Star Wars

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars>

 

***Star Wars*** is an [epic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic_film) [space opera](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_opera) [franchise](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media_franchise) initially conceived by [George Lucas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Lucas) during the [1970s](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1970s_in_film) and significantly expanded since that time. The first film in the franchise was simply titled [*Star Wars*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_IV:_A_New_Hope), but later had the subtitle *Episode IV: A New Hope* added to distinguish it from its sequels and prequels.[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-Lucas-0) *Star Wars* was released on May 25, 1977 by [20th Century Fox](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/20th_Century_Fox), and became a worldwide [pop culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pop_culture) phenomenon, initially spawning two sequels. Twenty-two years after *Star Wars* was released, Lucas began the release of a second trilogy as a [prequel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prequel) to the original trilogy.

The franchise has spawned other media including [books](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book), [television series](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Television_series), [video games](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_game), and [comic books](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comic_book). These supplements to the film trilogies comprise the [Star Wars Expanded Universe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Expanded_Universe), and have resulted in significant development of the series' [fictional universe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fictional_universe). As of 2008, the overall [box office](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Box_office) revenue generated by the six *Star Wars* films has totalled approximately $4.3 billion, making it the third-[highest grossing film series](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Highest_grossing_film_series).[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-Earnings-1)

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**Setting**

The events depicted in *Star Wars* media take place in a [fictional galaxy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_galaxy). Many species of [alien creatures](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Star_Wars_creatures) (often [humanoid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humanoid)) are depicted. [Robotic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robot) [droids](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Droid) are also commonplace and are generally built to serve their owners. Space travel is common, and many planets in the galaxy are members of a [Galactic Republic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galactic_Republic), later reorganized as the [Galactic Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galactic_Empire_%28Star_Wars%29).

One of the prominent elements of *Star Wars* is the "[Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Force_%28Star_Wars%29)", which is an [omnipresent](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Omnipresence) form of energy which can be harnessed by those with that ability. It is described in the first produced film as "an energy field created by all living things [that] surrounds us, penetrates us, [and] binds the galaxy together."[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_4-2) The Force allows users to perform a variety of [supernatural](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supernatural) feats (such as [telekinesis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telekinesis), [clairvoyance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clairvoyance), [precognition](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Precognition), and [mind control](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mind_control)) and also can amplify certain physical traits, such as speed and reflexes; these abilities can vary from user to user and can be improved through training. While the Force can be used for good, it has a [dark side](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_side_%28Star_Wars%29) that, when pursued, imbues users with hatred, aggression, and malevolence. The six films feature the [Jedi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jedi), who use the Force for good, and the [Sith](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sith), who use the dark side for evil in an attempt to take over the galaxy.[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_1-3)[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_2-4)[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_3-5)[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_4-2)[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_5-6)[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_6-7)

**Feature films**

The *Star Wars* franchise began as a film series. The **original trilogy** comprised three films: [*Star Wars*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_IV:_A_New_Hope), released on May 25, 1977, [*Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_V:_The_Empire_Strikes_Back), released on May 21, 1980, and [*Star Wars Episode VI: Return of the Jedi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_VI:_Return_of_the_Jedi), released on May 25, 1983. The [opening crawl](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_opening_crawl) of the sequels disclosed that they were numbered as "Episode V" and "Episode VI" respectively[*[citation needed](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*], though the films were generally advertised solely under their subtitles. Once *Star Wars* became a success and sequels were realized, Lucas numbered the initial film as the fourth episode in his series and gave it the subtitle *A New Hope* when the film was re-released in 1981.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_4-2)[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_5-6)[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_6-7)

In 1997, to correspond with the twentieth anniversary of the release of *Star Wars*, Lucas released "Special ions" of the three films to theaters. The re-releases featured alterations to the original films, primarily motivated by the improvement of [CGI](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer-generated_imagery) and other [special effects](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_effect) technologies, which allowed visuals that were not possible to achieve at the time of the original filmmaking. Lucas continued to make changes to the original trilogy for subsequent releases, such as the first ever [DVD](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DVD) release of the trilogy on September 21, 2004.[[9]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-8)

On May 19, 1999, Lucas released the first of the long-awaited **prequel trilogy**, [*Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_I:_The_Phantom_Menace). This was followed by [*Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_II:_Attack_of_the_Clones) on May 16, 2002, and [*Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_III:_Revenge_of_the_Sith) on May 19, 2005.[[10]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-release_dates-9)

