

# STAR WARS ROGUE ONE



## A LONG TIME AGO

### DON'T CALL IT A PREQUEL! HOW THE NEW FILM FITS INTO THE STAR WARS CANON

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CTW FEATURES

Feeling spaced out? “Rogue One,” the new Star Wars film coming December 16, doesn’t pick up with the immediate adventures of Rey (Daisy Ridley), Finn (John Boyega), Poe Dameron (Oscar Isaac) and all the other characters introduced in 2015’s “The Force Awakens.” Instead, we’re going back to time period of the original 1977 “Star Wars” film to tell a brand new story.

But that’s confusing. Why would we go farther back into the past, instead of finding out what happened when Rey finally found reclusive Jedi master Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill)? Well, that’s because this new film isn’t a sequel. In fact, it’s something that’s acquired a bit of a mixed reputation in Star Wars circles.

That’s right. The new film is a prequel.

Well, that isn’t strictly true, either. “Rogue One” is the first of what Disney hopes will be a long line of “standalone” Star Wars films. You can even see it in the film’s official title, which is *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*.

It’s very simple: movies whose titles begin with “Star Wars” will follow the adventures of the Skywalker clan,

from Anakin to Luke and Leia. But those with the “Star Wars Story” subtitle can be anything else.

Just as Disney’s Marvel films have showcased a wide range of influences and genres – from the “Ant Man” heist film to the nourish spy thriller “Captain America: The Winter Soldier” – the new studio hopes to showcase a wide variety of storylines.

We don’t know much about the plot of “Rogue One.” Much like last year’s “The Force Awakens,” Disney is tight-lipped about what’s coming to movie screens this December. What information we do know comes mostly from the oldest piece of Star Wars storytelling out there – the original 1977 film.

Remember the iconic opening text crawl? Just before the story began, it informs us, Rebel spaceships had won a crucial victory against the Galactic Empire and stolen secret plans to the Death Star, the Empire’s moon-shaped battle station.

Though those events did not occur onscreen, the stolen Death Star plans were the main driver of the original movie’s plot. They were the reason for Darth Vader’s pursuit and imprisonment of Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher). They were the reason that farm boy Luke Skywalker teamed up with Obi-Wan Kenobi. And they provided crucial information that allowed Rebel pilots (led by Skywalker) to destroy the feared battle station once and for all.

“Rogue One” aims to expand those few sentences of introductory text into a full-length film. The storyline will

tell us how those plans got into the hands of the Rebel spies in the first place.

So that means that fans will see the original 1977 stormtroopers, X-wings, TIE fighters – in short, everything that evoked the feel of the original. Make no mistake, the evil Empire hasn’t yet been vanquished. We’re looking at a time period long before Han Solo or Princess Leia. The sinister hordes of the Empire are spreading their influence across the galaxy, and only a few scattered and outnumbered Rebels are fighting back.

There are dozens of new characters to follow. (Turn a few pages to see more.) And filmgoers can still expect to see some new locations in December:

- **Jedha**, a desert-like moon under heavy Imperial occupation. With an arid climate that’s stuck in permanent winter, Jedha would be low on most galactic travelers bucket lists except for one thing: it was at one time holy to the outlawed Jedi order. Thus, it draws its share of spiritual pilgrims who travel to the remote world for mystical guidance from the Force.

- **Scarif**, a planet filled with sandy beaches and palm trees. This world would be a tropical paradise if the Imperial war machine wasn’t constructing the planet-destroying Death Star in orbit. Because of the heavy military presence, the world is surrounded by nearly impenetrable energy fields.

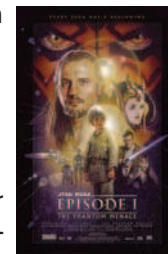
All signs point to there not being much of the Force in “Rogue One.” Sure, the mystical energy field that sur-

## A STAR WARS TIMELINE

*This winter’s film fits into a unique place in the Star Wars canon. Here are all the stories we know of so far, in order.*

### “Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace” (1999)

Jedi master Qui-Gon Jinn and apprentice Obi-Wan Kenobi help Queen Amidala when her planet is invaded by the evil Trade Federation. Along the way, the Jedi discover Anakin Skywalker, a nine-year-old slave unusually strong in the Force, and sinister agents of the Sith, the ancient enemy of the Jedi Order.



### “Star Wars: Episode II – Attack of the Clones” (2002)

Now a Jedi apprentice, Anakin Skywalker must protect Amidala when her life is threatened by assassins. Together with his master Obi-Wan Kenobi, the three are swept up in the beginning of the galaxy-wide Clone Wars.

### “The Clone Wars” (2008–2014)

This half-hour animated TV series showed the continued adventures of Anakin, Obi-Wan, Anakin’s apprentice Ahsoka Tano, and hosts of other fan-favorite characters. Along the way, further mysteries of the Jedi and Sith are revealed.

### “Star Wars: Episode III – Revenge of the Sith” (2005)

The evil Sith step from the shadows to reveal their plan to eliminate the Jedi and rule the galaxy. When Jedi hero Anakin Skywalker falls to the dark side of the Force, the galaxy’s last hope rests his and Amidala’s newborn children – twins who will one day be heroes.



### Untitled Han Solo stand-alone film (2018)

Not much is known about this film. Written by Lawrence Kasdan (who penned screenplays for “The Empire Strikes Back” and “The Force Awakens”) and his son Jon and directed by comedy duo Phil Lord and Chris Miller (“The Lego Movie,” “The Last Man on Earth”), the move has so far cast Alden Ehrenreich as the titular smuggler.