

Music of Game of Thrones by Ramin Djawadi (#887)



Clip 1 – Big Ben Strikes or Happy New Intro Modified (0:34)

Happy New Years Everyone! This is Vartok with another *Treks Music in Sci-Fi* guest podcast, #887 on January 1st, 2023. For today's podcast I am going to talk about the music of the **Game of Thrones**, by composer Ramin Djawadi (java-dee), spelled D-J-A-W-A-D-I. I have been watching the eight-season box set of the *Game of Thrones* at home and couldn't help noticing how much his music compositions appealed to me. If you've watched any of the **Games of Thrones** you may recall how powerful the opening sequence is, where the same main theme song was used for all eight seasons, while a very creative animated short video shows each of the kingdoms. **Here** is that main theme to get you all in the mood for the rest of this podcast.

Clip 2 – Game of Thrones Main Title (Season 1, Track #1, 1:52)

For today's podcast I have drawn heavily upon CD album liner notes, Wikipedia, YouTube, and other internet sources, as usual.

The HBO 8-season **Game of Thrones** is an American fantasy drama television series created by David Benioff and Daniel Weiss, who were the show's executive producers, showrunners, and writers. It is an adaptation of **A Song of Ice and Fire**, a series of fantasy novels by George R. R. Martin, the first of which is **A Game of Thrones**. The show was shot in the United Kingdom, Canada, Croatia, Iceland, Malta, Morocco, and Spain. It premiered on HBO in the United States on April 17, 2011, and concluded 8 years later on May 19, 2019, with a total of 73 episodes. The series rates 89% on Rotten Tomatoes and 9.2/10 at the IMDB, both excellent scores.

Set on the fictional continents of Westeros and Essos, **Game of Thrones** has a very large ensemble cast and follows several story arcs throughout the course of the show. The **first major arc** concerns the Iron Throne of the Seven Kingdoms of Westeros through a web of political conflicts among the noble families either vying to claim the throne or fighting for independence from whoever sits on the throne. **A second arc** focuses on the last descendant of the realm's deposed ruling dynasty, who has been exiled to Essos and is plotting to return and reclaim the throne. **The third arc** follows the Night's Watch, a military order defending the realm against fearful threats from beyond Westeros's northern border. But don't worry too much, I won't be covering much of the plot lines in GOT as it would literally take days to do so. On the other hand, I highly recommend watching the series, especially in binge mode.

Ramin Djawadi is an Iranian and German score composer. He was born July 19, 1974, making him just 48 years old as of this podcast. Ramin was born in Duisburg (doos-brg), West Germany, to an Iranian father and a German mother. In a 2017 interview on CBS This Morning he was asked how he got started in music.

Clip 3 – 14 Playing by Ear (Composer Ramin Djawadi on Making Music, 9/4/2017, 0:29)

Ramin attended the Krupp Gymnasium in Duisburg, and then studied at the prestigious Berklee College of Music (spelled BERKLEE). When asked in 2018 in an AV Club interview to name his top five musical influences he responded this way.

Clip 4 – 13 Top Five Influences (GOT Composer Ramin Djawadi Ranks Top Five Influences, 9/4/2018, 1:03)

After graduating from the Berklee College of Music in 1998, Ramin garnered the attention of Hans Zimmer, who recruited him to Remote Control Productions – a Zimmer powerhouse, or sweatshop for new composers, I'm not clear on that. Djawadi moved to Los Angeles and worked as an assistant to Klaus Badelt. From there on he made additional music and arrangements for Badelt and Zimmer movies, such as **Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl**, **The Time Machine**, and the Academy Award-nominated film **Something's Gotta Give**. He co-

composed the music for **System Shock 2** (1999). In 2003, he and Badelt composed the score of **Beat the Drum**. He has also scored films such as **Clash of the Titans**, **Pacific Rim**, **Warcraft**, **A Wrinkle in Time** and **Eternals**. He has also scored music for television series including **Prison Break**, **Person of Interest**, **Jack Ryan**, and **Westworld**, not to mention the video games such as **Medal of Honor**, **Gears of War 4**, and **Gears 5**.

Unlike other composers whom I have featured, I **don't** plan to provide representative music throughout Ramin's active career. **Instead**, I only plan to cover tracks from **Game of Thrones**. Ramin is still early in his career and looks to have a long, successful road ahead of him – it's just not time for his retrospective yet! However, let's continue with just a little more of his career development. If you were to ask him what his favorite instruments to play are he would respond this way as recorded in a 2017 Q&A session he put up on YouTube.

Clip 5 – 2 What Are Your Favorite Instruments to Play (GOT Q&A with Composer Ramin Djawadi, 9/15/2017, 0:27)

In 2004, Djawadi went out on his own with his own soundtrack for **Blade: Trinity**, collaborating with American rapper, actor, filmmaker, and record producer RZA; for director David S. Goyer. This was the beginning of his relationship with director Goyer for both film and television. In 2005 Djawadi continued making additional music for Zimmer in films such as **Batman Begins** and **The Island**, which was his last time working in the background for another composer. The same year, he composed the Emmy-nominated main title themes and scores for **Prison Break**; and the related show **Breakout Kings**.

In 2006, Djawadi scored the first Sony Pictures Animation project, **Open Season**, followed by the sequel **Open Season 2** in 2008. His ethereal score for the 2007 film **Mr. Brooks** earned him a World Soundtrack Award for Discovery of the Year nomination. His other scores include **Deception**, **Ask the Dust**, and **Iron Man**. Djawadi was nominated for a Grammy Award for his Best Score Soundtrack for his work on **Iron Man** in 2008.

In 2009 Djawadi wrote the score for Goyer's horror thriller **The Unborn**, produced by Michael Bay. Ramin collaborated with Goyer on the television show **FlashForward** that year, earning him a second Emmy nomination. Currently, Ramin is back as the composer for the HBO **Game of Thrones** prequel series, **House of the Dragon** which just finished broadcasting season one this last October, 2022.

Okay, so, let's focus on his music to **Game of Thrones**.

The soundtrack to **Game of Thrones** was originally meant to be composed by Stephen Warbeck. On February 2, 2011, **only ten weeks** prior to the show's premiere, it was reported that Warbeck had left the project and that Ramin Djawadi had been commissioned to write the music instead. The music supervisor Evyen (Ev-ee-yen) Klean suggested Djawadi to Benioff and Weiss as the replacement for Warbeck. Although Djawadi was reluctant, as he had other commitments at that time, they managed to persuade Djawadi to accept the project. Benioff and Weiss noted "we were behind the 8-ball on the music front, largely due to the scope and difficulty of scoring Game of Thrones. When we asked Evyen who he thought was the person best suited to face these challenges, he thought for two seconds and said 'There's a guy named Ramin Djawadi.' He opened his laptop and played some of Ramin's work to **Clash of the Titans**, and in about ten seconds we were excited to meet him. We met Ramin the next day and found him easy-going, pleasant, and unfazed by our various unsuccessful attempts to pronounce his last name. He was very busy, and initially he tried very graciously to decline, but our campaign of brutal and remorseless begging eventually changed his mind."

That turned out to be a good decision. Ramin subsequently won two consecutive Emmy Awards for **Game of Thrones**, in 2018 for the episode "The Dragon and the Wolf" and in 2019 for the episode "The Long Night." So basically, Ramin is the up and coming famous composer that no one knows! Well, let's change that just a little bit here.

As the producers noted "His first task was his most important: writing a main title theme that would encapsulate the broad sweep of George Martin's world, with its many lands and families, its love and lust and violence and intrigue. He said he'd give it a shot. Two days later he sent us a piece of music that was almost exactly what you hear [in the show]. It was one of the most powerful earworms we'd ever encountered. This was a mistake on Ramin's part. He tipped his hand, and showed us that he could indeed write fantastic music in very little time. Always with a smile – Ramin provided one of the most relentlessly good-natured people either of us had ever had the good fortune to work with. We knew that composers were supposed to be almost as prickly and difficult as writers, but clearly no one had ever told Ramin this." (season one disc liner notes). Let's hear Ramin talk about the opening sequence music to Game of Thrones from a 2019 YouTube session where he discusses GOT's greatest hits.

Clip 6 – 5 GOT Opening Sequence (Composer Ramin Djawadi Talks GOT Greatest Hits, 4/12/2019, 1:02)

Djawadi said he intended to capture the overall impression of the show with the main theme cue. Cello is featured strongly as Benioff and Weiss wanted to avoid the flutes or solo vocals found in many other productions in the fantasy genre. Djawadi chose the cello as the main instrument for the music because he felt it has a "darker sound" that suited the show. He started with a riff and then built the title theme around the riff. The tune begins with the riff played on strings in a minor key, then changes to a major key after 2 bars, and then back to minor again. Ramin said that he wanted to reflect the "backstabbing and conspiracy" and the unpredictability of the show: He noted "I thought it would be cool to kinda do the same play with the music."

The main melody is introduced with the cello, joined later by a solo violin that may suggest an interplay between different characters. The melody is then repeated with the entire orchestra. The next section introduces a change in melody, described by Djawadi as giving "a sense of adventure", and continues with a repeat that involves a choir of twenty female voices. The title theme ends with a combination of a dulcimer and kantele (can-t-la), producing a "shimmery quality" in its sound that Djawadi thought would give it a sense of mystery and anticipation for the episode.

The title music is reprised as a global theme or cue in the soundtracks for the series. It may be played occasionally on its own in fragments, sometimes as part of the theme of individual characters, or in combination with other pieces of music, and may also be reappear during particularly important scenes.

Well, enough background! From here on I'm going to pick the best tracks from each season, or perhaps ones that better illustrate Ramin's range of music for the series. From Season One here is track #29 appropriately titled *Finale*. I love the inclusion of the main theme, the drumbeats of war, and the choir accompaniment. By the way, you can purchase all eight seasons of the Game of Thrones music at iTunes.

Clip 7 – Finale (Season 1, Track 29, 2011, 2:31)

Didn't that sound epic? The track is from the episode titled "Fire and Blood" where Daenerys Targaryen appears alive and unharmed by the flames of Khal Drogo's funeral pyre, along with the three dragons which have hatched from the dragon's eggs. It contains the melody of Daenerys' theme ("*Love in the Eyes*") and the main GOT theme.

Moving on to Season Two, I personally rated 5 of 21 tracks with 5 out of 5 stars. Of these I've chosen two tracks. The first is track #6 titled *Winterfell*, chosen for its more introspective and emotional appeal and use of the cello. This musical cue is reprised in six episodes of Season Two, with the first use in the Season Two premiere episode titled "The North Remembers." The full version plays in episode #8 titled "The Prince of Winterfell" when Brandon and Rickon Stark are revealed to be still alive in the crypts beneath Winterfell.

Clip 8 – Winterfell (Season 2, Track 6, 2:44)

The second track I've chosen from Season Two is track #20 titled *The Rains of Castamere* which is the House Lannister's theme. It is from the 9th and final episode of Season Two titled "Blackwater." The music is performed by a group called The National, an American rock band of Cincinnati, Ohio natives, formed in Brooklyn, New York City, in 1999.

Clip 9 – The Rains of Castamere (Season 2, Track 20, 2:24)

For Season Three I have chosen track #2 titled *A Lannister Always Pays His Debts*, once again featuring a cello. It is another House Lannister theme and is featured in episode #7 titled "The Bear and the Maiden Fair." It also plays again as Jaime Lannister and Brienne of Tarth leave Harrenhal. In the episode "Second Sons" a modified version appears as Cersei Lannister tells Margaery the story of House Reyne of Castamere's failed rebellion. And in the episode "The Rains of Castamere" a live version is played on set musicians at the infamous Red Wedding - a wedding not subsequently known for 'a good time was had by all.'

Clip 10 – A Lannister Always Pays His Debts (Season 3, Track 2, 2:51)

In my opinion the music to Season 4 is some of the best of the series with 6 of 22 tracks rated 5 of 5 stars. Another wonderful version of *The Rains of Castamere* is featured, but I've played that theme already for you; and I am saving a different version to close out this podcast. And, as you may guess by now, *The Rains of Castamere* is on the list of GOT greatest hits.

So, I am picking track #22 titled *The Children*. It is heard in the 10th and final episode of Season 4 when Arya Stark escapes Westeros and sails to Braavos. The track is predominantly a modified children's choral version of the main

title theme, although it also contains elements of the House Stark theme *Goodbye Brother*, and Arya Stark's theme *Valar Morghulis*. I love it Ramin.

Clip 11 – The Children (Season 4, Track 22, 2:41)

In Season 5 one of the most hated villains of Game of Thrones, Cersei Lannister, is forced to atone for her sins in the now infamous scene known as *Cersei's Walk of Atonement*, where shorn of her long hair, and fully naked, she must walk the streets of King's Landing, all the while being pelted with garbage, spit, and feces by jeering crowds. Although I admit I inwardly truly loved seeing Cersei finally being punished for her rottenness, I couldn't help thinking, "Man, what actors and actresses have to do for their art!" Here is track #7 titled *Mother's Mercy* from the season's 10th and final episode in Season Five.

Clip 12 – Mother's Mercy (Season 5, Track 7, 2:15)

Well, I may have picked that track just to relive my desire to see Cersei pay for her nasty behavior. If you want to enjoy yourself, search for "Walk of Atonement" on YouTube. Another track I'd like to feature is track #9 *Dance of the Dragon*, from Episode 9 called "The Dance of the Dragon." This is the scene where the largest of the three dragons named Drogon arrives at the fighting pit, rescues Daenerys Targaryen and her followers from the Sons of the Harpy, and then flies off with Daenerys riding on Drogon's back for the first time. I love the tension of the music along with the essence of battle, followed by the post battle cooldown, and then finally the quickened pace of flying away.

Clip 13 – Dance of the Dragons (Season 5, Track 9, 3:09)

Of all the seasons I found the music to Season 6 to be my favorite – so many good tracks. One I just must play for you is track #3 titled *Light of the Seven*, from the episode titled "The Winds of Winter," the last episode of season 6. "Light of the Seven" is the first time we hear Ramin using piano for Game of Thrones. The soundtrack received favorable reviews and peaked at number 1 on the US Billboard Soundtrack Albums chart, and number 27 on the US Billboard 200. The full track is almost 10 minutes long, so I am just going to play part of it here.

Clip 14 – Light of the Seven (Season 6, Track 3, 9:49) use 5:22 to end?

Here is Ramin talking just a bit about this track from a 2019 YouTube video, where he talks about his choices for the Game of Thrones greatest hits.

Clip 15 – 7 Light of the Seven Piano Ballad (Composer Djawadi Talks GOT Greatest Hits, 4/12/2019, 1:06)

Now I can't leave Season Six without another season ending track, #19 titled *The Winds of Winter*. As Daenerys Targaryen finally leaves Essos and sails for Westeros along with her three dragons, her whole army of the Unsullied and the Dothraki bloodriders, with Tyrion Lannister as advisor, with spy Varys, and with her new allies Theon and Yara Greyjoy, and House Tyrell and House Martell. The soundtrack contains the melodies of *Dracarys*, the House Greyjoy theme, Daenerys Targaryen's theme, and main GOT theme. By now you may have noticed that the final track of each season has been one of my favorites. Here is *The Winds of Winter*.

Clip 16 – Then Winds of Winter (Season 6, Track 19, 3:30)

As it turns out, the Season Six album is also the only one to include 7 bonus tracks, many of them excellent in their own right.

And now onto Season Seven. Once again, I am going to feature the last track, #24, of the Season 7 album, titled *Winter is Here* from the episode titled "The Dragon and the Wolf." The music plays as Jaime Lannister leaves King's Landing as snow starts to fall on the capital. It is a slow and quiet version of the GOT Main Theme, using predominantly a piano. So peaceful.

Clip 17 – Winter is Here (Season 7, Track 24, 2:54)

Which brings us to the final season, Season 8. Much has been said of the final season, which had only six episodes. The season largely consisted of original content not found in George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* series, while also incorporating material that Martin had revealed to the showrunners about the upcoming novels in the series. The season was met with mixed reviews from critics, in contrast to the critical acclaim of previous seasons, and is the lowest-rated of the series on the website Rotten Tomatoes. While the performances, production values and music score were praised, criticism was mainly directed at the shorter runtime of the season, as well as numerous creative decisions made by the showrunners regarding the plot and character arcs. Many commentators deemed it to

be a disappointing conclusion to the series. In fact, towards the end of the final season of Game of Thrones, a petition to HBO was started on Change.org. It called Benioff and Weiss "woefully incompetent writers" and demanded "competent writers" to remake the eighth season of Game of Thrones in a manner "that makes sense." The petition eventually amassed over 1.5 million signatures. Ouch! But there is little chance of that happening.

However, despite the vitriol, Season 8 received 32 nominations at the 71st Primetime Emmy Awards, the most for a single season of television in history. It won twelve awards, including Outstanding Drama Series and Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Drama Series for Peter Dinklage who portrayed the dwarf Tyrion Lannister.

From the last episode of season 8 titled "The Iron Throne," I have chosen to play for you track #31 titled *The Last of the Starks*. It plays as Jon Stark arrives at Castle Black and is reunited with Ghost, his adopted albino dire wolf. And as Sansa Stark is crowned Queen in the North. And as Arya Stark sets sail for the West. It starts out slowly and sadly but builds strength. The GOT main theme reprises halfway through and becomes more triumphant sounding before quietly disappearing into the distance.