**Plot overview**

The prequel trilogy follows the upbringing of [Anakin Skywalker](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anakin_Skywalker), who is discovered by the Jedi Knight [Qui-Gon Jinn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qui-Gon_Jinn). He is believed to be the "Chosen One" foretold by Jedi [prophecy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prophecy) to bring balance to the Force. The [Jedi Council](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jedi_Council), led by [Yoda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yoda), sense that his future is clouded with fear, but reluctantly allow Qui-Gon's apprentice [Obi-Wan Kenobi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Obi-Wan_Kenobi) to train Anakin after Qui-Gon is killed by the Sith Lord [Darth Maul](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darth_Maul). At the same time, the planet [Naboo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naboo) is under attack, and its ruler, [Queen Padmé Amidala](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Padm%C3%A9_Amidala), seeks the assistance of the Jedi to repel the attack. The Sith Lord Darth Sidious secretly planned the attack to give his alias, [Senator Palpatine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palpatine), a pretense to overthrow the Supreme Chancellor of the Galactic Republic.[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_1-3) The remainder of the prequel trilogy chronicles Anakin's fall to the dark side, as Sidious attempts to create an army to defeat the Jedi and lure Anakin to be his apprentice.[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_2-4) Anakin and Padmé fall in love and eventually she becomes pregnant. Anakin soon succumbs to his anger, becoming the Sith Lord [Darth Vader](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darth_Vader). While Sidious re-organizes the Republic into the Galactic Empire, Vader participates in the extermination of the Jedi Order, culminating in a [lightsaber](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lightsaber) battle between him and Obi-Wan. After defeating his former apprentice, Obi-Wan leaves Vader for dead - but Sidious arrives shortly after to save him and put him into a suit of black armor that keeps him alive. At the same time, Padmé dies while giving birth to twins. The twins are hidden from Vader and not told of their true parents.[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_3-5)

The original trilogy begins 19 years later as Vader nears completion of the massive [Death Star](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_Star) space station which will allow him and Sidious, now the Emperor, to crush the [rebellion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rebel_Alliance) which has formed against the evil empire. He captures [Princess Leia Organa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Princess_Leia_Organa) who has stolen the plans to the Death Star and hidden them in droid [R2-D2](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R2-D2). R2-D2, along with his counterpart [C-3PO](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-3PO), escape to the planet [Tatooine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tatooine). There, the droids are purchased by [Luke Skywalker](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luke_Skywalker), son of Anakin, and his step-uncle and aunt. While Luke is cleaning R2-D2, he accidentally triggers a message put into the robot by Leia, who asks for assistance from Obi-Wan. Luke later assists the droids in finding the Jedi Knight, who is now passing as an old hermit under the alias Ben Kenobi. Obi-Wan tells Luke of his father's greatness, but says that he was killed by Vader.[[12]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-11) Obi-Wan and Luke hire the [Corellian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corellian) space pilot and smuggler [Han Solo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Han_Solo) and his [Wookie](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wookie) co-pilot [Chewbacca](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chewbacca) to take them to the rebels. Obi-Wan begins to teach Luke about the Force, but allows himself to be killed in a showdown with Vader during the rescue of Leia. His sacrifice allows the group to escape with the plans that allow the rebels to destroy the Death Star.[[3]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_4-2)

Vader continues to hunt down the rebels, and begins building a second Death Star. Luke travels to find Yoda to become trained as a Jedi, but is interrupted when Vader lures him into a trap by capturing Han and the others. Vader reveals that he is Luke's father and attempts to turn him to the dark side.[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_5-6) Luke escapes, and returns to his training with Yoda. He learns that he must face his father before he can become a Jedi, and that Leia is his twin sister. As the rebels attack the second Death Star, Luke confronts Vader under the watch of the Emperor. Instead of convincing Luke to join the dark side, the young Jedi defeats Vader in a lightsaber duel and is able to convince him that there is still some good in him. Vader kills the Emperor before succumbing to his own injuries, and the second Death Star is destroyed, restoring freedom to the galaxy.[[8]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_6-7)

### Themes

*See also:* [*Philosophy and religion in Star Wars*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_and_religion_in_Star_Wars)*and* [*The Force (Star Wars)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Force_%28Star_Wars%29)

*Star Wars* features elements such as (Jedi) knights, [witches](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Witches_of_Dathomir), and [princesses](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Princess) that are related to archetypes of the fantasy genre.[[13]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-EmpireOfDreams-12) The *Star Wars* world, unlike science-fiction and fantasy films that featured sleek and futuristic settings, was portrayed as dirty and grimy. Lucas' vision of a "used universe" was further popularized in the science fiction-horror films [*Alien*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alien_%28film%29),[[14]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-Legacy-13) which was set on a dirty space freighter; [*Mad Max 2*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mad_Max_2), which is set in a post-apocalyptic desert; and [*Blade Runner*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blade_Runner), which is set in a crumbling, dirty city of the future. Lucas made a conscious effort to parallel scenes and dialogue between films, and especially to parallel the journeys of Luke Skywalker with that of his father Anakin when making the prequels.[[4]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_1-3)

### Technical information

All six films of the *Star Wars* series were shot in an [aspect ratio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aspect_ratio_%28image%29) of 2.35:1. The original trilogy was shot with [anamorphic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anamorphic) lenses. Episodes IV and V were shot in [Panavision](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panavision), while Episode VI was shot in Joe Dunton Camera (JDC) scope. Episode I was shot with Hawk anamorphic lenses on [Arriflex](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arri) cameras, and Episodes II and III were shot with Sony's [CineAlta](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CineAlta) high-definition digital cameras.[[15]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-14) Lucas hired [Ben Burtt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ben_Burtt) to oversee the sound effects on *A New Hope*.

