

star wars legends books timeline

star wars legends books timeline represents a vast and intricate chronology of stories set in the expansive Star Wars universe outside the official canon. These Legends novels, formerly known as the Expanded Universe, offer an elaborate background to the beloved characters, events, and eras that enrich Star Wars lore. Understanding the star wars legends books timeline is essential for fans and scholars of the franchise who seek to explore the detailed history spanning thousands of years before and after the iconic films. This timeline encompasses numerous series, standalone novels, and multi-author collaborations, each contributing to a comprehensive narrative structure. This article will delve into the key periods, notable series, and significant events within the Legends timeline, providing clarity on the chronological order and thematic connections. Furthermore, it will outline how the Legends timeline diverges from the official canon and highlight the importance of these works to the Star Wars community.

- The Origins of Star Wars Legends
- Major Eras in the Star Wars Legends Books Timeline
- Key Series and Notable Novels
- Chronological Order and Timeline Structure
- Differences Between Legends and Canon

The Origins of Star Wars Legends

The star wars legends books timeline began as the Expanded Universe (EU), a collection of novels, comics, and other media created to expand upon the stories introduced in the original Star Wars films. Prior to 2014, these materials were considered part of the official Star Wars continuity. However, following Disney's acquisition of Lucasfilm, the EU was rebranded as "Legends" to distinguish it from the new canon. This reclassification allowed for creative freedom in producing new stories while preserving the rich heritage of the Legends material. The Legends timeline includes works published from the late 1970s through 2014, encompassing a broad range of genres and storytelling styles.

Major Eras in the Star Wars Legends Books Timeline

The star wars legends books timeline is divided into several major eras, each focusing on distinct historical periods within the galaxy far, far away. These eras provide a structured framework for understanding the chronological placement of the novels and their narrative significance.

The Old Republic Era

This era is set thousands of years before the events of the original Star Wars films and explores the rise and fall of the Galactic Republic and Sith Empires. It is characterized by epic conflicts, the establishment of Jedi and Sith orders, and foundational galactic history.

The Rise of the Empire Era

Taking place shortly before and during the reign of the Galactic Empire, this era covers the political intrigue, the fall of the Jedi Order, and the expansion of Imperial control. It includes stories that bridge the gap between the prequel trilogy and the original trilogy.

The Rebellion Era

This era corresponds with the timeline of the original trilogy, focusing on the struggle between the Rebel Alliance and the Galactic Empire. Many novels explore the backgrounds of iconic characters and untold battles within this period.

The New Republic Era

Following the defeat of the Empire, this era details the efforts to rebuild the galaxy, the formation of the New Republic, and the continuing threats posed by remnants of the Empire and other adversaries. It encompasses the majority of post-original trilogy Legends novels.

The Legacy Era

Set over a century after the original films, the Legacy era explores the descendants of well-known characters and introduces new conflicts and factions, including Sith uprisings and galactic-scale wars.

Key Series and Notable Novels

The Star Wars Legends books timeline includes several landmark series and individual novels that have shaped the Legends narrative and captivated readers worldwide.

The Thrawn Trilogy

Written by Timothy Zahn, this trilogy is widely credited with revitalizing Star Wars literature in the early 1990s. It follows the Imperial Grand Admiral Thrawn's attempt to restore the Empire and features characters such as Mara Jade and Talon Karrde.

The Jedi Academy Trilogy

This series centers on Luke Skywalker's efforts to rebuild the Jedi Order after the original trilogy. It explores the challenges of training new Jedi and facing new threats to the galaxy.

The Dark Empire Series

A comic series that introduced the concept of Emperor Palpatine's return through cloning, this storyline significantly influenced the Legends timeline and subsequent novels.

The Darth Bane Trilogy

Focusing on the Sith Lord Darth Bane, this series explains the origins of the Sith Rule of Two and delves into Sith philosophy and dark side lore, set thousands of years before the films.

Other Notable Works

- **"X-Wing" Series:** Revolves around the pilots of the Rebel Alliance's starfighter squadrons.
- **"The New Jedi Order" Series:** Chronicles the war against the extragalactic Yuuzhan Vong invaders.
- **"Legacy of the Force" Series:** Explores dark side corruption within the Solo family.

Chronological Order and Timeline Structure

Understanding the star wars legends books timeline requires familiarity with the chronological placement of stories relative to the Battle of Yavin, the pivotal event marking the destruction of the first Death Star in Episode IV: A New Hope. The timeline is often organized using the terms BBY (Before the Battle of Yavin) and ABY (After the Battle of Yavin).

The timeline is structured as follows:

1. **Old Republic Era:** Approximately 5,000 BBY to 1,000 BBY.
2. **Rise of the Empire Era:** Approximately 1,000 BBY to 0 BBY (the Battle of Yavin).
3. **Rebellion Era:** 0 ABY to 5 ABY.
4. **New Republic Era:** 5 ABY to 40 ABY.
5. **Legacy Era:** Approximately 130 ABY and beyond.

Many Legends novels are placed within these ranges, although some stories span multiple eras or focus on specific events. For example, the “Darth Bane” trilogy is set roughly 1,000 years before the films, while the “Legacy of the Force” series takes place decades after the original trilogy.