Clip 18 – The Last of the Starks (Season 8, Track 31, 4:52)

Ramin Djawadi won his second of seven Primetime Emmy Award nominations, for Outstanding Music Composition for a Series, for Season Eight's 3rd episode, "The Long Night." Overall, Ramin noted "'It's been such an honor to be a part of this incredible show for the past eight years."

When asked how music fits into a dramatic work Ramin responded this way in a 2018 YouTube video:

Clip 19 – 9 Film Music as an Additional Character (GOT Composer Ramin Djawadi, 8/17/2018, 0:24)

and ...

Clip 20 – 11 Composer Under Viewer's Skin (GOT Composer Ramin Djawadi, 8/17/2018, 0:28)

Between February 2017 through October 2019 Ramin Djawadi conducted a GOT Live Concert experience featuring up to 33 songs from the series, performing in North America and Europe in four legs, with breaks between each leg. The concerts were well received. If you missed those opportunities a Game of Thrones live concert experience featuring Ramin Djawadi will occur for one night only on May 13, 2023, at the Hollywood Bowl. Tickets are available at Ticketmaster. **So Tempting!**
























Ending

























Well, that's it for this *Treks Music-in-Sci-Fi* guest podcast on the Music of the **Game of Thrones**, my 15th guest podcast on the music of sci-fi and sometimes fantasy media. I sincerely hoped you enjoyed it. Thanks to Rico for allowing me this opportunity to once again showcase music by great composers of our time. Happy New Years to all of you Treks in Sci-Fi fanboys and fangirls. It's been a pleasure. Next time, Rico will bring to you more geeky goodness with another great Treks in Sci-Fi podcast episode. Until then I will end this podcast with an alternate version of **The Rains of Castamere**, as sung by Jackie Evancho.


























Clip 21 – The Rains of Castamere (Jackie Evancho, 2014, 3:36)




IMDB

Ramin Djawadi is an Iranian-German film score composer known for composing the hit HBO series Game of Thrones and the Marvel films Blade: Trinity, Iron Man and Eternals. He also composed Clash of the Titans, A Wrinkle in Time, Pacific Rim, Westworld, Gears of War 4 and 5, Medal of Honor, Open Season 1 and 2, Jack Ryan and Warcraft. He won two Emmy Awards for Game of Thrones.

Upcoming · 1			⬆
	Australian Big Cats Composer In Production	2023	i
Previous · 74			⬆
	Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan Composer TV Series	2018–2022 24 episodes	i
	House of the Dragon Composer TV Series	2022 10 episodes	i
	The DioField Chronicle Composer Video Game	2022	i
	Westworld Composer TV Series	2016–2022 29 episodes	i
	The Man from Toronto Composer	2022	i
	Metal Lords Composer	2022	i
	Uncharted Composer (music by)	2022	i
	Eternals Composer (music by)	2021	i
	New World Composer Video Game	2021	i
	Reminiscence Composer (music by)	2021	i
	The Ravine composer	2021	i
	In the Footsteps of Elephant Composer	2020	i
	Elephant Composer	2020	i
	Amazing Stories Composer TV Series	2020 1 episode	i
	Gears 5 Composer (music composed by) Video Game	2019	i
	Game of Thrones Composer TV Series	2011–2019 73 episodes	i
	The Queen's Corgi Composer	2019	i
	Slender Man Composer	2018	i
	A Wrinkle in Time Composer (music by)	2018	i
	Trónok Harca vs. Star Wars Composer Video	2017	i
	The Strain Composer TV Series	2014–2017 46 episodes	i
	The Mountain Between Us Composer	2017	i

	Prison Break Composer TV Series	2005–2017 89 episodes	i
	The Great Wall Composer	2016	i
	A Show of Ice & Fire Composer (original music by) Video	2016	i
	Gears of War 4 Composer Video Game	2016	i
	Person of Interest Composer TV Series	2011–2016 103 episodes	i
	Warcraft Composer	2016	i
	Tower of Joy: A Game of Thrones FanFilm Composer (original music composed by) Short	2016	i
	Yassine Movie Composer Short	2016	i
	The Wild Life Composer	2016	i
	Mozart Heroes Composer Short	2015	i
	Wild Cats 3D with Kevin Richardson Composer Short	2015	i
	Dracula Untold Composer	2014	i
	Los Angeles: 'City of Angels' - Aerial Documentary Composer Short	2014	i
	Thunder and the House of Magic Composer	2013	i
	African Safari Composer	2013	i
	Pacific Rim: Training Day Composer (uncredited) Short	2013	i
	Pacific Rim Composer	2013	i
	Game of Thrones: Season 3 - Theme Song Mash-up Composer Video	2013	i
	Medal of Honor: Warfighter Composer Video Game	2012	i
	Red Dawn Composer	2012	i
	A Turtle's Tale 2: Sammy's Escape from Paradise Composer	2012	i
	Breakout Kings Composer TV Series	2011–2012 23 episodes	i
	Safe House Composer	2012	i
	Fright Night Composer	2011	i

	Shift 2: Unleashed Composer Video Game	2011	i
	Medal of Honor Composer Video Game	2010	i
	Pobeg Composer TV Series	2010	i
	A Turtle's Tale: Sammy's Adventures Composer	2010	i
	Flashforward Composer TV Series	2009–2010 23 episodes	i
	Clash of the Titans Composer (music by)	2010	i
	Prison Break: The Final Break Composer Video	2009	i
	The Unborn Composer	2009	i
	Open Season 2 Composer Video	2008	i
	Prison Break Season 3: Orientación Composer Video	2008	i
	Deception Composer	2008	i
	Iron Man Composer	2008	i
	Fly Me to the Moon 3D Composer	2007	i
	The Chubbchubbs Save Xmas Composer Short	2007	i
	Mr. Brooks Composer	2007	i
	Boog & Elliot's Midnight Bun Run Composer Video	2006	i
	Open Season Composer	2006	i
	Blade: The Series Composer TV Series	2006 12 episodes	i
	Ask the Dust Composer	2006	i
	Threshold Composer TV Series	2005 1 episode	i
	All the Invisible Children Composer (segment Jonathan)	2005	i
	Buffalo Dreams Composer (music by) TV Movie	2005	i
	Blade: Trinity Composer	2004	i
	The Grid Composer TV Mini Series	2004 6 episodes	i
	Thunderbirds Composer	2004	i

	Saving Jessica Lynch Composer TV Movie	2003 i
	Beat the Drum Composer	2003 i
	Shoo Fly Composer Short	2001 i



Ramin Djawadi Biography

[Edit](#)

Showing all 12 items

Jump to: [Overview](#) (2) | [Mini Bio](#) (1) | [Family](#) (1) | [Trivia](#) (8)

Overview (2)

Born [July 19, 1974](#) in [Duisburg, North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany](#)

Height [6' 1½" \(1.87 m\)](#)

Mini Bio (1)

Ramin Djawadi is an Iranian-German film score composer known for composing the hit HBO series *Game of Thrones* and the Marvel films *Blade: Trinity*, *Iron Man* and *Eternals*. He also composed *Clash of the Titans*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, *Pacific Rim*, *Westworld*, *Gears of War 4* and *5*, *Medal of Honor*, *Open Season 1* and *2*, *Jack Ryan* and *Warcraft*. He won two Emmy Awards for *Game of Thrones*.

- *IMDb Mini Biography* By: [Christian Frates](#)

Family (1)

Spouse [Jennifer Hawks \(? - present\)](#) (2 children)

Trivia (8)

His last name is pronounced "Java-dee".

He is of Iranian descent.

Jonathan Nolan said he met Ramin Djawadi when he did additional music in Christopher Nolan's *"Batman Begins"*. He later chose him to compose his CBS show *"Person of Interest"*, and he was constantly amazed with his work and described him as "unbelievably talented", and said that sometimes they intended to use a song in the show (for example in the very ending of the very last episode), but then Ramin presented them to an original piece he wrote and they chose to use that instead. Later Nolan was highly impressed with Ramin's work on the HBO hit series *"Game of Thrones"*, and he chose Ramin to serve as composer in his HBO show *"Westworld"*.

Ramin is the first television composer in history to receive his own live orchestral tour around the United States which is centered exclusively on the soundtrack of a television series, *Game of Thrones*. Ramin received high acclaim from fans, musicians and critics alike during his run in the show but his recognition peaked after the season 6 finale, *The Winds of Winter*.

Has twins (b. November 2013) with his wife Jennifer Hawks.

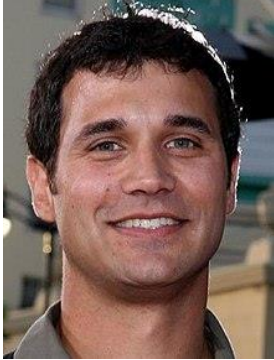
Won his first Emmy Award in 2018 for the season 7 finale of *Game of Thrones*, while having a second nomination in the same category for an episode in the second season of *Westworld*. He won his second Emmy award for the following season in 2019 and was also nominated for a Grammy for both seasons.

Is the third composer in history to win the Television Composer of the Year Award in the World Soundtrack Awards, a relatively new category that added to the ceremony in 2016. He was nominated in all the three years preceding his win, and won in the 2018 ceremony for his work on *Game of Thrones* (seventh season), *Westworld* (second season) and *The Strain* (fourth season).

Graduated from Berklee College of Music.

Ramin Djawadi

Ramin Djawadi



Djawadi in 2008

Background information

Born 19 July 1974 (age 48)
[Duisburg](#), [North Rhine-Westphalia](#), [West Germany](#)

Genres • [Film and television scores](#)

Occupation(s) • [Composer](#)

Instrument(s) • [Piano](#)

Years active 1998–present

Labels • [WaterTower Music](#)

•

Website www.ramindjawadi.com

Ramin Djawadi (/rəˈmiːn ˈdʒɑːvədi/, Persian: رامین جوادی; born 19 July 1974) is an Iranian and German^{[1][2][3]} **score composer**. He is known for his scores for the 2008 Marvel film *[Iron Man](#)* and the HBO series *[Game of Thrones](#)*, for which he was nominated for [Grammy Awards](#) in 2009, 2018 and 2020.^[4] He is also the composer for the HBO *Game of Thrones* prequel series, *[House of the Dragon](#)* (2022—present).^[5] He has scored films such as *[Clash of the Titans](#)*, *[Pacific Rim](#)*, *[Warcraft](#)*, *[A Wrinkle in Time](#)* and *[Eternals](#)*, television series including *[Prison Break](#)*, *[Person of Interest](#)*, *[Jack Ryan](#)*, and *[Westworld](#)*, and video games such as *[Medal of Honor](#)*, *[Gears of War 4](#)*, and *[Gears 5](#)*. He won two consecutive [Emmy Awards](#) for *Game of Thrones*, in 2018 for the episode "[The Dragon and the Wolf](#)" and in 2019 for "[The Long Night](#)".^[6]



Early life

Djawadi was born in [Duisburg](#), to an Iranian father and a German mother.^[7] He went to Krupp Gymnasium in [Duisburg](#), [West Germany](#) and studied at [Berklee College of Music](#).^{[8][9]}

Career

After graduating from [Berklee College of Music](#) in 1998,^[10] Djawadi garnered the attention of [Hans Zimmer](#), who recruited him to [Remote Control Productions](#).^[11] Djawadi moved to Los Angeles and worked as an assistant to [Klaus Badelt](#). From there on he made additional music and arrangements for Badelt and Zimmer movies, such as *[Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl](#)*, *[The Time Machine](#)*, and the [Academy Award](#)-nominated film *[Something's Gotta Give](#)*. He co-composed the music for *[System Shock 2](#)* (1999). In 2003, he and Badelt composed the score of *[Beat the Drum](#)*.^[12]

In 2004, Djawadi went out on his own with [Blade: Trinity](#), collaborating with [RZA](#) for director [David S. Goyer](#). This was the beginning of his relationship with Goyer for both film and television. The following year, Djawadi continued making additional music for Zimmer in films such as [Batman Begins](#) and [The Island](#), which was his last time working in the background of another composer. The same year, he composed the Emmy-nominated main title themes and scores for [Prison Break](#) and the related show [Breakout Kings](#).^[13]

In 2006, Djawadi scored the first [Sony Pictures Animation](#) project, [Open Season](#), followed by the sequel [Open Season 2](#) (2008). Djawadi's ethereal score for the film [Mr. Brooks](#) (2007) earned him a [World Soundtrack Award for Discovery of the Year](#) nomination. His other scores include [Deception](#), [Robert Towne's Ask the Dust](#), and [Iron Man](#). Djawadi was nominated for [Grammy Award for Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media](#)^[14] for his work on *Iron Man*.

Djawadi wrote the score for Goyer's horror thriller [The Unborn](#) (2009), produced by [Michael Bay](#). Djawadi collaborated with Goyer on the television show [FlashForward](#) that year, earning him his second [Emmy](#) nomination.



[Game of Thrones' main title theme](#)

0:16

Sample of "Main Title", the series's musical theme tune, illustrating the melody played with cello and variations of the riff in strings

Problems playing this file? See [media help](#).

In 2010, Djawadi completed Warner Brothers' [Clash of the Titans](#). The same year, he scored the soundtrack for the video game [Medal of Honor](#).

In 2011, he was selected to score HBO's fantasy drama [Game of Thrones](#).^[15] His work on *Game of Thrones* has garnered him several industry awards and recognition including a [Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Music Composition for a Series](#) in September 2018 for the score "The Dragon and the Wolf".^[16] For his work on [season 7](#), he was nominated for the [Grammy Award for Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media](#).^[17] This was his second nomination in this category after being nominated before for *Iron Man* in 2009. In 2011, he worked on the CBS crime drama [Person of Interest](#).^[18]

In 2013, Djawadi composed for the science fiction film [Pacific Rim](#). He scored FX's vampire drama [The Strain](#), created by *Pacific Rim* director [Guillermo del Toro](#).^[19]

In 2016, Djawadi composed for the fantasy film [Warcraft](#) and the HBO science fiction show [Westworld](#).^{[20][21]} The same year, Djawadi composed the score for the fantasy action monster film [The Great Wall](#).^[22]

Djawadi scored [The Queen's Corgi](#), an animation film directed by frequent collaborator [Ben Stassen](#).^[23] He co-wrote "Hollow Crown" alongside [Ellie Goulding](#) in [For the Throne: Music Inspired by the HBO Series Game of Thrones](#).^[24] In 2019, he won his second Emmy Award in a row for the *Game of Thrones* episode "[The Long Night](#)".^[6]

In 2019, Djawadi also made the soundtrack for the Microsoft Studios and The Coalition video game, *Gears 5*. The soundtrack was copyrighted and cannot be used even while playing the game online.

He received a third Grammy nomination for his work in [season 8](#) of *Game of Thrones*, in the [Grammy Award for Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media](#) category.^[25]

Djawadi composed the score for the 2021 [Marvel Studios](#) film [Eternals](#), which marked his return to the [Marvel Cinematic Universe](#) (MCU) since 2008's *Iron Man*. Djawadi composed music for the trailer of [Magic: The Gathering: Theros Beyond Death](#), a card game. Djawadi co-composed music with [Brandon Campbell](#) for the second episode of [Apple TV+](#)'s series [Amazing Stories](#) titled "The Heat". He composed music for the [Disney+](#)'s [nature documentary](#) film [Elephant](#). Djawadi composed the score for [Lisa Joy's](#) feature film debut [Reminiscence](#). He also co-composed the music for the [Amazon Game's New World](#) with [Brandon Campbell](#).

He scored the music for [Ruben Fleischer's Uncharted](#) based on the [videogame franchise](#) of same name. He reunited with *Game Of Thrones* creator [D.B Weiss](#) and [Tom Morello](#), scoring the [Netflix](#) film, [Metal Lords](#), directed by [Peter Solliet](#). He scored upcoming [Sony's The Man from Toronto](#), directed by [Patrick Hughes](#) and the [Game Of Thrones](#) prequel series, [House Of the Dragon](#).

Personal life

Djawadi is married to Jennifer Hawks, a music executive in the film industry.^[26] They are parents of twins.^[27] According to Djawadi, he experiences the perceptual phenomenon known as [synesthesia](#) whereby he may "associate colours with music, or music with colours", and it allows him to visualize music.^[28]

Works and awards

Main article: [List of works by Ramin Djawadi](#)

Tours

- [Game of Thrones Live Concert Experience](#) (2017–2019)

See also

- [Music of Game of Thrones](#)
- [Music of the Marvel Cinematic Universe](#)
- [List of people with synesthesia](#)

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Official Web Site

<https://www.ramindjawadi.com/>

RollingStone

‘Game of Thrones’ Live Concert Experience Returning for Fall Tour

Series composer Ramin Djawadi will perform at three shows from 20-date audio-visual run May 9, 2019

The 'Game of Thrones' Live Concert Experience will return this fall for 20 North American shows throughout the U.S. and Canada. *Larry Marano/REX/Shutterstock*

The [Game of Thrones](#) Live Concert Experience will return for its third tour this fall, bringing the HBO series' grand score to 20 venues throughout the U.S. and Canada. The North American trek launches September 5th in Syracuse, New York and wraps October 5th in Los Angeles, California.

Tickets will be available starting Monday, May 13th at 10 a.m. local time via [Ticketmaster](#).