Burtt's accomplishment was such that the [Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Academy_of_Motion_Picture_Arts_and_Sciences) presented him with a Special Achievement Award because it had no award at the time for the work he had done.[[16]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-15) Lucasfilm developed the [THX](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/THX) sound reproduction standard for *Return of the Jedi*.[[17]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-16) The [scores for the six *Star Wars* films](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_music) were composed by [John Williams](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Williams). Lucas' design for *Star Wars* involved a grand musical sound, with [leitmotifs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leitmotif) for different characters and important concepts. Williams' *Star Wars* title theme has become one of the most famous and well-known musical compositions in modern music history.[[18]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-17)

### Production history

#### Original trilogy

In [1971](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1971_in_film), [Universal Studios](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_Studios) agreed to make [*American Graffiti*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Graffiti) and *Star Wars* in a two-picture contract, although *Star Wars* was later rejected in its early concept stages. *American Graffiti* was completed in 1973 and, a few months later, Lucas wrote a short summary called "The Journal of the Whills", which told the tale of the training of apprentice C.J. Thorpe as a "Jedi-Bendu" space commando by the legendary Mace Windy.[[19]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-18) Frustrated that his story was too difficult to understand, Lucas then wrote a 13-page treatment called *The Star Wars*, which was a loose remake of [Akira Kurosawa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akira_Kurosawa)'s [*The Hidden Fortress*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Hidden_Fortress).[[20]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-19) By 1974, he had expanded the treatment into a rough draft screenplay, adding elements such as the [Sith](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sith), the [Death Star](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_Star), and a young boy as the protagonist named [Annikin Starkiller](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anakin_Skywalker). For the second draft, Lucas made heavy simplifications, and also introduced the young hero on a farm as [Luke](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luke_Skywalker). Annikin became Luke's father, a wise [Jedi knight](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jedi_knight). The "[Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Force_%28Star_Wars%29)" was also introduced as a supernatural power. The next draft removed the father character and replaced him with a substitute named [Ben Kenobi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ben_Kenobi), and in 1976 a fourth draft had been prepared for principal photography. The film was titled *Adventures of Luke Starkiller, as taken from the Journal of the Whills, Saga I: The Star Wars*. During production, Lucas changed Luke's name to Skywalker and altered the title to simply *The Star Wars* and finally *Star Wars*.[[21]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-20)

At that point, Lucas was not expecting the film to become part of a series. The fourth draft of the script underwent subtle changes that made it more satisfying as a self-contained film, ending with the destruction of the [Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galactic_Empire_%28Star_Wars%29) itself by way of destroying the Death Star. However, Lucas *had* previously conceived of the film as the first in a series of adventures. Later, he realised the film would not in fact be the first in the sequence, but a film in the second trilogy in the saga. This is stated explicitly in George Lucas' preface to the 1994 reissue of [*Splinter of the Mind's Eye*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Splinter_of_the_Mind%27s_Eye):

It wasn't long after I began writing Star Wars that I realized the story was more than a single film could hold. As the saga of the Skywalkers and Jedi Knights unfolded, I began to see it as a tale that could take at last nine films to tell—three trilogies—and I realized, in making my way through the back story and after story, that I was really setting out to write the middle story.

The second draft contained a teaser for a never-made sequel about "The Princess of Ondos," and by the time of the third draft some months later Lucas had negotiated a contract that gave him rights to make two sequels. Not long after, Lucas met with author [Alan Dean Foster](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_Dean_Foster), and hired him to write these two sequels as novels.[[22]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-21) The intention was that if *Star Wars* were successful, Lucas could adapt the novels into screenplays.[[23]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-22) He had also by that point developed a fairly elaborate backstory to aid his writing process.[[24]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-23)

When *Star Wars* proved successful, Lucas decided to use the film as the basis for an elaborate [serial](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serial_%28film%29), although at one point he considered walking away from the series altogether.[[25]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-24) However, Lucas wanted to create an independent filmmaking center— what would become [Skywalker Ranch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skywalker_Ranch)—and saw an opportunity to use the series as a financing agent.[[26]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-25) Alan Dean Foster had already begun writing the first sequel novel, but Lucas decided to abandon his plan to adapt Foster's work; the book was released as [*Splinter of the Mind's Eye*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Splinter_of_the_Mind%27s_Eye) the next year. At first Lucas envisioned a series of films with no set number of entries, like the [James Bond](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Bond) series. In an interview with [*Rolling Stone*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolling_Stone) in August 1977, he said that he wanted his friends to each take a turn at directing the films and giving unique interpretations on the series. He also said that the backstory where Darth Vader turns to the dark side, kills Luke's father and fights [Ben Kenobi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ben_Kenobi) on a volcano as the [Galactic Republic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galactic_Republic) falls would make an excellent sequel.

Later that year, Lucas hired science fiction author [Leigh Brackett](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leigh_Brackett) to write *Star Wars II* with him. They held story conferences and by late November 1977, Lucas had produced a handwritten treatment called *The Empire Strikes Back*. The treatment is very similar to the final film except that Darth Vader does not reveal he is Luke's father. In the first draft that Brackett would write from this, Luke's father appears as a ghost to instruct Luke.[[27]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-26)

