



20 FACTS ABOUT THE HARRY POTTER BOOK SERIES

1. Scholastic published *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* in the U.S. in September 1998. The book by then debut author J.K. Rowling had an initial first printing of 50,000 copies.
2. Arthur A. Levine, Scholastic publisher who brought Harry Potter to America, acquired at auction the manuscript for *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* in the low six figures. At the time, it was the highest Arthur had ever paid for a children's book.
3. Before the title of book 1 in the series was changed to *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* in the U.S. (published as *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in the U.K.), one of the suggested titles was "Harry Potter and the School of Magic."
4. *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, the fourth book in the series, was the first Harry Potter book simultaneously released in both the U.S. and the U.K. Published by Scholastic on July 8, 2000, *Goblet of Fire* had an initial print run of 3.8 million copies in the U.S. The book sold 3 million copies in its first weekend on sale.
5. Each Harry Potter book broke sales records set by the previous book starting with *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. Book 6, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, published in July 16, 2005, sold 6.9 million copies in the first 24 hours.
6. *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, book 7 in the series, was published by Scholastic on July 21, 2007, and had an initial print run of 12 million copies. The book sold 8.3 million copies in the first 24 hours.
7. More than 500 million copies of the Harry Potter books have sold worldwide; more than 180 million copies have sold in the U.S. alone.
8. A slightly different list of Hogwarts school subjects appears in J.K. Rowling's earliest notes. Herbology was called Herbalism; Divination was Compulsory from the first year as was Alchemy and a subject simply called Beasts.

9. J.K. Rowling said that The Mirror of Erised is her favorite chapter in the first book and one of her favorites from the entire series.
10. Bookstores organically organized the first midnight parties to celebrate the release of the new Harry Potter books. Scholastic supplied midnight party event kits with lightning bolt tattoos to bookstores hosting events.
11. Mary GrandPré, the illustrator of the original Harry Potter hardcover novels in the U.S., almost turned down the opportunity to illustrate *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* because her schedule was too busy.
12. Harry Potter's face in the original hardcover novels was based on Mary GrandPré herself.
13. One of Mary GrandPré's favorite creatures in the Harry Potter books is Fluffy, the three-headed dog. Mary originally drew him on the front part of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* cover, but he ended up in a corner in the finished jacket.
14. Of all of the magical creatures, Mary GrandPré loved drawing Dobby the most. She liked his pronounced nose and huge ears. Mary GrandPré found the dementors to be the hardest characters to draw. Mary GrandPré used Chopper, her beloved Saint Bernard, as inspiration for her drawing of Hagrid. She found they both shared the characteristics of warmth and loyalty.
15. Scholastic approached Brian Selznick to illustrate the covers and boxed set for the 20th anniversary of Harry Potter in the U.S. Selznick is the Caldecott Medal-winning illustrator and #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Invention of Hugo Cabret* which was adapted into the film *Hugo*, directed by Martin Scorsese.
16. Brian Selznick is a Hufflepuff. Like Mary GrandPré, Brian's favorite Harry Potter character is Dobby.
17. In his cover illustrations, Brian Selznick had a few specific inspirations: He based his drawing of Dumbledore (on book 6) on Michelangelo's Moses and a self-portrait of Leonardo da Vinci. Fleur Delacour was inspired by movie star Veronica Lake. The train in the bottom right-hand corner of book 7 is the Hogwarts Express going to school nineteen years later in the coda, and the smoke blowing back runs through all of the images, back to book 1.
18. When lined up, Lily Potter's Patronus (the doe on book 7) sits on the shoulder of Snape, who loved her, on book 6.
19. Brian Selznick knew he wanted the Harry Potter 20th anniversary edition covers to be in black and white, and the collectible box that he also designed to be in color. If the reader looks closely, there's a surprise image *inside* the box once you take all of the books out!
20. If all the Harry Potter books ever sold were placed end to end, they would go around the equator over 16 times.