Game of Thrones composer Ramin Djawadi will perform at the Los Angeles show, along with the September 14th date in New York City and the October 4th gig in Irvine, California. The audio-visual staging will feature pieces throughout the fantasy series, along with new musical arrangements from the ongoing eighth and final season — including Djawadi's nine-minute [“The Night King” theme](#).

The concert series [premiered in February 2017](#) with a lengthy North American run featuring a full orchestra, choir and projections from the show; the National's Matt Berninger and System of a Down's Serj Tankian both made [surprise appearances](#) during the tour, joining for the song “The Rains of Castamere.” The production continued with European and North American tours in 2018, bringing the total to 75 shows.

Game of Thrones Live Concert Experience 2019 North American Tour Dates

September 5 – Syracuse, NY @ St. Joseph's Health Amphitheater at Lakeview
September 6 – Toronto, ON @ Budweiser Stage
September 8 – Chicago, IL @ Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre
September 10 – Boston, MA @ Xfinity Center
September 11 – Hartford, CT @ XFINITY Theatre
September 12 – Philadelphia, PA @ The Mann
September 14 – New York, NY @ Northwell Health at Jones Beach Theater
September 15 – Washington, DC @ Jiffy Lube Live
September 17 – Virginia Beach, VA @ Veterans United Home Loans Amphitheater
September 18 – Raleigh, NC @ Coastal Credit Union Music Park
September 20 – Jacksonville, FL @ Daily's Place
September 21 – West Palm Beach, FL @ Coral Sky Amphitheatre
September 22 – Tampa, FL @ MIDFLORIDA Credit Union Amphitheatre
September 25 – Rogers, AR @ Walmart AMP
September 26 – Dallas, TX @ The Pavilion at Toyota Music Factory
September 27 – Houston, TX @ Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion
October 1 – Phoenix, AZ @ Comerica Theatre
October 3 – San Francisco, CA @ Shoreline Amphitheatre
October 4 – Irvine, CA @ FivePoint Amphitheatre
October 5 – Los Angeles, CA @ Hollywood Bowl

two tracks

Ramin Djawadi debuts his latest, from 'The Mountain Between Us'

By [Shirley Li](#) August 29, 2017 at 10:00 AM EDT

Credit: 20th Century Fox; Inset: Bret Hartman/20th Century Fox

[The Mountain Between Us](#)

Winter may have [finally arrived in Westeros](#), but even before the latest season of *Game of Thrones* began, the series' composer Ramin Djawadi had already felt the season's freezing cold.

He felt it not while thinking about Westeros, but while crafting the score for [The Mountain Between Us](#), an epic love story and survival tale directed by Hany Abu-Assad about two strangers (played by Kate Winslet and Idris Elba) whose charter plane crashes into the side of a mountain, leaving them stranded atop a snowy peak. "I was writing the score in Los Angeles, in the warmth, and [the film] just makes you shiver," Djawadi tells EW. "It's harsh, but it's beautiful at the same time as well."

Djawadi began working on the score immediately after returning from his nationwide tour conducting the [Game of Thrones Live Concert Experience](#) in April. The composer — [who also penned the scores for HBO's Westworld and films like Iron Man and Pacific Rim](#) — found it difficult to balance a sound that would fit both a romance and a thriller. "To portray both these elements, to keep the tension up but the romantic aspect of it too, was quite tricky to do," he admits. "It was a great challenge."

Below, Djawadi shares two exclusive tracks from the score, along with more insight into how he arranged the pieces.

"Mountain Between Us Suite"

Going in, Djawadi wanted to make sure that his themes for the film captured the role the mountain played, and how its beautiful-but-deadly environment both awed and terrified the two leads, kindling their romance while threatening their safety. "One thing Hany really wanted was to blend the environment with the music," he says. "At the core of the score is the piano and the strings, but then around it I played with elements. When you're in the mountains, you echo, so I implemented the idea of an echo into the score." In fact, Djawadi used [whirly tubes](#), rudimentary instruments that, when spun in the air, create tones that sound like wind, if wind were musical. "It fits tonally with the piano and the strings," Djawadi points out. "It's part of the environment, the nature."

"Separation"

Both tracks are a marked departure from what Djawadi had written for previous films in his oeuvre. "It's quite different compared to all of the other scores I've written," he observes of his *Mountain Between Us* score. "I've done a lot of bigger action scores. This is not *Pacific Rim*, not *Iron Man*, not *Warcraft*. *Game of Thrones*, I guess, is a beautiful hybrid. But with this film I was able to really zone in on just these two characters alone in this entire film and really explore their character development."

This track, therefore, uses a smaller collection of musicians than Djawadi usually does. "It was very special, because it was very personal, and a very small score," he says. "We used a medium to a small orchestra, and everything really was mostly just strings and a piano." It's an intimate setup for an intimate film.

'Gears 5' Composer Talks Bringing 'Westworld' Flair to Sera

By [Steven Asarch](#) On 9/5/19 at 4:07 PM EDT (Newsweek)

[Gaming](#)

Gears of War is a franchise full of bloody decapitations, grandiose cutscenes and epic music. Trying to capture the majesty of a human civilization constantly on the brink of annihilation requires a timely score and the best composers in the business. Reprising his role from the fourth installment of Microsoft's Lancer-sawing series, Composer Ramin Djawadi returns to create the moodscape for *Gears 5*. Known for his Emmy-award winning work on *Game of Thrones* and *Westworld*, Djawadi has made a name for himself as one of the top composers for projects that need to be larger than life.

Cool guys don't look at explosions Microsoft

"We had first wanted to contact Djawadi while working on a project code named Ranger," John Morgan, audio director at The Coalition, told *Newsweek*. "But that didn't work out. We knew he was quite busy with television and film." Morgan and the

Coalition studio head Rod Fergusson were sitting in an airport lounge, discussing what composers they would like to work with on *Gears of War 4*. Fergusson was watching *Game of Thrones* and Morgan suggested that maybe they should contact Djawadi to work on the project.

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Whether it's a huge fight scene with angry aliens or a *Westworld* rendition of "Paint it Black," Djawadi tries to find the emotions the creatives are trying to convey in his music. "What I love about my job is every time you approach a new project, you examine it to figure out what does it need and what can we do different," Djawadi said. "The creativity is what matters to me. It doesn't always have to be loud and big to be epic, the nuances also matter."

After working out the details, Djawadi met with the team at the studio in Vancouver and agreed to score the game. With the success of *Gears of War 4*, the team over at the Coalition wanted Djawadi to return for the next entry. In short time, the composer recalled just how unique the creative process for games truly is.

"A movie has scenes that are locked to picture, but in a video game you can't anticipate what the player will do." Djawadi said. "The approach is often to create two or four minutes of an action or tension piece that captures a mood that underlines what the theme is."

In the early stages of development for *Gears 5*, Morgan sent over a 20-page pre-production deck outlining the characters, theme and the story. From there, Djawadi started writing music he felt captured the spirit of what the game will be and then programmed the melodies into his computer as a demo.

"The main idea is to find the style and melodies and then dissect and rearrange," Djawadi said. "[These songs] can become the end credit music or the opening titles, we try and find a home for them." Morgan remembers being "nervous" when receiving the initial delivery of the demo tracks "because sometimes it can be hit or miss from our past experiences on other projects."

You ever just have one of those chainsaw dueling days? Microsoft

"When we got the sound files and put them in the studio, we were blown away," Morgan said. "Every song we listened to, we felt like it had a home and we felt the emotion in the music."

After the pieces were fine tuned and approved, the orchestral recordings were done at Sony Studios in Culver City with around 70 musicians. Recording with an orchestra is still Djawadi's favorite part of the process because that's when he sees his work truly spring to life.

"When a musician plays the music, they automatically bring emotion into it that's never there with the demos, as good as they may sound," Djawadi said. "When they play the music they automatically bring an interpretation to the note that's on the page. Nothing can beat live music because it brings it to a whole other level. That's why it's so powerful."

Music of *Game of Thrones*

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

[Jump to navigation](#) [Jump to search](#)

The music for the fantasy TV series *Game of Thrones* is composed by [Ramin Djawadi](#). The music is primarily [non-diegetic](#) and [instrumental](#) with occasional vocal performances, and is created to support musically the characters and plots of the show. It features various [themes](#), the most prominent being the "[main title theme](#)" that accompanies the series' [title sequence](#). In every season, a soundtrack album was released. The music for the show has won a number of awards, including a [Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Music Composition for a Series](#) in 2018 and 2019.

A series of concerts which featured *Game of Thrones* music, [Game of Thrones Live Concert Experience](#) with composer [Ramin Djawadi](#), took place in 2017–2018. First to be performed in [Saint Paul, Minnesota](#), it then went on to tour across the [United States](#), [Canada](#) and [Europe](#).^{[1][2]} This is followed by a world tour starting May 2018 in [Madrid](#).^[3]

The music of *Game of Thrones* has inspired many cover versions; the main title theme is particularly popular.^[4] There are also decidedly non-medieval renditions of songs from the series's source novels by [indie bands](#). These adaptations, according to [Wired](#), create attention for the series in media that wouldn't normally cover it, but are also notable for their musical merits independent of the series.^[5]



Background

Initially a different composer, [Stephen Warbeck](#), was hired for the pilot episode of *Game of Thrones* but he left the project.^[6] The music consultant for HBO and music supervisor of *Game of Thrones* [Evyen Klean](#) then suggested [Ramin Djawadi](#) to [David Benioff](#) and [D. B. Weiss](#).^[7] Djawadi, although initially interested, declined the offer three days later as the schedule conflicted with a film project he was working on. However, after a few meetings, Djawadi was persuaded to take on the project.^[8] The showrunners Benioff and Weiss sent Djawadi the first two episodes of the series, which impressed Djawadi. He arranged a meeting with Benioff and Weiss to discuss the concept of the series, after which he began to compose the music for the series.^{[5][9]}

According to Djawadi, Benioff and Weiss were interested in using music to support the different characters and plots.^[10] They wanted the music to express the emotion and mood of each scene in the series, and that distinct themes should be created for the main characters.^[11] Benioff and Weiss also wanted a soundscape that is distinct from other productions in the fantasy genre, therefore flutes and solo vocals were initially avoided. Cello became a prominent feature of the music of *Game of Thrones*, notably in its title theme.^[12]

Composition and recording

The process of composition is essentially the same throughout the series. Once the filming is nearly completed, episodes are sent to Djawadi either singly or in batches of multiple episodes as they were being edited together but often before any special effects added to the footage. Benioff and Weiss would also inform Djawadi in advance of the need to expand a theme or create new themes for characters.^[9] Djawadi wrote all the music in [Santa Monica, California](#).^[13] Asked in an interview about the overall process of composing the music and how it is used in the series, Djawadi said: "I sit with David and Dan and we do what's called a spotting session where we watch the entire episode and then discuss when music should start and stop. Everybody's very involved with that. And it constantly gets played with. What I love about *Game of Thrones* is that the positioning of the music is so well done, because it's not overdone. When the music cuts in, it really has something to say."^[14]

The recordings of most of the soundtracks were conducted in [Prague](#) with The Czech Film Orchestra and Choir. Djawadi interacted with the orchestra over the internet and was present during the entire recording session, giving comments on the recordings via the internet.^[15]

Themes

Main Title

Main article: [Game of Thrones Theme](#)



[Game of Thrones' main title theme](#)

0:16

Sample of "Main Title", the series's musical theme tune, illustrating the melody played with cello and variations of the riff in strings

Problems playing this file? See [media help](#).

According to Djawadi, the series creators wanted the main title theme that accompanies the [Game of Thrones title sequence](#) to be about a journey as there are many locations, characters in the series and involves much traveling. After Djawadi had seen the preliminary animated title sequence the visual effect artists were still working on, he was inspired to write the piece; which is inspired from a traditional Afghan Rubab melody. Djawadi said he intended to capture the overall impression of the series with the theme tune.^{[15][16]} The title theme is unusually long for a television series at nearly two minutes long, and cello was chosen as the main instrument for the music as he thought it has a "darker sound" that suited the series.^[15] The main title theme may also be incorporated into other music segments within the show, particularly at climactic moments.^[12]

Houses and characters

Djawadi composed an individual [leitmotif](#) or theme for each of the major houses, as well as for some locations and some characters. These themes are often played in scenes involving them and they can be used to tell a story. Not all characters would have their own themes due to the large number of characters in the series.^[11] The theme for [House Stark](#) is the first theme to be composed and is played on a cello.^[17] Most of the Stark characters only have variations on the same theme on cello. [Arya Stark](#) is the first of the house to have her own theme, first heard when she started her lesson on swordplay in [episode three](#) of season one, with the music featuring a [hammered dulcimer](#).^{[18][19]} A new theme for [Jon Snow](#), previously using only the House Stark theme, was created in the sixth season and prominently featured in the episode "[Battle of the Bastards](#)". It was first heard at the end of [episode three](#) when he said "My watch is ended", signifying a shift in the character after he had been resurrected.^[9]

Due to the large number of themes, the introductions of different themes are also deliberately spaced over a longer period so as not to confuse the audience, for example, the theme for [Theon Greyjoy](#) or House Greyjoy was not introduced until the second season even though he first appeared in the first season.^[20] [House Lannister](#) has an associated song, "[The Rains of Castamere](#)", which became their theme. The song was played at the [Red Wedding](#), but first heard when [Tyrion Lannister](#) whistled a small part in the first episode of the second season.^[10] When a theme has become established, different versions that are darker or lighter are then introduced, and concepts such as honor and conspiracy are also represented in themes.^[21]

Djawadi chose distinctive sounds and instruments for different leitmotifs and themes, for example, [didgeridoos](#) are used for the wildlings, while the Armenian [duduk](#) flute is used for the Dothrakis.^[20] The duduk flute has a different sound from other flutes, which were deliberately avoided as they are frequently used in other fantasy films.^[22] The themes for the [White Walkers](#) and the [Night King](#) are more of sound designs rather than regular themes; the White Walker theme initially employed a glass harmonica for a "really high, eerie, icy sound", but became fully orchestral when the army of the dead was revealed in the season two finale.^[18] The theme for the White Walkers extended over time into the music of the Army of the Dead, representing the gathering strength of Army of the Dead, which was only introduced in full in [the finale](#) of the [seventh season](#) when the Wall fell.^[23]

The themes may evolve over time in the series. The theme for [Daenerys Targaryen](#) started small, but became grander as she became more powerful. Her theme was initially played with a single instrument such as a processed [cello](#), but later began incorporating more instruments, including Japanese [taiko](#)-inspired drums, Indonesian [bedug](#) drums, and an Armenian duduk flute.^[18] Syllables and words in [Valyrian](#), a fictional language of *Game of Thrones*, are also used in her theme music, although not as whole sentences.^[9] The instrumentation for her theme are also used for dragon attacks.^[19] For the dragons, the theme was first heard when they hatched at the end of season one as a quiet high-pitched melody, but developed into something more powerful by the time they became fully grown, for example it was played with [French horns](#) in the loot train attack scene in the seventh season.^[24]

Different themes may also be combined in some themes and scenes. For example, in Season 5, the music for House of Black and White is an extension from the themes for Arya and Jaqen H'ghar.^[25] During the first scene of the fourth season, as Ice, the Stark sword, is reforged by Tywin Lannister, the Starks' and Lannisters' themes are clearly played simultaneously, to finally end with the Lannister theme only. In the finale of Season 6 with the shot of the armada at the end, at least five themes were combined – themes for Daenerys, Theon, [the Unsullied](#), the dragons, and the main title.^[18]

List of themes

Houses

- House Baratheon ("The King's Arrival")
- House Bolton ("Reek", "Let's Play a Game")
- House Greyjoy ("What Is Dead May Never Die", "Ironborn")
- House Lannister ("A Lannister Always Pays His Debts", "[The Rains of Castamere](#)")

- House Martell ("Unbowed, Unbent, Unbroken", "Jaws of the Viper")
- House Stark ("Goodbye Brother", "Home", "The Last of the Starks")
- House Targaryen ("Fire and Blood", "Breaker of Chains", "Dragonstone")
- House Tyrell ("Service of the Gods")

Groups

- Army of the Dead ("The Army of the Dead")
- Children of the Forest ("He Is Lost")
- Dothraki ("To Vaes Dothrak")
- Dragons ("Breaker of Chains", "Blood of the Dragon")
- The Living ("The Night King")
- Night's Watch ("The Night's Watch")
- Red Priests ("Warrior of Light", "The Red Woman")
- Sons of the Harpy ("Son of the Harpy")
- Thenns ("Thenns", "Let's Kill Some Crows")
- The Undying ("Pyat Pree")
- Unsullied ("Dracarys", "Casterly Rock")
- White Walkers ("White Walkers")
- Wildlings ("We Are the Watchers on the Wall")

Characters (with themes different from their House theme)

- Arya Stark ("The Pointy End", "Needle", "The Children")
- Brienne of Tarth ("The Old Gods and the New", "Feed the Hounds", used as a theme for Catelyn Stark in season 1)
- Cersei Lannister ("[Light of the Seven](#)", "Hear Me Roar", "No One Walks Away from Me", "For Cersei")
- Daenerys Targaryen ("Love in the Eyes", "Finale", "Mhysa", "Khaleesi")
- Euron Greyjoy ("Coronation")
- High Sparrow ("High Sparrow")
- Jaime Lannister ("Kingslayer")
- Jaqen H'ghar ("Valar Morghulis")
- Joffrey Baratheon ("You Win or You Die")
- Jon Snow ("My Watch Has Ended", "Bastard")
- The Mountain ("I Choose Violence")
- Three-Eyed Raven ("Three-Eyed Raven")
- Samwell Tarly ("Maester")
- Stannis Baratheon ("Warrior of Light", "Don't Die With a Clean Sword")
- Melisandre ("The Red Woman")