Brackett finished her first draft in early 1978; Lucas has said he was disappointed with it, but before he could discuss it with her, she died from cancer.[[28]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-27) With no writer available, Lucas had to write his next draft himself. It was this draft in which Lucas first made use of the "Episode" numbering for the films; *Empire Strikes Back* was listed as *Episode II*.[[29]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-28) As Michael Kaminski argues in *The Secret History of Star Wars*, the disappointment with the first draft probably made Lucas consider different directions in which to take the story.[[30]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-29) He made use of a new plot twist: Darth Vader claims to be Luke's father. According to Lucas, he found this draft enjoyable to write, as opposed to the year-long struggles writing the first film, and quickly wrote two more drafts,[[31]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars" \l "cite_note-30" \o ") both in April 1978. He also took the script to a darker extreme by having [Han Solo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Han_Solo) become imprisoned in [carbonite](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carbonite) and left in [limbo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Limbo).[[7]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_5-6)

This new story point of Darth Vader being Luke's father had drastic effects on the series. Michael Kaminski argues in his book that it is unlikely that the plot point had ever seriously been considered or even conceived of before 1978, and that the first film was clearly operating under an alternate storyline where Vader was separate from Luke's father;[[32]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-31) there is not a single reference to this plot point before 1978. After writing the second and third drafts of *Empire Strikes Back* in which the point was introduced, Lucas reviewed the new backstory he had created: Anakin Skywalker was Ben Kenobi's brilliant student; he had a child called Luke but was swayed to the dark side by Emperor [Palpatine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palpatine) (who became a Sith and not simply a politician). Anakin battled Ben Kenobi on the site of a volcano and was wounded, but then resurrected as Darth Vader. Meanwhile Kenobi hid Luke on [Tatooine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tatooine) while the Republic became the Empire and Vader hunted down the [Jedi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jedi) knights.[[33]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-32)

With this new backstory in place, Lucas decided that the series would be a trilogy, changing *Empire Strikes Back* from *Episode II* to *Episode V* in the next draft.[[34]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-33) [Lawrence Kasdan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawrence_Kasdan), who had just completed writing [*Raiders of the Lost Ark*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raiders_of_the_Lost_Ark), was then hired to write the next drafts, and was given additional input from director [Irvin Kershner](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irvin_Kershner). Kasdan, Kershner, and producer [Gary Kurtz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gary_Kurtz) saw the film as a more serious and adult film, which was helped by the new, darker storyline, and developed the series from the light adventure roots of the first film.[[35]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-34)

By the time he began writing *Episode VI* in 1981 (then titled [*Revenge of the Jedi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revenge_of_the_Jedi)), much had changed. Making *Empire Strikes Back* was stressful and costly, and Lucas' personal life was disintegrating. Burnt out, and not wanting to make any more *Star Wars* films, he vowed that he was done with the series in a May 1983 interview with [*Time* magazine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_magazine). Lucas' 1981 rough drafts had Darth Vader competing with the Emperor for possession of Luke—and in the second script, the "revised rough draft," Vader became a sympathetic character. Lawrence Kasdan was hired to take over once again and, in these final drafts, Vader was explicitly redeemed and finally unmasked. This change in character would provide a springboard to the "Tragedy of Darth Vader" storyline that underlies the prequels.[[36]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-35)

#### Prequel trilogy

After losing much of his fortune in a divorce settlement in 1987, Lucas had no desire to return to *Star Wars*, and had unofficially canceled his [Sequel Trilogy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_sequel_trilogy) by the time of *Return of the Jedi*.[[37]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-36) However the prequels, which were quite developed, continued to fascinate him. After *Star Wars* became popular once again, in the wake of Dark Horse's comic line and [Timothy Zahn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timothy_Zahn)'s [trilogy of novels](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thrawn_trilogy), Lucas saw that there was still a large audience. His children had begun to grow older, and with the explosion of [CGI](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer-generated_imagery) technology he was now considering returning to directing.[[38]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-37) By 1993 it was announced, in [*Variety*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Variety_%28magazine%29) among other sources, that he would be making the prequels. He began outlining the story, now indicating that Anakin Skywalker would be the protagonist rather than Ben Kenobi, and that the series would be a tragic one examining Anakin's transformation to evil. Lucas also began to change how the prequels would exist relative to the originals — at first they were supposed to be a "filling-in" of history, backstory, existing parallel or tangential to the originals, but now he saw that they could form the beginning of one long story that started with Anakin's childhood and ended with his death. This was the final step towards turning the franchise into a "Saga".[[39]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-38)

In 1994, Lucas began writing the first screenplay titled *Episode I: The Beginning*. Following the release of that film, Lucas announced that he would also be directing the next two, and began working on *Episode II* at that time.[[40]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-39) The first draft of *Episode II* was completed just weeks before principal photography, and Lucas hired Jonathan Hales, a writer from [*The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Young_Indiana_Jones_Chronicles), to polish it up.[[41]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-40) Unsure of a title, Lucas had jokingly called the film "Jar Jar's Great Adventure."[[42]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-41) In writing *The Empire Strikes Back*, Lucas initially decided that [Lando Calrissian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lando_Calrissian) was a clone and came from a planet of clones which caused the "Clone Wars" mentioned by Kenobi in *A New Hope*;[[43]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-42)[[44]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-43) he later came up with an alternate concept of an army of clone shocktroopers from a remote planet which attacked the Republic and were repelled by the Jedi knights.[[45]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-44) The basic elements of that backstory became the plot basis for *Episode II*, with the new wrinkle added that the entire event was personal manipulation of Palpatine's.[[5]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_2-4)



A replica of [R2-D2](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R2-D2), an iconic droid of the *Star Wars* universe.

