [Parseltongue](#), the language of snakes when [Draco Malfoy](#) released a snake to attack another student, [Justin Finch-Fletchly](#). [Moaning Myrtle](#), a ghost who haunts a bathroom, shows Harry and his friends a [diary](#) that was left in her stall. It belonged to [Tom Riddle](#), a student who witnessed another student's death when the Chamber was last opened. During the next attack by the monster, [Hermione Granger](#) is petrified.

Harry and Ron discover that the monster is a [Basilisk](#), a gigantic snake that can kill victims with a direct gaze and Petrify them with an indirect gaze. Harry realizes the Basilisk is producing the voice he hears in the walls. After Ron's sister [Ginny](#) is abducted and taken into the Chamber, Harry and Ron discover the Chamber entrance in Myrtle's bathroom. When they force Lockhart to enter with them, he confesses that the stories he told of his heroic adventures are fabrications. He attempts to erase the boys' memories, but his spell backfires and obliterates his own memory.

Harry finds an unconscious Ginny in the Chamber. A manifestation of Tom Riddle appears and reveals that he is [Lord Voldemort](#) and the Heir of Slytherin. After explaining that he opened the Chamber, Riddle summons the Basilisk to kill Harry. Dumbledore's phoenix [Fawkes](#) arrives, bringing Harry the [Sorting Hat](#). While Fawkes blinds the Basilisk, Harry pulls the [Sword of Gryffindor](#) from the Hat. He slays the serpent, then stabs the diary with a Basilisk fang, destroying it and the manifestation of Riddle. Later, Harry liberates Dobby by tricking his master into giving him clothing.

At the end of the novel, the Petrified students are cured and Gryffindor wins the House Cup.