- Petyr Baelish ("Chaos is a Ladder")
- The Night King ("The Night King")

Locations

- The Citadel ("Maester")
- House of Black and White ("Valar Morghulis", "House of Black and White")
- Meereen ("Mereen")
- Qarth ("Qarth")
- The Wall ("The Wall")
- Winterfell ("Winterfell")

Couples

- Daenerys and Khal Drogo ("Love in the Eyes", "When the Sun Rises in the West")
- Daenerys and Jon Snow ("See You for What You Are", "Truth", "Be With Me")
- Greyworm and Missandei ("I'm Sorry for Today")
- Jon Snow and Ygritte ("You Know Nothing", "The Real North")
- Robb Stark and Talisa ("I Am Hers, She Is Mine", also used as a love theme in general)
- Jaime Lannister and Brienne of Tarth ("The White Book")

Other

- The Long Night ("The Night King", "Farewell")
- Conspiracy ("Chaos Is a Ladder", "The Dagger")

Other compositions and songs

Various pieces of music are also composed for particular plot lines in the series. A notable piece is the "[Light of the Seven](#)", which is played at the beginning of the final episode of [season 6](#), "[The Winds of Winter](#)". This piece, which is over nine minutes long, is unusual in its choice of piano as that instrument had not been used before on the series.^[26] Additionally, such long pieces are seldom used, although in season 6 soundtracks cover a 10-minute section in the Hodor scenes in "[The Door](#)" episode and a 22-minute sequence in the "[Battle of the Bastards](#)" episode.^[26]

Djawadi composed a number of songs for the show using lyrics from the books *A Song of Ice and Fire*, the most prominent of which is "[The Rains of Castamere](#)". [The National](#) recorded the song in the [season 2](#), and [Sigur Rós](#) recorded it in [season 4](#) for a cameo appearance.^[27] In [season 3](#), [Gary Lightbody](#) appeared in a cameo amongst other captors of Brienne of Tarth and Jaime Lannister in season 3 episode 4 to sing "[The Bear and the Maiden Fair](#)",^[28] and a recording of the song performed by [The Hold Steady](#) was played over that episode's closing credits.^{[29][5]} The same season [Kerry Ingram](#), who played the character Shireen Baratheon, sang "It's Always Summer Under the Sea". The character Bronn, played by [Jerome Flynn](#), sang "The Dornishman's Wife" in [season 5](#), and [Ed Sheeran](#) appeared in a cameo to perform "Hands of Gold" composed by [Ramin Djawadi](#) in [season 7](#).^[30] However, neither of the latter two songs was used in the soundtrack albums.

In [season 8](#), [Daniel Portman](#) who played the character Podrick Payne sang "[Jenny of Oldstones](#)" a song from the book *A Storm of Swords* but with additional lyrics by [David Benioff](#) and [Dan Weiss](#) and composer [Ramin Djawadi](#) providing the music.^{[31][32]} The full version of the song titled "[Jenny of Oldstones](#)" was sung by [Florence Welch](#), and played over the closing credits of the second episode "[A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms](#)".^[33] It was released as a single of [Florence + the Machine](#).^{[34][35]}

House of the Dragon

Main article: [House of the Dragon: Season 1 \(soundtrack\)](#)

It was announced in September 2022 that Ramin Djawadi will compose the series score. Djawadi composed the music for all eight seasons of Game of Thrones which garnered him three Grammy Awards nominations and two Emmy Awards wins. Djawadi, along with the showrunners, decided to keep the original theme song, "Game of Thrones Theme", which was first featured in the second episode of House of the Dragon. In an interview with the A.V. Club, Djawadi stated that the original theme song was used in order to "tie the shows together". For the first season, Djawadi, along with Condal and Sapochnik,

watched each episode and made notes on when the music should occur and what mood the music should set. Character motifs from *Game of Thrones* are also featured in *House of the Dragon*, including the Dragon theme "[Dracarys](#)".

As similar to *Game of Thrones*, the cello was used as the primary instruments in *House of the Dragon*. However, Djawadi made minor adjustments on the instrumentation, which he referred as the total instrumental swap, on comparing the musical identities with the two series. He did not use the solo violin, but used the viola, which had "a little bit lower in range and different timbre". He used newer instruments, such as the ethnic bamboo flutes and woodwinds, alongside multiple instruments. Djawadi wanted to "push the cello up into the violin range [because] there is a thickness to it up higher than the violin and I like that sound. It's the same with the viola — obviously the viola can play lower than the violin, but even if the viola plays higher, it has a different timbre."

In the fifth episode, during Rhaenyra's pre-wedding dance sequence, Djawadi said that the music was written even before the shooting had started, as "the music had to be there first so they could choreograph the dancing to it". Hence, he read the script and discussed on how the scene comes to fruition. Djawadi said "We have the drums, and it's just maybe not what you'd expect of wedding music—tribal isn't the right word, but the percussive element, there's definitely a strong background of that there. So it was fun to write it and see how they shot the scene to it. And then later it turns into score, obviously, when it all goes crazy, but I think there were three pieces I had to write before. So they were written, like, over a year ago." He also mentioned Rhaenys' grand entrance during the coronation as one of his "favorite musical moments of the show so far", where the scene transitioned from "celebration mode to pure chaos in an instant" and the music syncs as Alicent's eyes close. He also included the main title theme in the concluding moments, which he did with the balance of sound effects.

Releases

In every season, a soundtrack album of the music used in that season was released toward the end of the season. The first two were released by [Varèse Sarabande](#), while all subsequent releases were by [WaterTower Music](#). Mixtapes were also released in 2014 and 2015 before the start of the fourth and fifth season respectively and they were available as free downloads to promote the season.^{[36][37]}

Soundtracks

Year	Title	Composer	Ref(s)
2011	Game of Thrones: Season 1		^[38]
2012	Game of Thrones: Season 2		^[39]
2013	Game of Thrones: Season 3		^[40]
2014	Game of Thrones: Season 4		^[41]
2015	Game of Thrones: Season 5	Ramin Djawadi	^[42]
2016	Game of Thrones: Season 6		^[43]
2017	Game of Thrones: Season 7		^[44]
2019	Game of Thrones: Season 8		^[45]
2022	House of the Dragon: Season 1		^[46]

Tie-in album

A companion album, [For the Throne: Music Inspired by the HBO Series Game of Thrones](#), comprising songs that are inspired by the show but not featured in it. A single, "[Power Is Power](#)" by [SZA](#), [The Weeknd](#) and [Travis Scott](#), was released as the lead single from the album. The title of the song quotes a line spoken by Cersei.^[47]

Year	Title	Artist	Ref(s)
2019	For the Throne: Music Inspired by the HBO Series Game of Thrones	Various	^[48]

Mixtapes

Year	Title	Artist	Ref(s)
2014	Catch the Throne: Volume I	Various	^[49]
2015	Catch the Throne: Volume II	Various	^[50]

Tours

Main article: [Game of Thrones Live Concert Experience](#)

A concert tour featuring the music of *Game of Thrones* was produced in 2017.^[1] The tour involved an 80-piece orchestra, a choir, and seven custom 360-degree stages. Instruments were specially created for the tour, such as a 12-foot Wildling horn played during the Wildling attack on the Wall section.^{[17][51]} A world tour was also arranged for cities in Europe and North America in 2018, with new music from season 7 added.^[52]

Awards

Awards and nominations

Year	Award	Category	Nominee(s)	Result	Ref.
2011	International Film Music Critics	Best Original Score for a Television Series		Nominated	^[53]

Year	Award	Category	Nominee(s)	Result	Ref.
	Association				
2012	ASCAP Awards	Top Television Series		Won	^[54]
				Won	^[55]
2013	International Film Music Critics Association	Best Original Score for a Television Series		Nominated	^[56]
	66th Primetime Creative Arts Emmy Awards	Outstanding Music Composition for a Series (Original Dramatic Score)	Episode: " The Mountain and the Viper "	Nominated	^[57]
2014	Hollywood Music in Media Awards	Best Original Score – TV Show/Digital Streaming Series		Nominated	^[58]
	World Soundtrack Awards	Television Composer of the Year	Ramin Djawadi	Nominated	^[59]
2016	International Film Music Critics Association	Best Original Score for a Television Series		Won	^[60]
	60th Annual Grammy Awards	Film Music Composition of the Year	Song: " Light of the Seven "	Nominated	^[61]
		Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media	Game of Thrones: Season 7	Nominated	^[62]
2018	70th Primetime Creative Arts Emmy Awards	Outstanding Music Composition for a Series (Original Dramatic Score)	Episode: " The Dragon and the Wolf "	Won	^[63]
2019	71st Primetime Creative Arts Emmy Awards		Episode: " The Long Night "	Won	
2020	62nd Annual Grammy Awards	Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media	Game of Thrones: Season 8	Nominated	

See also

- [For the Throne: Music Inspired by the HBO Series Game of Thrones](#) (2019)
- For other music based on the *A Song of Ice and Fire* novels, see [Works based on A Song of Ice and Fire](#).

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[George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*](#)

- [v](#)
- [t](#)
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[Ramin Djawadi](#)

Game of Thrones

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Game of Thrones



- Genre
- [Action](#)
 - [Adventure](#)
 - [Fantasy](#)^[1]
 - [Serial drama](#)^[2]
 - [Tragedy](#)^{[3][4]}

- Created by
- [David Benioff](#)
 - [D. B. Weiss](#)

Based on [A Song of Ice and Fire](#)
by [George R. R. Martin](#)

Starring see [List of Game of Thrones characters](#)

Theme music composer [Ramin Djawadi](#)

Opening theme "[Main Title](#)"

Composer Ramin Djawadi

Country of origin United States

Original language English

No. of seasons 8

No. of episodes 73 ([list of episodes](#))

Production

- David Benioff
- D. B. Weiss
- George R. R. Martin
- [Carolyn Strauss](#)

- Executive producers
- Frank Doelger
 - [Bernadette Caulfield](#)
 - [Bryan Cogman](#)
 - [Miguel Sapochnik](#)
 - [David Nutter](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Huffam
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joanna Burn
Producers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Newman • Greg Spence • Lisa McAtackney • Duncan Muggoch
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United Kingdom • Croatia • Iceland
Production locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spain • Malta • Morocco • Canada
Running time	50–82 minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HBO Entertainment • Television 360 • Grok! Television
Production companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generator Entertainment • Startling Television • Bighead Littlehead
Distributor	Warner Bros. Television Distribution
Release	
Original network	HBO
Picture format	HDTV 1080i
Audio format	Dolby Digital 5.1
Original release	April 17, 2011 – May 19, 2019
Chronology	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thronecast
Related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the Thrones • House of the Dragon

Game of Thrones is an American [fantasy drama](#) television series created by [David Benioff](#) and [D. B. Weiss](#) for [HBO](#). It is an adaptation of *[A Song of Ice and Fire](#)*, a series of fantasy novels by [George R. R. Martin](#), the first of which is *[A Game of Thrones](#)*. The show was shot in the United Kingdom, Canada, Croatia, Iceland, Malta, Morocco, and Spain. It premiered on HBO in the United States on April 17, 2011, and concluded on May 19, 2019, with 73 episodes broadcast over eight seasons.

Set on the fictional continents of [Westeros](#) and [Essos](#), *Game of Thrones* has a large [ensemble cast](#) and follows several [story arcs](#) throughout the course of the show. The first major arc concerns the [Iron Throne](#) of the [Seven Kingdoms](#) of Westeros through a web of political conflicts among the noble families either vying to claim the throne or fighting for independence from whoever sits on it. A second focuses on the last descendant of the realm's deposed ruling dynasty, who has been exiled to Essos and is plotting to return and reclaim the throne. The third follows the Night's Watch, a military order defending the realm against threats from beyond Westeros's northern border.

Game of Thrones attracted a record viewership on HBO and has a broad, active, and international fan base. Critics have praised the series for its acting, complex characters, story, scope, and production values, although its frequent use of nudity and violence (including sexual violence) has been subject to criticism. The [final season](#) received significant critical backlash for its reduced length and creative decisions, with many considering it a disappointing conclusion. The series received 59 [Primetime Emmy Awards](#), the most by a drama series, including [Outstanding Drama Series](#) in 2015, 2016, 2018 and 2019. Its [other awards and nominations](#) include three [Hugo Awards for Best Dramatic Presentation](#), a [Peabody Award](#), and five nominations for the [Golden Globe Award for Best Television Series – Drama](#).

A prequel series, [House of the Dragon](#), premiered on HBO in 2022.



Contents

- [1 Premise](#)
 - [1.1 Plot](#)
 - [1.2 Cast and characters](#)
 - [1.3 Themes](#)
 - [1.4 Inspirations and derivations](#)
- [2 Production](#)
 - [2.1 Conception and development](#)
 - [2.2 Casting](#)
 - [2.3 Writing](#)
 - [2.3.1 Adaptation schedule and episodes](#)
 - [2.4 Filming](#)
 - [2.4.1 Effect on locations](#)
 - [2.5 Directing](#)
 - [2.6 Production design](#)
 - [2.7 Visual effects](#)
 - [2.7.1 Title sequence](#)
 - [2.8 Music](#)
 - [2.9 Language](#)
- [3 Availability](#)
 - [3.1 Broadcast](#)
 - [3.2 Home media and streaming](#)
 - [3.3 Copyright infringement](#)

- [4 Reception](#)
 - [4.1 Critical response](#)
 - [4.1.1 General](#)
 - [4.1.2 Sex and violence](#)
 - [4.1.3 Lighting](#)
 - [4.2 Cultural influence](#)
 - [4.2.1 Fandom](#)
 - [4.3 Awards](#)
 - [4.4 Viewership](#)
- [5 Other media](#)
 - [5.1 Video games](#)
 - [5.2 Merchandise and exhibition](#)
- [6 Related shows](#)
 - [6.1 Thronecast](#)
 - [6.2 After the Thrones](#)
 - [6.3 Home media extras](#)
 - [6.4 Successors](#)
 - [6.4.1 Bloodmoon](#)
 - [6.4.2 House of the Dragon](#)
 - [6.4.3 Animated series](#)
- [7 References](#)
- [8 External links](#)

Premise

Plot

See also: [Synopsis of A Song of Ice and Fire](#) and [World of A Song of Ice and Fire](#)

Game of Thrones is roughly based on the storylines of the [A Song of Ice and Fire](#) book series by [George R. R. Martin](#), set in the fictional [Seven Kingdoms](#) of [Westeros](#) and the continent of [Essos](#).^{[5][6]} The series follows several simultaneous plot lines.^[7] The first [story arc](#) follows a [war of succession](#) among competing claimants for control of the [Iron Throne](#) of the Seven Kingdoms, with other noble families fighting for independence from the throne. The second concerns the exiled [scion](#)'s actions to reclaim the throne; the third chronicles the threat of the impending winter, as well as the [legendary creatures](#) and fierce peoples of the North.^[8]

Cast and characters

Main article: [List of Game of Thrones characters](#)

Game of Thrones has an [ensemble cast](#) which has been estimated to be the largest on television.^[9] In 2014, several actors' contracts were renegotiated to include a seventh-season option.^[10] By the final season, five of the main cast members made \$1 million per episode, making them among the [highest paid television performers](#).^{[11][12]}

[Eddard "Ned" Stark](#) ([Sean Bean](#)) is the head of [House Stark](#). He and his wife, [Catelyn](#) ([Michelle Fairley](#)), have five children: [Robb](#) ([Richard Madden](#)), [Sansa](#) ([Sophie Turner](#)), [Arya](#) ([Maisie Williams](#)), [Bran](#) ([Isaac Hempstead-Wright](#)), and [Rickon](#) ([Art Parkinson](#)). Ned also has an [illegitimate](#) son, [Jon Snow](#) ([Kit Harington](#)), who, along with his scholarly friend, [Samwell Tarly](#) ([John Bradley](#)),

serve in the [Night's Watch](#) under Lord Commander [Jeor Mormont](#) ([James Cosmo](#)). The Wildlings living north of the Wall include the young [Gilly](#) ([Hannah Murray](#)) and the warriors [Tormund Giantsbane](#) ([Kristofer Hivju](#)) and [Ygritte](#) ([Rose Leslie](#)).^[13]

Others associated with House Stark include Ned's ward [Theon Greyjoy](#) ([Alfie Allen](#)), Ned's [vassal](#) [Roose Bolton](#) ([Michael McElhatton](#)), and Roose's illegitimate son, [Ramsay](#) ([Iwan Rheon](#)). Robb accepts help from the healer [Talisa Maegyr](#) ([Oona Chaplin](#)), while elsewhere, Arya befriends the blacksmith's apprentice [Gendry Rivers](#) ([Joe Dempsie](#)) and the assassin [Jagen H'ghar](#) ([Tom Wlaschiha](#)). In the Stormlands, the tall warrior [Brienne of Tarth](#) ([Gwendoline Christie](#)) serves on the Rainbow Guard.