Lucas began working on *Episode III* even before *Attack of the Clones* was released, offering concept artists that the film would open with a montage of seven Clone War battles.[[46]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-45) As he reviewed the storyline that summer, however, he says he radically re-organized the plot.[[47]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-46) Michael Kaminski, in *The Secret History of Star Wars*, offers evidence that issues in Anakin's fall to the dark side prompted Lucas to make massive story changes, first revising the opening sequence to have Palpatine kidnapped and Dooku killed by Anakin as the first act in the latter's turn towards the dark side.[[48]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-47) After principal photography was complete in 2003, Lucas made even more massive changes in Anakin's character, re-writing his entire turn to the dark side — he would now turn primarily in a quest to save Padme from death, rather than the previous version in which that reason was one of several, including that he genuinely believed that the Jedi were evil and plotting to take over the Republic. This fundamental re-write was accomplished both through ing the principal footage, and new and revised scenes filmed during pick-ups in 2004.[[49]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_3_documentary-48)

Lucas often exaggerated the amount of material he wrote for the series; much of it stemmed from the post–1978 period when the series grew into a phenomenon. Michael Kaminski explained that these exaggerations were both a publicity and security measure. Kaminski rationalized that since the series' story radically changed throughout the years, it was always Lucas' intention to change the original story retroactively because audiences would only view the material from his perspective.[[50]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-arnold_2005-49)[[6]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-star_wars_3-5)

**Future releases**

At a [ShoWest](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Association_of_Theatre_Owners) convention in 2005, Lucas demonstrated new technology and stated that he planned to release the six films in a new [3-D film](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3-D_film) format, beginning with *A New Hope* in 2007.[[51]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-50) However, by January 2007, Lucasfilm stated on StarWars.com that "there are no definitive plans or dates for releasing the Star Wars saga in 3-D." At Celebration Europe in July 2007, Rick McCallum confirmed that Lucasfilm is "planning to take all six films and turn them into 3-D," but they are "waiting for the companies out there that are developing this technology to bring it down to a cost level that makes it worthwhile for everybody".[[52]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-51)

Lucas has hinted in the past that he will release future, more definitive ions of the six *Star Wars* films on a next-generation home-video format.[[53]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-52)[[54]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-53) There have been discussions that he will take this opportunity to make any final adjustments, changes, additions, and/or subtractions to his films for this final release. An altered clip from *The Phantom Menace* included in a featurette on the DVD release of *Revenge of the Sith* (in which a computer generated Yoda replaces the original puppet) appears to be a sign that the "archival" ions are indeed in the works.[[55]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-54) Lucasfilm Vice President of Marketing Jim Ward confirmed that Lucasfilm is likely to do even more work on the films (possibly digital contemporization of the original trilogy), stating "As the technology evolves and we get into a high-definition platform that is easily consumable by our customers, the situation is much better, but there will always be work to be done."[[56]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-55)

**Critical reception**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Film** | [**Rotten Tomatoes**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rotten_Tomatoes) | [**Metacritic**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metacritic) |
| [*Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_IV:_A_New_Hope) | 95% (59 reviews)[[57]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-56) | 91% (13 reviews)[[58]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-57) |
| [*Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_V:_The_Empire_Strikes_Back) | 97% (65 reviews)[[59]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-58) | 78% (15 reviews)[[60]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-59) |
| [*Star Wars Episode VI: Return of the Jedi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_VI:_Return_of_the_Jedi) | 74% (58 reviews)[[61]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-60) | 52% (14 reviews)[[62]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-61) |
| [*Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_I:_The_Phantom_Menace) | 63% (153 reviews)[[63]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-62) | 52% (35 reviews)[[64]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-63) |
| [*Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_II:_Attack_of_the_Clones) | 66% (211 reviews)[[65]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-64) | 53% (39 reviews)[[66]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-65) |
| [*Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_III:_Revenge_of_the_Sith) | 79% (250 reviews)[[67]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-66) | 68% (40 reviews)[[68]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-67) |
| [*Star Wars: The Clone Wars*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_The_Clone_Wars_%28film%29) | 20% (135 reviews)[[69]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-68) | 35% (30 reviews)[[70]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-69) |

**Box office performance**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Film** | **Release date** | **Box office revenue** | | | **Box office ranking** | |
| **United States** | **Foreign** | **Worldwide** | **All-time domestic** | **All-time worldwide** |
| [*Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_IV:_A_New_Hope)[[71]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-70) | May 25, 1977 | $460,998,007 | $314,400,000 | $775,398,007 | #3 | #19 |
| [*Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_V:_The_Empire_Strikes_Back)[[72]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-71) | May 21, 1980 | $290,475,067 | $247,900,000 | $538,375,067 | #33 | #52 |
| [*Star Wars Episode VI: Return of the Jedi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_VI:_Return_of_the_Jedi)[[73]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-72) | May 25, 1983 | $309,306,177 | $165,800,000 | $475,106,177 | #27 | #68 |
| **Original *Star Wars* trilogy** |  | **$1,069,779,251** | **$871,606,177** | **$1,788,879,321** |  |  |
| [*Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_I:_The_Phantom_Menace)[[74]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-73) | May 19, 1999 | $431,088,301 | $493,229,257 | $924,317,558 | #5 | #7 |
| [*Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_II:_Attack_of_the_Clones)[[75]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-74) | May 16, 2002 | $310,676,740 | $338,721,588 | $649,398,328 | #22 | #32 |
| [*Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_III:_Revenge_of_the_Sith)[[76]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-75) | May 19, 2005 | $380,270,577 | $468,728,238 | $848,998,815 | #8 | #16 |
| **Prequel *Star Wars* trilogy** |  | **$1,122,035,083** | **$1,300,679,983** | **$2,422,714,701** |  |  |
| **Complete *Star Wars* film series** |  | **$2,191,814,334** | **$2,286,514,160** | **$4,211,594,022** |  |  |