Differences Between Legends and Canon

It is important to distinguish the star wars legends books timeline from the current official Star Wars canon. In 2014, Lucasfilm declared all Expanded Universe materials non-canon, rebranding them as Legends. The official canon now includes the original films, television series, and new novels and comics released under Disney’s oversight.

While the Legends timeline offers a far more expansive and detailed history, it occasionally conflicts with the official narratives. For instance, the depiction of character fates, political histories, and major events differ between the two continuities. Nevertheless, the Legends books remain a valuable resource for fans interested in exploring alternative storylines and extended lore.

Key distinctions include:

- **Character Development:** Some characters central to Legends, like Grand Admiral Thrawn, were later reintroduced into the official canon with altered backgrounds.
- **Historical Events:** The Legends timeline includes numerous wars, factions, and historical periods not covered or significantly changed in the canon.
- **Story Continuity:** Legends comprise a vast array of interconnected stories, while canon maintains tighter narrative control.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the timeline covered by the Star Wars Legends books?

The Star Wars Legends books cover an extensive timeline that spans thousands of years, starting from the Old Republic era, through the rise and fall of the Galactic Empire, and beyond the events of the original Star Wars films.

How do the Star Wars Legends books relate to the official Star Wars canon?

Star Wars Legends books are part of the Expanded Universe that was rebranded as 'Legends' after Disney acquired Lucasfilm. They are not considered official canon but offer rich stories and background that expand the Star Wars universe.

Are there key periods or eras within the Star Wars Legends timeline?

Yes, the Legends timeline is divided into several key eras such as the Old Republic era, the Rise of the Empire era, the Rebellion era, and the New Republic era, each featuring different characters and story arcs.

Can I read the Star Wars Legends books in chronological order?

Yes, many fans prefer to read the Star Wars Legends books in chronological order based on the in-universe timeline, which starts with Old Republic stories and moves forward through eras like the Clone Wars, Galactic Civil War, and beyond.

Where can I find a detailed timeline or reading order for Star Wars Legends books?

Several fan websites and Star Wars community forums provide detailed chronological timelines and recommended reading orders for Star Wars Legends books, helping readers navigate the complex and expansive stories.

Additional Resources

1. Heir to the Empire

Set five years after the events of *Return of the Jedi*, this novel follows the New Republic as it faces the threat of Grand Admiral Thrawn, a brilliant strategist from the remnants of the Empire. Luke Skywalker, Princess Leia, and Han Solo must unite to thwart Thrawn's plans while uncovering new mysteries about the Force. The book kickstarted the Thrawn Trilogy, revitalizing Star Wars Legends literature.

2. Darth Bane: Path of Destruction

This novel explores the origins of Darth Bane, the Sith Lord who established the Rule of Two, stating that only two Sith can exist at one time—a master and an apprentice. It delves into Bane's rise from a miner to the most powerful Sith in history, emphasizing Sith philosophy and the dark side's power. The story adds depth to the Sith legacy within the Legends timeline.

3. Jedi Academy Trilogy

This trilogy follows Luke Skywalker as he attempts to rebuild the Jedi Order by establishing a new Jedi Academy on Yavin 4. It highlights the challenges of training new Jedi, the emergence of new threats, and the internal struggles of his students. The series expands on the post-Return of the Jedi era and the evolving nature of the Force.

4. The Thrawn Trilogy: Dark Force Rising

Continuing the story of Grand Admiral Thrawn's campaign against the New Republic, this book focuses on a desperate search for the lost Katana fleet, a powerful Imperial asset. The protagonists face political intrigue, battles, and betrayals as they try to maintain the fragile peace. It deepens the political and military complexities of the Star Wars Legends universe.

5. *X-Wing: Rogue Squadron*

This novel introduces Rogue Squadron, an elite group of starfighter pilots led by Wedge Antilles, as they undertake dangerous missions against Imperial forces. It emphasizes aerial combat, camaraderie, and the strategic aspects of the war between the New Republic and the Empire. The book launched a popular series focusing on starfighter adventures.

6. *Knights of the Old Republic*

Set thousands of years before the films, this novel explores the conflict between the Jedi and Sith during the Old Republic era. It follows a group of heroes confronting a resurgent Sith threat, blending rich lore with classic Star Wars themes of heroism and redemption. This story helped expand the Legends timeline into ancient history.

7. *Dark Empire*

A comic series that follows the New Republic as it faces the return of Emperor Palpatine through cloning technology. It explores the moral and spiritual challenges faced by Luke Skywalker and his allies as the dark side resurges. Dark Empire is notable for its darker tone and exploration of the Force's complexities.

8. *The Han Solo Trilogy*

This trilogy delves into the early life and adventures of Han Solo before the events of the original Star Wars film. It reveals his transformation from a scruffy smuggler to a key figure in the Rebellion, providing background on his motivations and relationships. The books add depth to one of the franchise's most beloved characters.

9. *Republic Commando*

Focusing on an elite unit of clone commandos during the Clone Wars, this series offers a gritty, ground-level perspective on the galactic conflict. It explores themes of brotherhood, loyalty, and the cost of war through the eyes of specialized soldiers. The narrative enriches the Legends timeline with intense military action and character-driven stories.

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