In [King's Landing](#), Ned's old friend, King [Robert I Baratheon](#) ([Mark Addy](#)), shares a loveless political marriage with [Cersei Lannister](#) ([Lena Headey](#)). Her younger twin brother, Ser [Jamie](#) ([Nikolaj Coster-Waldau](#)), serves on the Kingsguard. The third and youngest Lannister sibling is the dwarf [Tyrian](#) ([Peter Dinklage](#)), who is attended by his mistress [Shae](#) ([Sibel Kekilli](#)) and the [sellsword](#) [Bronn](#) ([Jerome Flynn](#)). Cersei's father is [Tywin](#) ([Charles Dance](#)), head of [House Lannister](#) and richest man in [Westeros](#). Cersei has two sons: [Joffrey](#) ([Jack Gleeson](#)) and [Tommen](#) ([Dean-Charles Chapman](#)). Joffrey is guarded by the scar-faced warrior [Sandor "The Hound" Clegane](#) ([Rory McCann](#)).^[14]

The king's Small Council of advisors includes, among others, the crafty Master of Coin, Lord [Petyr "Littlefinger" Baelish](#) ([Aidan Gillen](#)), and the [eunuch](#) spymaster, Lord [Varys](#) ([Conleth Hill](#)). In [Dragonstone](#), Robert's younger brother, [Stannis](#) ([Stephen Dillane](#)), is advised by the foreign priestess [Melisandre](#) ([Carice van Houten](#)) and former smuggler Ser [Davos Seaworth](#) ([Liam Cunningham](#)). In [the Reach](#), the [Tyrell](#) family, led by its matriarch [Olenna](#) ([Diana Rigg](#)), is represented at court by [Margery](#) ([Natalie Dormer](#)), the matriarch's granddaughter. [The High Sparrow](#) ([Jonathan Pryce](#)) is eventually given power as a religious leader. In the southern [principality](#) of [Dorne](#), the warrior [Ellaria Sand](#) ([Indira Varma](#)) seeks vengeance against the [Lannisters](#).^[13]

Across the Narrow Sea, in [Pentos](#), siblings [Viserys Targaryen](#) ([Harry Lloyd](#)) and [Daenerys Targaryen](#) ([Emilia Clarke](#)) (colloquially referred to as "Dany") are in exile, with the former plotting to reclaim his father's throne. Daenerys is forced into marrying [Khal Drogo](#) ([Jason Momoa](#)), a leader of the nomadic [Dothraki](#). Her retinue eventually comes to include the exiled knight Ser [Jorah Mormont](#) ([Iain Glen](#)), her aide [Missandei](#) ([Nathalie Emmanuel](#)), the [sellsword](#) [Daario Naharis](#) ([Michiel Huisman](#)), and the elite soldier [Grey Worm](#) ([Jacob Anderson](#)).^[13]

Main cast and characters



[Peter Dinklage](#) ([Tyrian Lannister](#))



[Lena Headey](#) ([Cersei Lannister](#))



[Nikolaj Coster-Waldau](#) (Ser [Jaime Lannister](#))



[Emilia Clarke](#) ([Daenerys Targaryen](#))



[Kit Harington](#) ([Jon Snow](#))



[Sophie Turner](#) ([Sansa Stark](#))



[Maisie Williams](#) ([Arya Stark](#))



[Iain Glen](#) (Ser [Jorah Mormont](#))



[Alfie Allen](#) ([Theon Greyjoy](#))

Themes

Main article: [Themes in A Song of Ice and Fire](#)

The series has been praised by both television critics and historians for what was perceived as a sort of medieval realism.^{[15][16][17]} George R.R. Martin set out to make the story feel more like historical fiction than contemporary fantasy, with less emphasis on magic and sorcery and more on battles, political intrigue, and the characters, believing that magic should be used moderately in the epic fantasy genre.^{[18][19][20]} Martin has said that, "the true horrors of human history derive not from [orcs](#) and Dark Lords, but from ourselves".^[21] Academics have classified the series as [neo-medieval](#) which focuses on the overlapping of medieval history and popular fantasy.^{[22][23][24]} A common theme in the fantasy genre is the battle between [good and evil](#), which Martin says does not mirror the real world.^[25] Martin explores the relationship between good and evil through the questions of redemption and character change.^[26] The series allows the audience to view different characters from [their perspective](#), unlike in many other fantasies.^{[20][27]}

In early seasons, under the influence of the *A Song of Ice and Fire* books, main characters were regularly killed off, and this was credited with developing tension among viewers.^[28] Martin stated in an interview that he wanted to depict war and violence in a [realistic way](#), which sometimes mean the hero or main characters could be injured or killed.^[29] In later seasons, critics pointed out that certain characters had developed "plot armor" to survive in unlikely circumstances and attributed this to *Game of Thrones* deviating from the novels to become more of a traditional television series.^[28] In a 2012 study, out of 40 recent television drama shows, *Game of Thrones* ranked second in deaths per episode, averaging 14.^[30] A scientific study conducted in 2018 stated that about 60% of the major characters died as a result violence and war.^[31]

Inspirations and derivations

Although the series's first season closely follows the events of the first novel, there were significant changes made for later seasons. According to Benioff, the TV adaptation is "about adapting the series as a whole and following the map George laid out for us and hitting the major milestones, but not necessarily each of the stops along the way".^[32] Aspects of the novels' plots and their adaptations are based upon settings, characters, and events in European history.^[33] Most of Westeros is reminiscent of [high medieval](#) Europe, from its geography and castles to its cultures, the [feudal system](#), palace intrigues, and the [knights' tournaments](#).^{[34][35]} Like medieval Europe, most of the houses in the series use the [patriarchal system](#) of power.^[36] The series also includes elements of [gothic fiction](#), including torture [tropes](#).^[37]

A principal inspiration for the novels is the English [Wars of the Roses](#) (1455–1485) between the houses of [Lancaster](#) and [York](#), reflected in Martin's houses of [Lannister](#) and [Stark](#).^[38] The scheming Cersei Lannister evokes [Isabella](#), the "She-Wolf of France" (1295–1358).^[33] She and her family, as portrayed in [Maurice Druon](#)'s historical novel series, *The Accursed Kings*, were a main inspiration of Martin's.^[39] Other historical antecedents of series elements include: [Hadrian's Wall](#) (which becomes Martin's

Wall), the [Roman Empire](#), and the legend of [Atlantis](#) (ancient [Valyria](#)), Byzantine [Greek fire](#) ("wildfire"), Icelandic [sagas](#) of the [Viking Age](#) (the [Ironborn](#)), the [Mongol hordes](#) (the [Dothraki](#)), the [Hundred Years' War](#), and the [Italian Renaissance](#).^[33] The series's popularity has been attributed, in part, to Martin's skill at fusing these elements into a seamless, credible version of [alternate history](#).^{[33][40]}

Production

Conception and development



Showrunners [D. B. Weiss](#) and [David Benioff](#) created the series, wrote most of its episodes and directed several.

The *A Song of Ice and Fire* series of novels was popular before *Game of Thrones*.^[41] The series has sold more than 90 million copies worldwide with the novels being translated into 45 different languages.^{[42][43]} George R. R. Martin received multiple fantasy writing awards and nominations, including a [World Fantasy Award](#) and multiple [Locus Awards](#), for the series.^[44] Writing for *Time* magazine in 2005 after the release of *A Feast for Crows*, journalist [Lev Grossman](#) called Martin the "American [Tolkien](#)", stating he is a "major force for evolution in fantasy".^[45]

In January 2006, David Benioff had a telephone conversation with Martin's literary agent about the books he represented. Having been a fan of [fantasy](#) fiction when he was younger, he became interested in *A Song of Ice and Fire*, which he had not read. The literary agent sent Benioff the series's first four books.^[46] Benioff read a few hundred pages of the first novel, *A Game of Thrones*, shared his enthusiasm with [D. B. Weiss](#), and suggested that they adapt Martin's novels into a television series; Weiss finished the first novel in "maybe 36 hours".^[47] They [pitched](#) the series to [HBO](#) after a five-hour meeting with Martin (himself a veteran screenwriter) in a restaurant on [Santa Monica Boulevard](#). According to Benioff, they won Martin over by knowing the answer to his question, "[Who is Jon Snow's mother?](#)"^[48]

I had worked in Hollywood myself for about 10 years, from the late '80s to the '90s. I'd been on the staff of *The Twilight Zone* and *Beauty and the Beast*. All of my first drafts tended to be too big or too expensive. I always hated the process of having to cut. I said, 'I'm sick of this, I'm going to write something that's as big as I want it to be, and it's going to have a cast of characters that go into the thousands, and I'm going to have huge castles, and battles, and dragons.

—George R. R. Martin, author^[49]

Before being approached by Benioff and Weiss, Martin had had meetings with other scriptwriters, most of whom wanted to adapt the series as a feature film. Martin, however, deemed it "unfilmable", saying that the size of one of his novels is as long as *The Lord of the Rings*, which had been adapted as [three feature films](#).^[49] Benioff agreed it would be impossible to turn the novels into a feature film as their scale is too big for a feature film, and dozens of characters would have to be discarded. Benioff added, "a fantasy movie of this scope, financed by a major studio, would almost certainly need a PG-13 rating. That means no sex, no blood, no profanity. Fuck that."^[20] Martin was pleased with the suggestion that they adapt it as an HBO series, saying that he "never imagined it anywhere else".^[50]

The series began development in January 2007.^[51] HBO acquired the television rights to the novels, with Benioff and Weiss as the series' executive producers and Martin as a co-executive producer. The intention was for each novel to yield a season's worth of episodes.^[51] Initially, Martin would write one episode per season while Benioff and Weiss would write the rest.^[51] [Jane Espenson](#) and [Bryan Cogman](#) were added later to write one episode each for the first season.^[51] The first and second drafts of the [pilot](#) script by Benioff and Weiss were submitted in August 2007^[52] and June 2008,^[53] respectively. Although HBO liked both drafts,^[54] a pilot was not ordered until November 2008.^[55] The pilot episode, "[Winter Is Coming](#)", was shot in 2009; after its poor reception following a private viewing, HBO demanded an extensive re-shoot (about 90 percent of the episode, with cast and directorial changes).^{[48][56]} The pilot reportedly cost HBO \$5–10 million to produce,^[57] while the first season's budget was estimated at \$50–60 million.^[58] For the second season, the series received a 15-percent budget increase for the climactic battle

in "[Blackwater](#)" (which had an \$8 million budget).^{[59][60]} Between 2012 and 2015, the average budget per episode increased from \$6 million^[61] to "at least" \$8 million.^[62] The sixth-season budget was over \$10 million per episode, for a season total of over \$100 million, a record for a series's production cost.^[63] By the final season, the production budget per episode was estimated to be \$15 million.^[64]

Casting

[Nina Gold](#) and Robert Sterne were the series' primary casting directors.^[65] Through a process of auditions and readings, the main cast was assembled. The only exceptions were Peter Dinklage and Sean Bean, whom the writers wanted from the start; they were announced as joining the [pilot](#) in 2009.^{[66][67]} Other actors signed for the pilot were Kit Harington as Jon Snow, Jack Gleeson as Joffrey Baratheon, Harry Lloyd as Viserys Targaryen, and Mark Addy as Robert Baratheon.^[67] According to Benioff and Weiss, Addy was the easiest actor to cast for the series because of his audition performance.^[68] Some characters in the pilot were recast for the first season. The role of [Catelyn Stark](#) was played initially by [Jennifer Ehle](#), but the role was recast with Michelle Fairley.^[69] The character of Daenerys Targaryen was also recast, with Emilia Clarke replacing [Tamzin Merchant](#).^[70] The rest of the first season's cast was selected in the second half of 2009.^[71]

Although many of the cast returned after the first season, the producers had many new characters to cast in each of the following seasons. Because of the large number of new characters, Benioff and Weiss postponed introducing several key characters in the [second season](#) and merged several characters into one, or assigned plot functions to different characters.^[9] Some recurring characters were recast over the years; for example, [Gregor Clegane](#) was played by three different actors, while Dean-Charles Chapman played both Tommen Baratheon and a minor Lannister character.^[72]

Writing



[George R. R. Martin](#), author of *A Song of Ice and Fire*, is a series co-[executive producer](#) and wrote one episode for each of the first four seasons.

Game of Thrones used seven writers over its six seasons. Benioff and Weiss wrote most of each season's episodes.^[73] *A Song of Ice and Fire* author George R. R. Martin wrote one episode in each of the first four seasons. Martin did not write an episode for the later seasons, since he wanted to focus on completing the sixth novel (*The Winds of Winter*).^[74] Jane Espenson co-wrote [one first-season episode](#) as a [freelance writer](#).^[75]

Cogman, initially a script coordinator for the series,^[75] was promoted to producer for the fifth season. Cogman, who wrote at least one episode for the first five seasons, was the only other writer in the writers' room with Benioff and Weiss.^[73] Before Cogman's promotion, [Vanessa Taylor](#)—a writer during the second and third seasons—worked closely with Benioff and Weiss. [Dave Hill](#) joined the writing staff for the fifth season after working as an assistant to Benioff and Weiss.^[76] Although Martin was not in the writers' room, he read the script outlines and made comments.^[73]

Benioff and Weiss sometimes assigned characters to particular writers; for example, Cogman was assigned to Arya Stark for the fourth season. The writers spent several weeks writing a character outline, including what material from the novels to use and the overarching themes. After these individual outlines were completed, they spent another two to three weeks discussing each main character's individual arc and arranging them episode by episode.^[73] A detailed outline was created, with each of the writers working on part of it to create a script for each episode. Cogman, who wrote two episodes for the fifth season, took a month and a half to complete both scripts. They were then read by Benioff and Weiss, who made notes, and parts of the script were rewritten. All ten episodes were written before filming began since they were shot out of order by two [units](#) in different

countries.^[73] Benioff and Weiss wrote their episodes together; one wrote the first half of the script with the other writing the second half. They then passed the drafts back and forth to make notes and do rewrites.^[50]

Adaptation schedule and episodes

Main article: [List of *Game of Thrones* episodes](#)

After *Game of Thrones* story line began outpacing the published novels in the sixth season, the series was based on a plot outline of the future novels provided by Martin along with original content.^{[77][78]} Before season four, Martin stated there was an issue with the television series being released before the source material could be written.^[79] According to Benioff, Martin gave the showrunners an outline on the final two books of the series.^[80] In April 2016, the showrunners' plan was to shoot 13 more episodes after the sixth season: seven episodes in the seventh season and six episodes in the eighth.^[81] Later that month, the series was renewed for a seventh season with a seven-episode order.^{[82][83]} HBO announced in June 2016 that the eighth season would be the final for the series.^[84]

Game of Thrones adaptation and season schedule

Season	Ordered	Filming	First aired	Last aired	Novel(s) adapted	Ref(s)
Season 1	March 2, 2010	Second half of 2010	April 17, 2011	June 19, 2011	A Game of Thrones	^[85]
Season 2	April 19, 2011	Second half of 2011	April 1, 2012	June 3, 2012	A Clash of Kings	^[86]
Season 3	April 10, 2012	July–November 2012	March 31, 2013	June 9, 2013	A Storm of Swords	^[87]
Season 4	April 2, 2013	July–November 2013	April 6, 2014	June 15, 2014	<i>A Storm of Swords</i>	^[88]
Season 5	April 8, 2014	July–December 2014	April 12, 2015	June 14, 2015	A Feast for Crows , A Dance with Dragons and original content	^[89]
Season 6	April 8, 2014	July–December 2015	April 24, 2016	June 26, 2016	Outline from The Winds of Winter and original content	^[90]
Season 7	April 21, 2016	August 2016 – February 2017	July 16, 2017	August 27, 2017	Outline from A Dream of Spring and original content	^[91]
Season 8	July 30, 2016	October 2017 – July 2018	April 14, 2019	May 19, 2019	Outline from <i>A Dream of Spring</i> and original content	^[92]

The first two seasons adapted one novel each. For the later seasons, its creators saw *Game of Thrones* as an adaptation of *A Song of Ice and Fire* as a whole rather than the individual novels,^[93] enabling them to move events across novels as the screen adaptation required.^[94]

Filming



The [Azure Window](#) at Ras-id-Dwerja, on Gozo, was the site of the Dothraki wedding in season one.

Principal photography for the first season was scheduled to begin on July 26, 2010;^[95] the primary location was the [Paint Hall Studios](#) in [Belfast](#), [Northern Ireland](#).^[96] Exterior scenes in Northern Ireland were filmed at Sandy Brae in the [Mourne Mountains](#) (standing in for Vaes Dothrak); [Castle Ward](#) (Winterfell); Saintfield Estates (the Winterfell godswood); [Tollymore Forest](#) (outdoor scenes); [Cairncastle](#) (the execution site); the [Magheramorne](#) quarry (Castle Black); and [Shane's Castle](#) (the tourney grounds).^[97] [Doune Castle](#) in [Stirling](#), Scotland, was also used in the original pilot episode for scenes at Winterfell.^[98] The producers initially considered filming the entire series in Scotland, but decided on Northern Ireland because of the availability of studio space and tax credits.^[99]



The walled city of [Dubrovnik](#) stood in for King's Landing in season two.