**Expanded Universe**

*Main article:* [*Star Wars Expanded Universe*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Expanded_Universe)

The term *Expanded Universe* (*EU*) is an umbrella term for officially licensed *Star Wars* material outside of the six feature films. The material expands the stories told in the films, taking place anywhere from 25,000 years before *The Phantom Menace* to 140 years after *Return of the Jedi*. The first *Expanded Universe* story appeared in [Marvel Comics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marvel_Comics)' *Star Wars* #7 in January 1978 (the first six issues of the series having been an adaptation of the film), followed quickly by [Alan Dean Foster](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_Dean_Foster)'s novel [*Splinter of the Mind's Eye*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Splinter_of_the_Mind%27s_Eye) the following month.[[77]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-76)

George Lucas retains [artistic control](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artistic_control) over the *Star Wars* universe. For example, the death of central characters and similar changes in the status quo must first pass his screening before authors are given the go-ahead. In addition, Lucasfilm Licensing devotes efforts to ensure continuity between the works of various authors across companies.[[78]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-77) Elements of the Expanded Universe have been adopted by Lucas for use in the films, such as the name of capital planet [Coruscant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coruscant), which first appeared in [Timothy Zahn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timothy_Zahn)'s novel [*Heir to the Empire*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heir_to_the_Empire) before being used in *The Phantom Menace*. A character introduced in [Dark Horse Comics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_Horse_Comics)' *Star Wars* series, a blue Twi'lek Jedi Knight named [Aayla Secura](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aayla_Secura), was liked enough by Lucas to be included as a character in *Attack of the Clones*.[[79]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-78)

To date, six films and three animated series have been produced for television, with a live-action series and a [3D](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3D_computer_graphics) [CGI](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CGI) animated series in pre-production as well as a 3D CGI full-length theatrical movie, [The Clone Wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_The_Clone_Wars_%28film%29), scheduled for release on August 15, 2008. Lucas has played a large role in the production of the television projects, usually serving as storywriter or executive producer.[[80]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-79) *Star Wars* has had [numerous radio adaptations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_%28radio%29). A radio adaptation of *A New Hope* was first broadcast on [National Public Radio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Public_Radio) in 1981. The adaptation was written by science fiction author [Brian Daley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brian_Daley) and directed by [John Madden](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Madden_%28director%29). It was followed by adaptations of *The Empire Strikes Back* in 1983 and *Return of the Jedi* in 1996. The adaptations included background material created by Lucas but not used in the films. [Mark Hamill](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Hamill), [Anthony Daniels](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthony_Daniels), and [Billy Dee Williams](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billy_Dee_Williams) reprised their roles as Luke Skywalker, [C-3PO](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-3PO), and [Lando Calrissian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lando_Calrissian), respectively. The series also used John Williams' original score from the films and [Ben Burtt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ben_Burtt)'s original sound designs.[[81]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-80)

**Other films**

In addition to the two trilogies, several authorized films have been produced:

* [*The Star Wars Holiday Special*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Star_Wars_Holiday_Special), a 1978 two-hour [television special](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Television_special), shown only once and never released on video. Notable for the introduction of [Boba Fett](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boba_Fett).
* [*Caravan of Courage: An Ewok Adventure*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caravan_of_Courage:_An_Ewok_Adventure), a 1984 American [made-for-TV film](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Television_movie) - released theatrically overseas.
* [*Ewoks: The Battle for Endor*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ewoks:_The_Battle_for_Endor), a 1985 American made-for-TV film - released theatrically overseas.
* [*The Great Heep*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Great_Heep), a 1986 animated television special from the [*Star Wars: Droids*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_Droids) TV series.
* [*Star Wars: The Clone Wars*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_The_Clone_Wars_%28film%29), a 2008 theatrical release that leads into [the animated TV series](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_The_Clone_Wars_%282008_TV_series%29) of the same name.

**Animated series**

Following the success of the movies and merchandising for both the original trilogy and its spin-offs, two cartoons were created for the younger fan base:

* [*Droids*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Droids), also known as [*Star Wars: Droids*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_Droids), which premiered in September 1985, focused on the travels of R2-D2 and C-3P0 as they shift through various different owners/masters, and vaguely fills in the gaps between the events of [*Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_III:_Revenge_of_the_Sith) and [*Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_IV:_A_New_Hope).
* [*Ewoks*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ewoks), also known as [*Star Wars: Ewoks*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_Ewoks) and colloquially as [*The Ewoks*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Ewoks), was simultaneously released in September 1985 and focused on the adventures of Wicket and various other recognizable Ewok characters from the original trilogy in the years leading up to [*Star Wars Episode VI: Return of the Jedi*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_VI:_Return_of_the_Jedi).
* [*Star Wars: Clone Wars*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_Clone_Wars_%282003_TV_series%29) cartoon series created by [Genndy Tartakovsky](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genndy_Tartakovsky) that aired on [Cartoon Network](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cartoon_Network) from 2003 to 2005.
* [*Star Wars: The Clone Wars*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_The_Clone_Wars_%282008_TV_series%29) animated series coming off of the animated movie [Star Wars: The Clone Wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_The_Clone_Wars_%28film%29), scheduled to air in October, 2008.

**Literature**

*Main articles:* [*List of Star Wars books*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Star_Wars_books) *and* [*List of Star Wars comic books*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Star_Wars_comic_books)

*Star Wars*-based fiction predates the release of the first film, with the 1976 novelization of *Star Wars* (ghost-written by [Alan Dean Foster](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_Dean_Foster) and cred to Lucas). Foster's 1978 novel, [*Splinter of the Mind's Eye*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Splinter_of_the_Mind%27s_Eye), was the first Expanded Universe work to be released. In addition to filling in the time between the films, this additional content greatly expanded the *Star Wars* timeline before and after the film series. *Star Wars* fiction flourished during the time of the original series (1977–1983) but slowed to a trickle afterwards. In 1992, however, [Timothy Zahn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timothy_Zahn)'s [*Thrawn Trilogy*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thrawn_Trilogy) debuted, sparking a new interest in the *Star Wars* universe. Since then, several hundred tie-in novels have been published by [Bantam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bantam_Books) and [Del Rey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Random_House_Publishing). A similar resurgence in the Expanded Universe occurred in 1996 with the [Steve Perry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Perry_%28author%29) novel [*Shadows of the Empire*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shadows_of_the_Empire), set between *Episodes V* and *VI*, and accompanying video game and comic book series.[[82]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-81)

LucasBooks radically changed the face of the *Star Wars* universe with the introduction of the [*New Jedi Order*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_New_Jedi_Order) series, which takes place some 20 years after *Return of the Jedi* and stars a host of new characters alongside series originals. For younger audiences, three series have been introduced. *The Jedi Apprentice* series follows the adventures of Qui-Gon Jinn and his apprentice Obi-Wan Kenobi before *Episode I*. *The Jedi Quest* series follows the adventures of Obi-Wan Kenobi and his apprentice Anakin Skywalker after *Episode I* and before *Episode II*. The third and currently on-going series is *The Last Of the Jedi* series which follows the adventure of Obi-Wan Kenobi and the adventures of a surviving Jedi almost immediately after *Episode III*.

[Marvel Comics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marvel_Comics) published *Star Wars* comic book series and adaptations from 1977 to 1986. A wide variety of creators worked on this series, including [Roy Thomas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roy_Thomas), [Archie Goodwin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archie_Goodwin_%28comics%29), [Howard Chaykin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Howard_Chaykin), [Al Williamson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Williamson), [Carmine Infantino](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carmine_Infantino), [Gene Day](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gene_Day), [Walt Simonson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walt_Simonson), [Michael Golden](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Golden), [Chris Claremont](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chris_Claremont), [Whilce Portacio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whilce_Portacio), [Jo Duffy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jo_Duffy), and [Ron Frenz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ron_Frenz). They also published a *Star Wars* newspaper strip by [Russ Manning](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russ_Manning), [Steve Gerber](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steve_Gerber), and [Archie Goodwin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archie_Goodwin_%28comics%29), the latter under a pseudonym. In the late 1980s, Marvel announced it would publish a new *Star Wars* comic by [Tom Veitch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Veitch) and [Cam Kennedy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cam_Kennedy). However, in December 1991, [Dark Horse Comics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_Horse_Comics) acquired the *Star Wars* license and used it to launch a number of ambitious sequels to the original trilogy instead, including the very popular [*Dark Empire*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_Empire) stories.[[83]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-82) They have since gone on to publish a large number of original adventures set in the *Star Wars* universe. There have also been parody comics, including [*Tag and Bink*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tag_and_Bink).[[84]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-83)

**Games**

*Main articles:* [*Star Wars computer and video games*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_computer_and_video_games)*,* [*List of Star Wars video games*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Star_Wars_video_games)*, and* [*Star Wars Trading Cards*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Trading_Cards)

Since 1982, dozens of [video games](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Video_games) have been published bearing the *Star Wars* name, beginning with [*Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_The_Empire_Strikes_Back_%28Parker_Bros._game%29) published for the [Atari 2600](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atari_2600) by [Parker Brothers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parker_Brothers). Since then, *Star Wars* has opened the way to a myriad of [space-flight simulation games](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_simulator), [first-person shooter games](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First-person_shooter), [roleplaying games](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_role-playing_games), [RTS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Real-time_strategy) games, and others. Two different official tabletop [role-playing games](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Role-playing_game) have been developed for the *Star Wars* universe: [a version by West End Games](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_role-playing_game_%28WEG%29) in the 1980s and 1990s, and [one by Wizards of the Coast](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Roleplaying_Game_%28Wizards_of_the_Coast%29) in the 2000s. The best-selling games so far are the [*Lego Star Wars*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lego_Star_Wars:_The_Video_Game) and the [*Battlefront*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_Battlefront_%28series%29) series, with 12 million and 10 million units respectively. [[85]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-legostarwars-84)[[86]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-battlefront-85)