The first season's southern scenes were filmed in Malta, a change in location from the pilot episode's Moroccan sets.^[95] The city of [Mdina](#) was used for King's Landing.^[100] Filming also took place at [Fort Manoel](#) (representing the Sept of Baelor); at the [Azure Window](#) on the island of [Gozo](#) (the Dothraki wedding site); and at [San Anton Palace](#), [Fort Ricasoli](#), [Fort St. Angelo](#) and St. Dominic monastery (all used for scenes in the Red Keep).^[97] Filming of the second season's southern scenes shifted from Malta to Croatia, where the city of [Dubrovnik](#) and nearby locations allowed exterior shots of a walled, coastal medieval city. The [Walls of Dubrovnik](#) and [Fort Lovrijenac](#) were used for scenes in King's Landing, though exteriors of some local buildings in the series, for example, the Red Keep and the Sept of Baelor, are computer generated.^[101] The island of [Lokrum](#), the St. Dominic monastery in the coastal town of [Trogir](#), the [Rector's Palace](#) in Dubrovnik, and the Dubac quarry (a few kilometers east) were used for scenes set in Qarth. Scenes set north of the Wall, in the Frostfangs, and at the Fist of the First Men, were filmed in November 2011 in Iceland on the [Vatnajökull](#) glacier near Smyrlabjörg, the [Svínafellsjökull](#) glacier near [Skaftafell](#), and the [Mýrdalsjökull](#) glacier near [Vík](#) on Höfðabrekkuheiði.^{[97][102]} Filming also occurred at the harbor in [Ballintoy](#), Northern Ireland.^[103]



[Ballintoy Harbour](#) was Lordport on the Iron Islands.

Third-season production returned to Dubrovnik, with the Walls of Dubrovnik, Fort Lovrijenac, and nearby locations again used for scenes in King's Landing and the Red Keep.^[104] [Trsteno Arboretum](#), a new location, is the garden of the Tyrells in King's Landing. The third season also returned to Morocco (including the city of [Essaouira](#)) to film Daenerys's scenes in Essos.^[105] [Dimmuborgir](#) and the [Grjótagjá](#) cave in Iceland were used as well.^[102] One scene, with [a live bear](#), was filmed in [Los Angeles](#).^[106] The production used three units (Dragon, Wolf and Raven) filming in parallel, six directing teams, 257 cast members and 703 crew members.^[107] The fourth season returned to Dubrovnik and included new locations, including [Diocletian's Palace](#) in [Split](#), [Klis Fortress](#) north of Split, Perun quarry east of Split, the [Mosor](#) mountain range and [Baška Voda](#) farther south.^[108] [Thingvellir National Park](#) in Iceland was used for the fight between Brienne and the Hound.^[102] The fifth season added [Seville](#), Spain, used for scenes of [Dorne](#), and [Córdoba](#).^[109]

The sixth season, which began filming in July 2015, returned to Spain and filmed in [Navarra](#), [Guadalajara](#), Seville, [Almeria](#), [Girona](#) and [Peníscola](#).^[110] Filming also returned to Dubrovnik, Croatia.^[111] The filming of the seven episodes of season seven began on August 31, 2016, at Titanic Studios in Belfast, with other filming in Iceland, Northern Ireland and many locations in Spain,^[112] including Seville, [Cáceres](#), [Almodovar del Rio](#), [Santiponce](#), [Zumaia](#) and [Bermeo](#).^[113] Filming continued until the end of February 2017, as necessary, to ensure winter weather in some European locations.^[114] Filming for season eight began in October 2017 and concluded in July 2018.^{[115][116]} New filming locations included [Moneyglass](#) and [Saintfield](#) in Northern Ireland for "[The Long Night](#)" battle scenes.^[117]

Effect on locations

[Northern Ireland Screen](#), a UK government agency financed by [Invest NI](#) and the [European Regional Development Fund](#), helped fund *Game of Thrones*.^[118] [Tourism Ireland](#) has a *Game of Thrones*-themed marketing campaign similar to New Zealand's [Tolkien-related advertising](#).^{[119][120]} According to First Minister [Arlene Foster](#), the series has given Northern Ireland the most publicity in its history apart from [The Troubles](#).^[121] The production of *Game of Thrones* and other TV series boosted Northern Ireland's creative industries, contributing to an estimated 12.4 percent growth in arts, entertainment and recreation jobs between 2008 and 2013 (compared with 4.3 percent in the rest of the UK during the same period).^[122] After filming had finished, HBO converted its filming locations in Northern Ireland into tourist attractions to be opened in 2019.^[123] By 2019, 350,000 visitors, or one sixth of all tourists, came to Northern Ireland annually because of *Game of Thrones*.^[124]

Tourism organizations elsewhere reported increases in bookings after their locations appeared in *Game of Thrones*. Between 2014 and 2016, [Hotels.com](#) reported hotel bookings increased by 285 percent in Iceland and 120 percent in Dubrovnik.^[125] In 2016, bookings doubled in [Ouarzazate](#), Morocco, the location of Daenerys' season three scenes.^[126] Dubrovnik also saw an increase in overnight tourist stays after episodes aired.^[127] However, the increase in tourism driven by the series—estimated to be responsible for half of its annual increase over many years—led to concerns about "[over-tourism](#)" and its mayor imposing limits on tourist numbers in the city.^{[111][128]} Following the series finale, HBO announced in April 2019 a new exhibition and tourist attraction containing show props and set pieces.^[129] The attraction, titled *Game of Thrones Studio Tour*, will be located at

former show filming location Linen Mill Studios outside Belfast.^[130] Studies showed that the series had an overall positive economic impacts for both Northern Ireland and Dubrovnik.^{[131][132]} Despite the positive economic results, some academics note the impact and damage from *Game of Thrones*–related tourist activities could have on [historical sites](#) and other locations of cultural value.^[133]

Directing

Each ten-episode season of *Game of Thrones* had four to six directors, who usually directed back-to-back episodes.^[134] [Alan Taylor](#) directed seven episodes, the most of any director.^[135] [Alex Graves](#), [David Nutter](#), [Mark Mylod](#), and [Jeremy Podeswa](#) directed six episodes each.^[136] [Daniel Minahan](#) directed five episodes, and [Michelle MacLaren](#), [Alik Sakharov](#), and [Miguel Sapochnik](#) directed four each; MacLaren is the only female director of the entire series's run.^[137] [Brian Kirk](#) directed three episodes during the first season, and [Tim Van Patten](#) directed the series's first two episodes.^[138] [Neil Marshall](#) directed two episodes, both with large battle scenes: "Blackwater" and "[The Watchers on the Wall](#)".^[139] Other directors include [Jack Bender](#), [David Petrarca](#), [Daniel Sackheim](#), [Michael Slovis](#) and [Matt Shakman](#).^[140] David Benioff and D. B. Weiss have directed two episodes together but were credited with only one each, which was determined after a coin toss.^[76] For season eight, David Nutter and Miguel Sapochnik, who worked on previous episodes, directed the first five episodes.^[141] Benioff and Weiss were credited as both the writers and directors of the show finale "[The Iron Throne](#)".^[142]

Production design

External video



[HBO promotional video detailing the research and design of the show's costumes](#), YouTube video

[Michele Clapton](#) was the [costume designer](#) for *Game of Thrones*' first five seasons before she was replaced by [April Ferry](#).^[143] Clapton returned to the series as its costume designer for the seventh season.^[144] For the first three seasons, [Paul Engelen](#) was *Game of Thrones*' main makeup designer and [prosthetic makeup](#) artist with Melissa Lackersteen, [Conor O'Sullivan](#), and Rob Trenton. At the beginning of the fourth season, Engelen's team was replaced by Jane Walker and her crew, composed of Ann McEwan and Barrie and Sarah Gower.^{[145][146]} Over 130 makeup artists and prosthetic designers worked on the show.^{[147][148]}

The designs for the series's costumes were inspired by several sources, such as [Japanese](#) and [Persian](#) armor.^{[149][150]} Dothraki dress resembles that of the [Bedouin](#) (one was made of fish skins to resemble dragon scales), and the Wildlings wear animal skins like the [Inuit](#).^[151] Wildling bone armor is made from molds of actual bones and is assembled with string and latex resembling [catgut](#).^[152] Although the extras who played Wildlings and the Night's Watch often wore hats (normal in a cold climate), members of the principal cast usually did not so viewers could recognize them. [Björk](#)'s [Alexander McQueen](#) high-neckline dresses inspired Margaery Tyrell's funnel-neck outfit, and prostitutes' dresses were designed for easy removal.^[151] All the clothing used during the production was aged for two weeks, so it had a realistic appearance on high-definition television.^[152]

About two dozen wigs were used by the actresses. Made of human hair and up to 61 centimetres (2 ft) in length, they cost up to \$7,000 each and were washed and styled like real hair. Applying the wigs was time-consuming; Emilia Clarke, for example, required about two hours to style her brunette hair with a platinum-blond wig and braids. Other actors, such as Jack Gleeson and Sophie Turner, received frequent [hair coloring](#). For characters such as Daenerys (Clarke) and her Dothraki, their hair, wigs and costumes were processed to appear as if they had not been washed for weeks.^[151]

Visual effects

For the large number of [visual effects](#) used in the series, HBO hired British-based BlueBolt and Irish-based Screen Scene for season one. Most of the environment builds were done as [2.5D](#) projections, giving viewers perspective while keeping the programming from being overwhelming.^[153] In 2011, the season one finale, "[Fire and Blood](#)", was nominated for a Primetime Emmy Award for [Outstanding Special Visual Effects](#).^[145] The visual effects crew consisted of both on-set VFX supervisors and [concept artists](#) along with visual effect editors in [post-production](#).^[154]

Because the effects became more complex in subsequent seasons (including [CGI](#) creatures, fire, and water), German-based [Pixomondo](#) became the lead visual effects producer; nine of its twelve facilities contributed to the project for season two, with [Stuttgart](#) the lead studio.^{[155][156]} Scenes were also produced by British-based Peanut FX, Canadian-based Spin VFX, and US-based Gradient Effects. "[Valar Morghulis](#)" and "[Valar Dohaeris](#)" earned Pixomondo Primetime Emmy Awards for Outstanding Special Visual Effects in 2012 and 2013, respectively.^[145]

HBO added German-based Mackevision to the project in season four.^[157] The season four finale, "[The Children](#)", won the 2014 Emmy Award for Visual Effects. Additional producers for season four included Canadian-based [Rodeo FX](#), German-based [Scanline VFX](#) and US-based BAKED FX. The muscle and wing movements of the adolescent dragons in seasons four and five were based largely on those of a chicken. Pixomondo retained a team of 22 to 30 people focused solely on visualizing Daenerys Targaryen's dragons, with the average production time per season of 20 to 22 weeks.^[158] For the fifth season, HBO added Canadian-based [Image Engine](#) and US-based Crazy Horse Effects to its list of main visual-effects producers.^{[159][160]} Visual effect supervisor Joe Bauer said that the VFX team worked on more than "10,000 shots of visual effects" throughout all eight seasons.^[161] More than 300 artists worked on the show's visual effects team.^[162] The show won eight [Creative Arts Emmy Awards](#) for visual effects, winning for Outstanding Special Visual Effects in seven consecutive seasons.^{[163][164]}

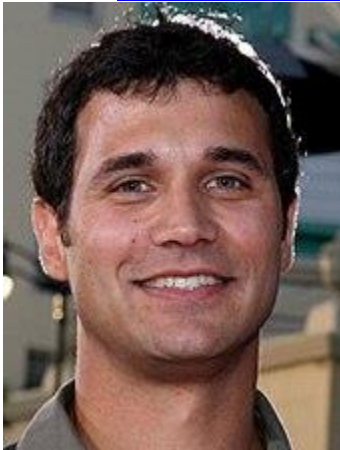
Title sequence

Main article: [Game of Thrones title sequence](#)

The series's [title sequence](#) was created for HBO by production studio Elastic.^[165] [Creative director Angus Wall](#) and his collaborators received the 2011 Primetime Emmy Award for [Main Title Design](#) for the sequence,^[166] which depicts a [three-dimensional map of the series's fictional world](#). The map is projected on the inside of a sphere which is centrally lit by a small sun in an [armillary sphere](#).^[167] As the camera moves across the map, focusing on the locations of the episode's events, clockwork mechanisms intertwine and allow buildings and other structures to emerge from the map. Accompanied by the [title music](#), the names of the principal cast and creative staff appear. The sequence concludes after about 90 seconds with the title card and brief [opening credits](#) detailing the episode's writer(s) and director. Its composition changes as the story progresses, with new locations replacing those featuring less prominently or not at all.^{[167][168]} [Entertainment Weekly](#) named the title sequence one of the best on television, calling it an "all-inclusive cruise of Westeros".^[169]

Music

Main article: [Music of Game of Thrones](#)



[Ramin Djawadi](#) composed the *Game of Thrones* score.

[Ramin Djawadi](#) composed the series's music. The first season's soundtrack, written about ten weeks before the series's premiere,^[170] was published by [Varèse Sarabande](#) in June 2011.^[171] Soundtrack albums for subsequent seasons have been released, with tracks by [the National](#), [the Hold Steady](#) and [Sigur Rós](#).^[172] Djawadi composed [reoccurring themes](#) for each of the major houses and some main characters.^[173] Some themes evolved over time. Daenerys Targaryen's theme was simple and became more complex after each season. At first, her theme was played by a single instrument, a [cello](#), and Djawadi later incorporated more instruments into it.^[173] Djawadi was nominated twice for a [Grammy Award for Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media](#) for his work on the show.^[174] In addition to the originally scored music, [Columbia Records](#) released the [For the Throne: Music Inspired by the HBO Series Game of Thrones](#) companion album on April 26, 2019.^[175]

Language

The Westerosi characters of *Game of Thrones* speak British-accented English, often (but not consistently) with the accent of the English region corresponding to the character's Westerosi region.^[176] The Northerner Eddard Stark speaks in actor Sean Bean's native [northern accent](#), and the southern lord Tywin Lannister speaks with a [southern accent](#), while characters from Dorne speak English with a Spanish accent.^{[177][178]} Characters foreign to Westeros often have a non-British accent.^[179]

Although the common language of Westeros is represented as English, the producers charged linguist [David J. Peterson](#) with [constructing Dothraki](#) and [Valyrian languages](#) based on the few words in the novels.^{[180][181]} Before production, Peterson wrote 300 pages of Dothraki language material, including translation and word function.^[182] Dothraki and Valyrian dialogue is often subtitled in English.^[183] Language-learning company [Duolingo](#) began offering courses in High Valyrian in 2017,^[184] of which 1.2 million people signed up for between 2017 and 2020.^[185]

Broadcast

Game of Thrones was broadcast by [HBO](#) in the United States and by its local subsidiaries or other [pay television](#) services in other countries, at the same time as in the US or weeks (or months) later. Broadcasters carrying *Game of Thrones* included [Fox Showcase](#) in Australia; [HBO Canada](#), [Super Écran](#), and [Showcase](#) in Canada; [HBO Latin America](#) in [Latin America](#); [Sky Television Network's SoHo](#) and [Neon](#) in New Zealand and [Sky Atlantic](#) in the United Kingdom and Ireland.^{[186][187][188][189]} In India, two versions of the series were aired; [Star World](#) aired a censored version of the series on television at the same time as the US, while an uncensored version was made available for live viewing on the [Hotstar](#) app.^[190]

On January 23, 2015, the last two episodes of [season four](#) were shown in 205 [IMAX](#) theaters across the United States, the first television series to be shown in this format.^[191] The show earned \$686,000 at the box office on its opening day^[192] and \$1.5 million during its opening weekend;^[193] the week-long release grossed \$1,896,092.^[194] Before the season eight premiere, HBO screened "[The Spoils of War](#)" episode from season seven in movie theaters in New York, Los Angeles, and "Chicago".^[195]

Home media and streaming

The ten episodes of the first season of *Game of Thrones* were released as a DVD and [Blu-ray box set](#) on March 6, 2012. The box set includes extra background and behind-the-scenes material but no deleted scenes, since nearly all the footage shot for the first season was used.^[196] The box set sold over 350,000 copies in the week following its release, the largest first-week DVD sales ever for an HBO series. The series also set an HBO-series record for digital-download sales.^[197] A collector's-edition box set was released in November 2012, combining the DVD and Blu-ray versions of the first season with the first episode of season two. A paperweight in the shape of a dragon egg is included in the set.^[198]

DVD-Blu-ray box sets and digital downloads of the second season became available on February 19, 2013.^[199] First-day sales broke HBO records, with 241,000 box sets sold and 355,000 episodes downloaded.^[200] The third season was made available for purchase as a digital download on the Australian [iTunes Store](#), parallel to the US premiere, and was released on DVD and Blu-ray in [region 1](#) on February 18, 2014.^{[201][202]} The fourth season was released on DVD and Blu-ray on February 17, 2015,^[203] and the fifth season on March 15, 2016.^[204] Blu-ray and DVD versions of the sixth season were released on November 15, 2016.^[205] Beginning in 2016, HBO began issuing Steelbook Blu-ray sets, which include both [Dolby TrueHD 7.1](#) and [Dolby Atmos](#) audio options.^[206] In 2018, the first season was released in [4K HDR](#) on [Ultra HD Blu-ray](#).^[207] Blu-ray and DVD versions of the seventh season were released on December 12, 2017.^[208] The final season was released on DVD and Blu-ray on December 3, 2019. The home release also included behind-the-scenes footage and cast commentary.^[209] A box set containing all eight seasons, including a cast reunion hosted by [Conan O'Brien](#), was released on DVD and Blu-ray on December 3, 2019,^[210] and was also released on 4K Ultra HD Blu-ray on November 3, 2020.^[211]

In August 2022, the complete series was released in [4K](#), [Dolby Vision HDR](#) and [Dolby Atmos](#) on [HBO Max](#).^[212]

Copyright infringement

Game of Thrones has been widely [pirated](#), primarily outside the US.^[213] According to the file-sharing news website [TorrentFreak](#), it was the most pirated television series from 2012 to 2019 (except 2018, when no new episodes were broadcast),^{[214][215]} and [Guinness World Records](#) named it the most-pirated television program in 2015.^[216] Illegal downloads increased to about seven million in the first quarter of 2015, up 45 percent from 2014.^[213] An unnamed episode was downloaded about 4.28 million times through public [BitTorrent trackers](#) in 2012, roughly equal to its number of broadcast viewers.^{[217][218]} Piracy rates were particularly high in Australia^[219] prompting the US Ambassador to Australia, [Jeff Bleich](#), to issue a statement in 2013 condemning the practice there.^[220] Delays in availability by non-HBO broadcasters before 2015 and the cost of subscriptions to their services have been cited as causes for the series's illegal distribution.^[221] According to TorrentFreak, a subscription to a service broadcasting *Game of Thrones* cost up to \$25 per month in the United States, up to £26 per episode in the UK and up to \$52 per episode in Australia.^[222]

In 2013, to combat unauthorized downloads, HBO said it intended to make its content more widely available within a week of the US premiere (including [HBO Go](#)).^[223] In 2015, the [fifth season](#) was [simulcast](#) to 170 countries and to [HBO Now](#) users.^[213] On April 11, the day before the season premiere, [screener](#) copies of the first four episodes of the fifth season leaked to a number of [file-sharing](#) websites.^[224] Within a day of the leak, the files were downloaded over 800,000 times;^[225] in one week the illegal downloads reached 32 million, with the season five premiere—"The Wars to Come"—pirated 13 million times.^[226] The season five finale ("Mother's Mercy") was the most simultaneously shared file in the history of the [BitTorrent](#) file sharing protocol, with over 250,000 sharers and over 1.5 million downloads in eight hours.^[227] HBO did not send screeners to the press for the sixth season to prevent the spread of unlicensed copies and [spoilers](#).^[228] [Season seven](#) was either illegally streamed or downloaded over 1 billion times, with the season averaging 14.7 billion illegal views, and the season finale garnering over 120 million illegal views within its first 72 hours.^[229] According to anti-piracy company MUSO, the [eighth season](#) was illegally downloaded or viewed most in India and China.^[230] Illegal viewership for the final season was double the number of legal viewers, with

55 million illegal downloads for the season eight premiere "[Winterfell](#)", compared to 17.4 million who watched on HBO platforms.^[231]

Observers, including series director David Petrarca and [Time Warner](#) CEO [Jeff Bewkes](#), said that illegal downloads did not hurt the series's prospects; it benefited from "[buzz](#)" and social commentary, and the high piracy rate did not significantly translate into lost subscriptions.^{[232][233]} According to [Polygon](#), HBO's relaxed attitude towards piracy and the sharing of login credentials amounted to a premium-television "[free-to-play](#)" model.^[234] At a 2015 [Oxford Union](#) panel discussion, series co-creator David Benioff said that he was just glad that people watched the series; illegally downloaded episodes sometimes interested viewers enough to buy a copy, especially in countries where *Game of Thrones* was not televised. Series co-creator D. B. Weiss had mixed feelings, saying that the series was expensive to produce and "if it doesn't make the money back, then it ceases to exist". However, he was pleased that so many people "enjoy the show so much they can't wait to get their hands on it."^[235]

Reception

Critical response

General

Critical response of *Game of Thrones*

Season	Rotten Tomatoes	Metacritic
1	90% (41 reviews) ^[236]	80 (28 reviews) ^[237]
2	96% (37 reviews) ^[238]	90 (26 reviews) ^[239]
3	96% (45 reviews) ^[240]	91 (25 reviews) ^[241]
4	97% (45 reviews) ^[242]	94 (29 reviews) ^[243]
5	93% (52 reviews) ^[244]	91 (29 reviews) ^[245]
6	94% (35 reviews) ^[246]	73 (9 reviews) ^[247]
7	93% (51 reviews) ^[248]	77 (12 reviews) ^[249]
8	55% (20 reviews) ^[250]	75 (13 reviews) ^[251]

Game of Thrones, particularly the first six seasons, received critical acclaim, although the series's frequent use of nudity and violence has been criticized. The series has an overall rating of 89 percent on Rotten Tomatoes and 86 on Metacritic.^{[252][253]} Some critics and publications have called the show among the best HBO series of all time.^{[254][255]} The series was highly anticipated by fans before its premiere.^{[256][257]} [James Poniewozik](#) said the pilot episode set "a very large table",^[258] while Ti Singh of [Den of Geek](#) said the show "is here to stay".^[259]

First-season reviewers said the series had high production values, a fully realized world and compelling characters.^[260] According to [Variety](#), "There may be no show more profitable to its network than 'Game of Thrones' is to HBO. Fully produced by the pay cabler and already a global phenomenon after only one season, the fantasy skein was a gamble that has paid off handsomely."^[261] The second season was also well received. *Entertainment Weekly* praised its "vivid, vital, and just plain fun" storytelling^[262] and, according to *The Hollywood Reporter*, the series made a "strong case for being one of TV's best series"; its seriousness made it the only drama comparable to [Mad Men](#) or [Breaking Bad](#).^[263]

The critical response for the middle seasons were also positive. Matt Fowler of [IGN](#) said the series was "still quite marvelous" praising the character development.^[264] [TV Guide](#) named the third season's penultimate episode "[The Rains of Castamere](#)" as number three on their 65 Best Episodes of the 21st Century.^[265] The critical acclaim continued into season four, with Darren Franich of *Entertainment Weekly* calling the season "the height of the show's icon-generating powers".^[266] [The Independent](#) stated that the show deviated significantly from the novels however the "changes benefited the show and condensed the substantial source text admirably well".^[267] The critical response to season five was again positive, however, some

commentators criticized the sexual assault in the "[Unbowed, Unbent, Unbroken](#)" episode.^[268] Season six also received favorable reviews. [Time](#) criticized the repetitive story lines early in the season, however, its reviewer praised the "[Battle of the Bastards](#)" episode as "one of the show's very best".^[269] One reviewer also said there were "more [woman-friendly](#)" themes throughout the season,^[270] with another singling out Arya Stark's story arc.^[271]

The show's final two seasons, especially season eight, received more criticism. Season seven was praised for its action sequences and focused central characters, but received criticism for its pace and plot developments that were said to have "defied logic".^{[249][248][272]} Writing for [Vox](#), Emily VanDerWerff cited the departure from the source material as a reason for the "circular storytelling".^[273] Critical reception for season eight was mixed.^[274] [The Guardian](#) said there was the "rushed business" of the plot which "failed to do justice to its characters or its actors".^[275] Writing for [The Hollywood Reporter](#), Maureen Ryan condemned the season's reductive treatment of women, and "decisions set up and executed with little or no foresight or thoughtfulness", declaring the penultimate episode as "Game of Thrones at its worst".^[276] Fan reaction was mixed for the final season. A petition on [Change.org](#) started by some fans requested that the final season be remade with different writers.^[277] Casey Bloys, HBO's president of programming, said at a [Television Critics Association](#) event "the petition shows a lot of enthusiasm and passion for the show but it wasn't something we seriously considered".^[278] Despite the criticism of the writing, the music and visual effects were praised.^{[279][280]}

The cast performances were praised throughout the show's run. Peter Dinklage's "charming, morally ambiguous, and self-aware"^[281] portrayal of Tyrion, which earned him [Emmy](#) and [Golden Globe](#) awards, was acclaimed. "In many ways, *Game of Thrones* belongs to Dinklage", wrote Mary McNamara of the [Los Angeles Times](#) before Tyrion became the series's central figure in season two.^{[282][283]} Several critics highlighted performances by actresses and children.^{[282][284]} Lena Headey's portrayal of the "riveting" Cersei Lannister also received praise.^{[281][285]} Maisie Williams was singled out as well and her season two work with veteran actor Charles Dance (Tywin Lannister).^[286] Stephen Dillane received positive reviews for his performance as Stannis Baratheon, especially in the fifth season, with one critic noting "Whether you like Stannis or not, you have to admit that Stephen Dillane delivered a monumental performance this season."^[287] The series was also praised for the portrayal of handicapped and disabled characters.^[288] One commentator stated that Tyrion Lannister is a "departure from the archetypal [dwarf](#)" often found in other fantasy stories like *The Lord of the Rings*.^[289]

Darren Franich of *Entertainment Weekly* gave the series a 'B' rating, saying that it was ultimately "okay". With both "transcendent moments" and "miserable phases", it was "beloved enough to be criticized by everyone for something". Franich described seasons three and four as "relentless", seasons six's ending having a "killer one-two punch", while seasons seven and eight were "indifferent".^[290] [The New York Times](#) gave the series a mixed review after the season three finale, criticizing the number of characters, their lack of complexity and a meandering plot.^[291] The show, however, appeared on many "best of" lists for the end of the [2010s](#). [Alan Sepinwall](#), writing for [Rolling Stone](#), placed the series on his "50 Best TV Shows of the 2010s" list, saying its "ability to most of the time keep all of its disparate threads feeling vital and tied to one another, remains a staggering achievement".^[292]

Sex and violence

Despite its otherwise enthusiastic reception by critics, *Game of Thrones* has been criticized for the amount of female nudity, violence, and [sexual violence](#) it depicts, and for the manner in which it depicts these themes.^{[293][294]} George R. R. Martin responded that he felt obliged to be truthful about history and human nature, and that rape and sexual violence are common in war; and that omitting them from the narrative would have rung false and undermined one of [his novels' themes](#), its historical realism.^[295] HBO said that they "fully support the vision and artistry of Dan and David's exceptional work and we feel this work speaks for itself".^[21] The show has reportedly been censored or banned for sexual or violent content in countries like China,^{[296][297]} India,^{[298][299]} Iran,^[300] Jordan,^[301] Singapore,^[302] Turkey,^{[303][304]} United Arab Emirates,^[305] and Vietnam.^[306]

The amount of sex and nudity in the series, especially in scenes incidental to the plot, was the focus of much of the criticism aimed at it in its [first](#) and second seasons. Stephen Dillane, who portrays Stannis Baratheon, likened the series's frequent explicit scenes to "German porn from the 1970s".^[307] The series's use of "[sexposition](#)", plot delivery accompanied by sex or nudity, was criticized as distracting.^[308] [Saturday Night Live](#) parodied this aspect of the adaptation in a sketch that portrayed a 13-year-old boy as a *Game of Thrones* consultant, whose main concern was showing as many breasts as possible.^[309]

The episode "[The Bear and the Maiden Fair](#)" in the [third season](#) featured the lengthy torture and eventual [emasculat](#)ion of Theon Greyjoy, which prompted criticism.^[310] [New York magazine](#) called the scene "[torture porn](#)".^[311] According to one commentator, although the series' violence tended to serve a narrative purpose, Theon's torture in "[The Bear and the Maiden Fair](#)" was excessive as well.^[312] One commentator noted that Greyjoy's emasculation was one of the only^[clarification needed] sexual assault scenes where a male was the victim.^[313] A scene in the fourth season's episode "[Breaker of Chains](#)", in which Jaime Lannister rapes his sister and lover Cersei, triggered a broad public discussion about the series' depiction of sexual violence against women. According to Dave Izkoff of *The New York Times*, the scene caused outrage, in part because of comments by

director Alex Graves that the scene became "consensual by the end".^[21] Sonia Saraiya of [The A.V. Club](#) wrote that the series's choice to portray this sexual act, and a similar one between Daenerys Targaryen and Khal Drogo in the first season—both described as consensual in the source novels—as a rape appeared to be an act of "exploitation for shock value".^[314]

In the fifth season's episode "Unbowed, Unbent, Unbroken", Sansa Stark is raped by Ramsay Bolton. Most reviewers and publications found the scene gratuitous and artistically unnecessary.^{[315][316][317]} In response to the scene, pop culture website [The Mary Sue](#) announced that it would cease coverage of the series because of the repeated use of rape as a plot device,^[318] and US Senator [Claire McCaskill](#) said that she would no longer watch it.^[319] The episode was the lowest rated on Rotten Tomatoes until the season eight episode "[The Bells](#)".^[320] As the later seasons saw Daenerys, Sansa, and Cersei assume ruling positions, Alyssa Rosenberg of *The Washington Post* noted that the series could be seen as a "long-arc revenge fantasy about what happens when women who have been brutalized and raped gain power".^[321] Much of the criticism after the series finale was centered around the handling of the female character storylines.^[322] One commentator cited the [male gaze](#) as one of main sources of the "romanticized female rape" and general nudity throughout the series.^[313] Another commentator stated the use of both sex and violence helps perpetuate [misogyny](#) within the *Game of Thrones* universe.^[323]

Lighting

The lighting, or lack of light, in darker scenes has been a recurring point of criticism since season six of the series.^{[324][325][326][327]} In 2016, [Bustle](#)'s Caitlyn Callegari listed 31 examples of scenes where the lighting caused viewers problems ranging from not being able to tell a character's hair color to being unable to see what was going on.^[328] Some reviewers have noted this is part of a wider trend^[329] among shows that are made by people who have experience working primarily on films, suggesting they "haven't grasped the nuances (or lack thereof)" of television as a medium, especially the differences between watching a scene on a television screen versus watching it on the big screen in a movie theater.^[330]

In a 2017 interview, [Robert McLachlan](#), a cinematographer working on the show, explained the lack of lighting as an artistic choice saying "we're trying to be as naturalistic as possible".^[331] The criticism reached a high point during "[The Long Night](#)", the third episode of [season eight](#).^{[332][333]} Barely minutes into the episode, viewers took to social media sites such as Twitter to express their discontent over the fact that they were having severe difficulties watching the battle and trying to figure out what was going on.^{[334][335]}

Cultural influence

Although *Game of Thrones* was initially dismissed by some critics,^[15] its success has been credited with an increase in the fantasy genre's popularity.^[336] The series's popularity led to increased [sales of the *A Song of Ice and Fire* novels](#) (republished in tie-in editions), which remained at the top of bestseller lists for months.^[337] On the eve of the second season's premiere, [CNN](#) said, "after this weekend, you may be hard pressed to find someone who isn't a fan of some form of [epic fantasy](#)" and cited [Ian Bogost](#) as saying that the series continues a trend of successful screen adaptations beginning with [Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy](#) (2001–2003) and the [Harry Potter films](#) (2001–2011) establishing fantasy as a mass-market genre; they are "[gateway drugs](#) to fantasy fan culture".^[338] The show's success led to the commissioning of several fantasy television series, including [The Wheel of Time](#) and [The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power](#) by [Amazon Studios](#).^[339] According to [Neil Gaiman](#), whose novels [Good Omens](#) and [American Gods](#) were adapted for television, *Game of Thrones* helped to change attitudes towards fantasy on television, but mainly it made big budgets for fantasy series more acceptable.^[340]

The success of the genre has been attributed by writers to a longing for escapism in popular culture, frequent female nudity and a skill in balancing lighthearted and serious topics (dragons and politics, for example) which provided it with a prestige enjoyed by conventional, top-tier drama series.^[15] According to [The Daily Beast](#), *Game of Thrones* was a favorite of [sitcom](#) writers and the series has been referred to in other television series.^[341] With other fantasy series, it has been cited as a reason for an increase in the purchase (and abandonment) of [huskies](#) and other wolf-like dogs.^[342]

Game of Thrones has added to the popular vocabulary. A first-season scene in which Petyr Baelish explains his motives (or background) while prostitutes have sex in the background gave rise to the word "sexposition" for providing [exposition](#) with sex and nudity.^[343] Dothraki, the series's nomadic horsemen, was ranked fourth in a September 2012 [Global Language Monitor](#) list of words from television most used on the internet.^[344] The series and its characters have also been referenced by politicians and academics to commentate on modern-day [geopolitics](#), [economic inequality](#), and [climate change](#).^{[345][346][347]}

In 2019, singer-songwriter [Taylor Swift](#) told *Entertainment Weekly* that several songs on her 2017 album [Reputation](#) were inspired by *Game of Thrones* characters and plots.^[348] "Khaleesi" became more popular as a name for baby girls in the United States. In the novels and the TV series, "khaleesi" is not a name, but the title of the wife of a "khal" (warlord) in the Dothraki language, held by Daenerys Targaryen.^[349] Other names from characters in the series, like Daenerys, also became popular baby names.^{[350][351]}

Game of Thrones has also become a subject of both academic and scientific inquiry.^{[352][353]} In 2016, researchers published a paper analyzing emotional sentiment in online public discourse associated with the unfolding storyline during the fourth season.^[352] The [Mathematical Association of America](#) published a journal in 2016 that applied the multidisciplinary field of [network science](#) to create a [social network](#) for the show's characters and their relationships.^[354] The analysis purported to be able to distinguish discussions about an episode's storyline from media critiques or assessments of a specific actor's performance. In 2018, Australian scientists conducted a [survival analysis](#) and examined the mortality among 330 important characters during the first seven seasons of *Game of Thrones*.^[31] In 2019, the [Australian Red Cross](#) conducted a study using [international humanitarian law](#) to determine which of the *Game of Thrones*' characters had committed the most [war crimes](#) during the first seven seasons of the show.^{[355][356]}

Animals have also been named after the show. Three species of [mud dragons](#); *Echinoderes daenerysae*, *Echinoderes rhaegal* and *Echinoderes drogoni*,^[357] a [bee fly](#); *Paramonovius nightking*,^[358] three species of [scarab beetles](#); *Gymnetis drogoni*, *Gymnetis rhaegali* and *Gymnetis viseroni*,^[359] and a [brittle star](#), *Ophiohamus georgemartini*, due to its sharp thorns resembling those depicted on the *Game of Thrones* crown.^[360]

Fandom

Main article: [A Song of Ice and Fire fandom](#)



In this [manipulated image](#) published by the [White House](#) in 2014, then US president [Barack Obama](#) (a fan of the series) sits on the Iron Throne in the [Oval Office](#) with the king's crown on his lap.