The latest games released are [*Lego Star Wars: The Complete Saga*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lego_Star_Wars:_The_Complete_Saga) and [*Star Wars: The Force Unleashed*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_The_Force_Unleashed_%28video_game%29), for the [PS3](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PlayStation_3), [PSP](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PlayStation_Portable), [PS2](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PlayStation_2), [Xbox 360](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xbox_360), [Nintendo DS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nintendo_DS) and [Wii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wii). While *The Complete Saga* focuses on all six episodes of the series, *The Force Unleashed*, of the same name of the [multimedia project which it is a part of](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Force_Unleashed), takes place in the largely unexplored time period between [*Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_III:_Revenge_of_the_Sith) and [*Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Episode_IV:_A_New_Hope) and casts players as [Darth Vader](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Darth_Vader)'s "secret apprentice" hunting down the remaining Jedi. The game features a new game engine, and was released on [September 16](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/September_16), [2008](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008) in the United States.[[87]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-86)[[88]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-releaseinfo-87) There are two more upcoming titles based around the [Clone Wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clone_Wars) which will be released in [November](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/November) for the [Nintendo DS](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nintendo_DS) ([Star Wars: The Clone Wars - Jedi Alliance](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_The_Clone_Wars_-_Jedi_Alliance) and [Wii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wii) ([Star Wars: The Clone Wars - Lightsaber Duels](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars:_The_Clone_Wars_-_Lightsaber_Duels)).

[Star Wars trading cards](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_Trading_Cards) have been published since the first 'blue' series, by [Topps](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Topps), in 1977.[[89]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-88) Dozens of series have been produced, with [Topps](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Topps) being the licensed creator in the United States. Some of the card series are of film stills, while others are 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$1000 or more. While most 'base' or 'common card' sets are plentiful, many 'insert' or '[chase cards](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chase_card)' are very rare.[[90]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-89)

**Fan works**

*Main article:* [*Star Wars fan films*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars_fan_films)

The *Star Wars* saga has inspired many fans to create their own [apocrypha](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocrypha) set in the *Star Wars* galaxy. In recent years, this has ranged from writing fan-fiction to creating [fan films](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fan_film). In 2002, Lucasfilm sponsored the first annual [Official Star Wars Fan Film Awards](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_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.[[91]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-90)

While many of the serious fan films have used elements from the licensed Expanded Universe to tell their story, they are not considered an official part of the *Star Wars* canon. Lucasfilm, for the most part, has allowed but not endorsed the creation of these derivative fan-fiction works, so long as no such work attempts to make a profit from or tarnish the *Star Wars* franchise in any way.[[92]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-91) Lucasfilm's open support and sanction of fan creations is a marked contrast to the attitudes of many other copyright holders. Some owners, such as [Paramount Pictures](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paramount_Pictures) with the [Star Trek](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Trek) properties, have been known to actively discourage the creation of such works by fans.[[93]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-92)

**Legacy**

*Main article:* [*Cultural impact of Star Wars*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_impact_of_Star_Wars)

The *Star Wars* saga has had a significant impact on modern global [pop culture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pop_culture). Both the films and characters have been parodied in numerous films and television. Notable film parodies of *Star Wars* include [*Hardware Wars*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hardware_Wars), a 13 minute 1977 spoof which Lucas has called his favorite Star Wars parody, and [*Spaceballs*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spaceballs), a feature film by [Mel Brooks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mel_Brooks) which featured effects done by Lucas' Industrial Light & Magic.[[94]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-93)[[95]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-94) Lucasfilm itself made two [mockumentaries](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mockumentary), *Return of the Ewok* (1982), about [Wicket W. Warrick](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wicket_W._Warrick)'s actor [Warwick Davis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warwick_Davis), and *R2-D2: Beneath the Dome* (2002), which depicts R2-D2 "life story".[[96]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-95)[[97]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-96) There have also been many songs based on, and in, the Star Wars universe. ["Weird Al" Yankovic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%22Weird_Al%22_Yankovic) recorded two parodies: "[Yoda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yoda_%28song%29)" and "[The Saga Begins](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Saga_Begins)".[[98]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-97)

When [Ronald Reagan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Reagan) proposed the [Strategic Defense Initiative](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_Defense_Initiative) (SDI), a system of lasers and missiles meant to intercept incoming [ICBMs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intercontinental_ballistic_missile), the plan was quickly labeled "Star Wars," implying that it was science fiction and linking it to Ronald Reagan's acting career. According to [Frances Fitzgerald](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frances_Fitzgerald), Ronald Reagan was annoyed by this, but Assistant Secretary of Defense [Richard Perle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Perle) told colleagues that he "thought the name was not so bad."; "'Why not?' he said. 'It's a good movie. Besides, the good guys won.'"[[99]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-98) This gained further resonance when Reagan described the [Soviet Union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union) as an [Evil Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evil_Empire), which was taken from the opening crawl to *A New Hope*.[[100]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars#cite_note-99)

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