A Song of Ice and Fire and *Game of Thrones* have a broad, active international [fan base](#). In 2012 *Vulture* ranked the series's fans as the most devoted in popular culture, more so than those of [Lady Gaga](#), [Justin Bieber](#), *Harry Potter* or *Star Wars*.^[361] Fans include political leaders such as former US president [Barack Obama](#),^{[362][363]} former British prime minister [David Cameron](#),^[364] former Australian prime minister [Julia Gillard](#)^[365] and Dutch foreign minister [Frans Timmermans](#), who framed European politics using quotes from Martin's novels in a 2013 speech.^[366]

[BBC News](#) said in 2013 that "the passion and the extreme devotion of fans" had created a phenomenon, unlike anything related to other popular TV series, manifesting itself in [fan fiction](#),^[367] *Game of Thrones*-themed [burlesque](#) routines and parents naming their children after series characters; writers quoted attributed this success to the rich detail, moral ambiguity, sexual explicitness and epic scale of the series and novels.^[368] The previous year, "[Arya](#)" was the fastest-rising girl's name in the US after it had jumped in popularity from 711th to 413th place.^[369]

As of 2013, about 58 percent of series viewers were male and 42 percent female, and the average male viewer was 41 years old.^{[223][370]} According to [SBS Broadcasting Group](#) marketing director Helen Kellie, *Game of Thrones* has a high fan-engagement rate; 5.5 percent of the series's 2.9 million [Facebook](#) fans talked online about the series in 2012, compared to 1.8 percent of the over ten million fans of *True Blood* (HBO's other fantasy series).^[371] *Vulture.com* cited *Westeros.org* and *WinterIsComing.net* (news and discussion forums), *ToweroftheHand.com* (which organizes communal readings of the novels) and *Podcastoficeandfire.com* as [fan sites](#) dedicated to the TV and novel series,^[361] and [podcasts](#) cover *Game of Thrones*.^[372]

Awards

Main article: [List of awards and nominations received by Game of Thrones](#)

Game of Thrones has won numerous awards throughout its run, including 59 Emmy Awards, eight [Screen Actors Guild Awards](#) and a [Peabody Award](#). It holds the record for total Emmy Award wins for a scripted television series (surpassing the record of 37 wins held by *Frasier* since 2004) and for most Emmy nominations for a drama series, with 161.^{[145][373][374][375]} In 2019, the show's final season established a new record for most Emmy nominations received in a year with 32, breaking the 25-year-long record of 26 nominations established by *NYPD Blue* in 1994.^[376] In 2013, the [Writers Guild of America](#) listed *Game of Thrones* as the 40th best written series in television history.^[377] In 2015, *The Hollywood Reporter* placed it at number four on their best TV

shows ever list,^[378] while in 2016 the series was placed seventh on *Empire's* "The 50 best TV shows ever".^[379] The same year, *Rolling Stone* named it the twelfth "greatest TV Show of all time".^[380] In 2013, at the Media Access Awards, George R. R. Martin accepted the Visionary Award from the Writers With Disabilities committee of the Writers Guild of America, for its positive portrayal of character with disabilities.^[381]

Viewership

Game of Thrones was considered a ratings success for HBO throughout all eight seasons.^{[382][383]} The show premiere was watched by 2.2 million, and the first season averaged 2.5 million viewers per episode.^[384] For its second season, the series had an average gross audience of 11.6 million viewers.^[385] The third season was seen by 14.2 million viewers, making *Game of Thrones* the second-most-viewed HBO series (after *The Sopranos*).^[386] HBO said that *Game of Thrones'* average gross audience of 18.4 million viewers (later adjusted to 18.6 million) had passed *The Sopranos* for the viewership record.^{[387][388]} The season five episode "*The House of Black and White*" was simulcasted in 173 countries, becoming the "largest TV drama telecast" according to *Guinness World Records*.^[389]

By the sixth season the average per-episode gross viewing figure had increased to over 25 million, with nearly 40 percent of viewers watching on HBO digital platforms.^[390] In 2016, a *New York Times* study of the 50 TV shows with the most [Facebook likes](#) found that *Game of Thrones* was "much more popular in cities than in the countryside, probably the only show involving zombies that is".^[391] By season seven, the average viewer numbers had grown to 32.8 million per episode across all platforms.^{[392][393]} The series finale was viewed by 19.3 million people across HBO's platforms, becoming the network's most watched episode.^{[394][395]} The [lead-out show](#) also benefited from the finale's record viewership.^[396]

Game of Thrones also set viewership records outside the United States on pay-television channels in the United Kingdom (with a 2016 average audience of more than five million on all platforms)^[397] and Australia (with a cumulative average audience of 1.2 million).^[398] Video streaming research company Parrot Analytics stated that after the US, the season eight premiere demand was "particularly strong in the United Kingdom and France".^[399] [Nielsen Media Research](#) noted the show was popular among 18 to 49 [key demographic](#) with strong female viewership for a fantasy series.^{[400][401]} The show also benefited from [time shifting](#) viewership. Between season one and season seven, 7-day viewers, the number of both [DVR](#) and [video on demand](#) views during the week after the episode broadcast, grew from 3.3 million to 13.7 million.^[402] Following the show finale, commentators said many viewers might cancel their premium television and streaming subscriptions.^[403] HBO parent company [WarnerMedia](#) reported that subscription revenue declined only 0.9 percent between April and June 2019.^[404]

Game of Thrones: U.S. viewers per episode (millions)

Season	Episode number										Average
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
1	2.22	2.20	2.44	2.45	2.58	2.44	2.40	2.72	2.66	3.04	2.52
2	3.86	3.76	3.77	3.65	3.90	3.88	3.69	3.86	3.38	4.20	3.80
3	4.37	4.27	4.72	4.87	5.35	5.50	4.84	5.13	5.22	5.39	4.97
4	6.64	6.31	6.59	6.95	7.16	6.40	7.20	7.17	6.95	7.09	6.84
5	8.00	6.81	6.71	6.82	6.56	6.24	5.40	7.01	7.14	8.11	6.88
6	7.94	7.29	7.28	7.82	7.89	6.71	7.80	7.60	7.66	8.89	7.69
7	10.11	9.27	9.25	10.17	10.72	10.24	12.07	N/A			10.26
8	11.76	10.29	12.02	11.80	12.48	13.61	N/A				11.99

Audience measurement performed by [Nielsen Media Research](#)^[405]

Other media

See also: [Works based on A Song of Ice and Fire](#)



Game of Thrones merchandise in HBO's New York City store

Video games

Main article: [List of A Song of Ice and Fire video games](#)

The series and the novels have inspired several video games.^{[406][407][408]}

Merchandise and exhibition

HBO has licensed a variety of [merchandise](#) based on *Game of Thrones*, including [games](#), replica weapons and armor, jewelry, [bobblehead](#) dolls by [Funko](#), beer by [Ommegang](#) and apparel.^[409] High-end merchandise includes a \$10,500 [Ulysse Nardin](#) wristwatch^[410] and a \$30,000 [resin](#) replica of the Iron Throne.^[411] In 2013 and 2014, a traveling exhibition of costumes, props, armor and weapons from the series visited major cities in Europe and the Americas.^[412] Starting 2018, [Diageo](#) released several *Game of Thrones* themed whiskies.^[413]

Related shows

Thronecast

Main article: [Thronecast](#)

[Thronecast](#): *The Official Guide to Game of Thrones*, a series of podcasts presented by [Geoff Lloyd](#) and produced by Koink, were released on the Sky Atlantic website and the UK iTunes store during the series's run; a new podcast, with analysis and cast interviews, was released after each episode.^[414] In 2014 and 2015, HBO commissioned [Catch the Throne](#), two rap albums about the series.^{[415][416]} A companion book, *Inside HBO's Game of Thrones* by series writer Bryan Cogman, was published on September 27, 2012. The 192-page book, illustrated with concept art and behind-the-scenes photographs, covers the creation of the series's first two seasons and its principal characters and families.^[417]

After the Thrones

Main article: [After the Thrones](#)

[After the Thrones](#) was a [live aftershow](#) during which hosts [Andy Greenwald](#) and Chris Ryan discussed episodes of the series. It aired on *HBO Now*, the Monday following each season six episode.^[418] The [Game of Thrones Live Concert Experience](#), a North American 28-city orchestral tour which performed the series's soundtrack with composer Ramin Djawadi, began in February 2017 and concluded in April 2017.^{[419][420]} A second tour followed in 2018 across cities in Europe and North America.^[421]

Home media extras

Each season's Blu-ray and DVD set contains several short [still motion](#) animated sequences titled *Histories and Lore*, narrated by the cast, in character, as they detail events in the history of Westeros.^[422] For the seventh season, this was to include the animated prequel series *Game of Thrones: Conquest & Rebellion*, illustrated in a different animation style than previous videos. The series focuses on Aegon Targaryen's conquest of the Seven Kingdoms of Westeros.^[423] A week after the series finale, HBO released a behind-the-scenes documentary entitled *Game of Thrones: The Last Watch*.^[424] The program documented the production of season 8 along with [read-throughs](#) and interviews with the cast.^[425]

Successors

In May 2017, after years of speculation about possible [successor series](#), HBO commissioned [Max Borenstein](#), [Jane Goldman](#), [Brian Helgeland](#), [Carly Wray](#), and Bryan Cogman to develop five individual *Game of Thrones* successor series;^[426] the writers were to be working individually with George R. R. Martin, who also co-wrote two of the scripts.^[427] D. B. Weiss and David Benioff said that they would not be involved with any of the projects.^[428]

Martin said that all the concepts under discussion were prequels, although he believes the term "successor show" applies better to these projects, as they are not *Game of Thrones* spin-offs in the traditional sense. He ruled out Robert's Rebellion (the overthrow of Daenerys's father by Robert Baratheon) as a possible idea and revealed that some may be set outside Westeros.^[429] In September 2018, speaking about the four projects (i.e. not about the Goldman's project), HBO president of programming Casey Bloys said that some of them had been abandoned completely, while others remained as possibilities for the future;^[430] Martin said that: "at least two of them are solidly based on material in *Fire and Blood*".^[431] In May 2019, Martin stated that two of the projects were still in the script stage, but were "edging closer".^[432] In April 2019, Cogman confirmed his prequel would not be moving forward.^[433]

In January 2021, it was revealed that HBO were developing another prequel series to be based on Martin's novella series [Tales of Dunk and Egg](#).^[434] [Steve Conrad](#) was attached as writer and executive producer of the *Tales of Dunk and Egg* series in November 2021.^[435] In March 2021, it was reported that three additional *Game of Thrones* spin-offs were in development at HBO; they include *10,000 Ships*, a reference to the voyages made by warrior queen Princess Nymeria, who later founds Dorne; *9 Voyages*, about the voyages of Corlys Velaryon on the Sea Snake; and a project based on Flea Bottom, the poorest slum in King's Landing.^[436]

In June 2022, it was reported that a Jon Snow sequel series with Kit Harington to reprise his role was in early development at HBO.^[437] The [working title](#) is *Snow* and Martin confirmed his involvement with the project and that Harington initiated the idea.^[438] Also in June, Martin said there were still three other live-action series in development: *10,000 Ships* (written by Amanda Segal), *9 Voyages* aka *Sea Snake* (written by [Bruno Heller](#)), and the Dunk & Egg prequel series (written by Steven Conrad), tentatively titled either *The Hedge Knight* or *Knight of the Seven Kingdoms*.^[438]

Bloodmoon

On June 8, 2018, HBO commissioned a pilot to a *Game of Thrones* prequel series from Goldman as showrunner and Martin as co-creator.^[439] The prequel was to take place in the Age of Heroes, a period that begins roughly 10,000 years before the events of *Game of Thrones*. Notable events of that period include the foundation of powerful Houses, the Long Night when the White Walkers first descended upon Westeros, and the Andal Invasion when the Andals invaded from Essos and conquered most of Westeros.^[440] Martin suggested *The Long Night* as a title for the series.^[441] [S. J. Clarkson](#) was announced to direct and executive produce the pilot,^[442] while [Naomi Watts](#) was cast as the female lead playing "a charismatic socialite hiding a dark secret".^[443] Other series regulars were to include: Josh Whitehouse, [Toby Regbo](#), [Ivanhoe](#), [Georgie Henley](#), [Naomi Ackie](#), [Denise Gough](#), [Jamie Campbell Bower](#), [Sheila Atim](#), [Alex Sharp](#), [Miranda Richardson](#), Marquis Rodriguez, [John Simm](#), [Richard McCabe](#), [John Heffernan](#), and Dixie Egerickx.^[444] In September 2019, Martin claimed the pilot was in post-production^[445] but in October 2019, it was announced that HBO had decided not to move forward with the series.^[446]

House of the Dragon

Main article: [House of the Dragon](#)

In September 2019, [Deadline Hollywood](#) reported that a second prequel from Martin and Ryan Condal that "tracks the beginning of the end for House Targaryen" was close to receiving a pilot order from HBO; the project is not considered an original sixth script, as it builds upon Cogman's idea from 2017.^[447] This prequel, titled *House of the Dragon*, was commissioned as a complete series on October 29, 2019. The 10-episode series is to be based on material from *Fire and Blood*, executive produced by Martin, Vince Gerardis, Condal, and Miguel Sapochnik; the latter two are to be its showrunners as well.^[448] In January 2020, HBO stated that the series is scheduled for a 2022 release and that the writing process has begun.^[449] Casting for the series started in July 2020.^[450] In October 2020, it was revealed that [Paddy Considine](#) was cast as King Viserys I Targaryen.^[451] In December 2020, three more castings were announced: [Olivia Cooke](#) as [Alicent Hightower](#), [Emma D'Arcy](#) as [Rhaenyra Targaryen](#), and [Matt Smith](#) as [Daemon Targaryen](#).^[452] In February 2021, HBO chief content officer Casey Bloys stated that the show would start production in April, with filming occurring in England.^{[453][454]} In February 2021, [Steve Toussaint](#), [Eve Best](#), [Rhys Ifans](#), and [Sonoya Mizuno](#) were confirmed to also be starring in the series.^[455] In March 2022, HBO announced a series premiere date of August 21, 2022, followed by the release of the official [teaser trailer](#).^[456]

Animated series

In January 2021, an animated drama series was announced as in development at [HBO Max](#).^[457] In July 2021, two more animated series were in development at HBO Max, with one being set in Yi Ti, a nation in Essos loosely based on [Imperial China](#).^[458]

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↑ ↑ Alsop, Elizabeth (July 8, 2015). *"The Unbearable Darkness of Prestige Television"*. *The Atlantic*. *Emerson Collective*. Archived from the original on July 10, 2015. Retrieved May 19, 2020. From the bro-style bloviating (or, broviating) of *True Detective*'s first season, to the ominous proclaiming that punctuates the general whoring and slaying of *Game of Thrones*, to the unceasing climatological and psychological punishments meted out to the cast of *The Killing*, it seems as though some of the most celebrated recent examples of serial drama have elected self-seriousness as their default tone.

↑ ↑ Arp, Robert (2017). J. Silverman, Eric (ed.). *The Ultimate Game of Thrones and Philosophy*. Open Court Publishing Company. ISBN 9780812699555. Archived from the original on May 26, 2020. Retrieved May 26, 2020. Like *Game of Thrones*, the action in those ancient tragedies centered on the stories of four ruling dynasties: House Atreus of Mycenae, House Cadmus in Thebes, House Erichthonius in Athens, and House Minos in Crete.

↑ ↑ Marcotte, Amanda (June 9, 2015). *"Don't Be So Shocked by the Deaths on Game of Thrones: The Show Is a Classical Tragedy"*. *Slate*. *The Slate Group*. Archived from the original on January 23, 2019. Retrieved May 19, 2020. But while *Game of Thrones* is in part a rebuttal to traditional fantasy fiction, I'd argue that it's become clear—after five books in *A Song of Ice and Fire* and five seasons of the TV series—that Martin and showrunners D.B. Weiss and David Benioff are actually playing with a format that isn't so revolutionary at all: They're reviving and updating the classical tragedy as a narrative form.

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