



25 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 first of a planned seven-book series written by then debut author J.K. Rowling. *Sorcerer's Stone* had an initial first printing of 50,000 copies.
2. *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, 11.5 million copies in the first ten days, breaking all industry records.
3. Twenty-five years since the first book launched in the U.S., Harry Potter is the bestselling book series of all time: more than 600 million copies of the Harry Potter books have sold worldwide; more than 230 million copies have sold in the U.S. to date.
4. 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."
5. In the U.S. editions of the Harry Potter books, the handwriting for several characters was created by select Scholastic employees, and an occasional celebrity. Mrs. Weasley's handwriting was provided by actress Rosie O'Donnell.
6. Because each new Harry Potter book was so highly anticipated, and to ensure that all readers would have access to the story at the same time, there was great secrecy behind the title and simultaneous release of the later books in the series. The Harry Potter manuscripts were kept under lock and key at the Scholastic headquarters in New York City and in some cases hand-carried from the UK to the US.
7. The popularity of the Harry Potter books led *The New York Times Book Review* to print a separate children's bestseller list. More than two decades later, Harry Potter remains on the *New York Times* series bestseller list.
8. In order for the final Harry Potter book to be published in braille simultaneously with the print edition, Scholastic sent the manuscript for *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* early to the National Braille Press, the nonprofit braille publisher. The NBP covered their office windows and employed an armed

guard to keep the manuscript secure while their staff worked around the clock to ensure the braille edition was ready in time for the July 20, 2007, publication.

9. Scholastic, in 2007, announced that all copies of the U.S. edition of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* would be printed on paper that contains a minimum of 30% post-consumer waste (pcw) fiber. Moreover, 65% of the 16,700 tons of paper used in the U.S. first printing was certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the global standard-setter for responsible forest management. During this time, this historic commitment was the largest purchase of FSC certified paper to be used in the printing of a single book title.
10. Because of the strict on-sale date for Harry Potter titles, bookstores organically organized midnight parties starting with the publication of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. Scholastic subsequently supplied midnight party event kits with thousands of lightning bolt tattoos to all bookstores hosting events.
11. J.K. Rowling first had the idea of a boy wizard who went to wizarding school in 1990, while sitting on a delayed train from Manchester to London. It took her five years to write the first book in the series. J.K. Rowling has said that “The Mirror of Erised” is her favorite chapter in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* and one of her favorites from the entire series.
12. 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.
13. Mary GrandPré studied typography and graphic design when she attended art school. She sketched out and did the handlettering of the Harry Potter logo for the U.S. editions. It was Mary’s idea to incorporate the lightning bolt into the “P” in Potter resulting in one of the most iconic logos in the world.
14. In 2001, two Harry Potter companion books were published, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* and *Quidditch Through the Ages*, with all royalties donated to Comic Relief and Lumos. These “facsimile editions” of some of the most popular books in the wizarding world include forewords by Albus Dumbledore.
15. A third companion book was published by Scholastic in 2008: *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*, a collection of five classic tales from the wizarding world. The book first appeared in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, which included “The Tale of the Three Brothers.” All royalties from Beedle the Bard are donated to Lumos, an international children’s charity founded by J.K. Rowling that works to transform care systems around the world.
16. For the launch of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, Scholastic purchased a double-decker bus from the UK and transformed it into a triple-decker bus to represent the Knight Bus then toured it around to libraries across the country.
17. Kazu Kibuishi, creator of the bestselling Amulet graphic novel series, was commissioned to create new covers for the 15th anniversary of Harry Potter in the US. When all seven books are lined up on a shelf, the spines create a tableau image of Hogwarts castle. Kibuishi’s slipcase artwork for the complete series box set features a snowy scene in Hogsmeade, including Honeydukes, Zonko’s, and many beloved characters.

18. 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. Brian Selznick is a Hufflepuff. Brian's favorite Harry Potter character is Dobby.
19. Harry Potter's story as a grown-up was continued in a stage play, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, which J.K. Rowling wrote with playwright Jack Thorne and director John Tiffany, and which is performed on Broadway and other locations around the world. The playscript was published at midnight on July 31, 2016, just hours after the play's premiere at the Palace Theatre in London. Booksellers brought back midnight parties for the release, and thousands of parties were held across the U.S.
20. For the 25th anniversary of the U.S. publication of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, Scholastic asked Headcase Design to "refresh" Mary GrandPré's iconic original covers for the Harry Potter series. New decorative elements were custom designed for each book cover – a hedge maze border for *Goblet of Fire*, for example – and stamped in gold foil.
21. As part of its year-long celebration in Fall 2023, Scholastic will publish *The Official Harry Potter Cookbook* (September 5, 2023), *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* designed and illustrated by MinaLima (October 3, 2023), and *The Harry Potter Wizarding Almanac* (October 10, 2023).
22. Libraries have played an integral part in sharing the magic of reading Harry Potter. To commemorate the 25th anniversary, Scholastic has created Harry Potter reading kits to be distributed to public libraries across the U.S. Readers can also access more free downloadable activities and discussion guides on Scholastic's Harry Potter website, www.scholastic.com/harrypotter.
23. In the years since Harry Potter was whisked from King's Cross Station onto Platform 9 ¾, his incredible adventures have left a unique and lasting mark on popular culture. Eight blockbuster films based on the original books have grossed almost \$7.7 billion at the box office.
24. Representing a vast interconnected universe, the franchise includes *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* – the multi-award-winning stage-play in London, New York, Hamburg, and Tokyo, three epic Fantastic Beasts films, state-of-the-art video and mobile games from Portkey Games, live entertainment (including four theme park lands at Universal Studios Orlando, Hollywood, Osaka, Beijing with a new one planned to open in Abu Dhabi). This expanding portfolio also includes the flagship Harry Potter New York City store, Warner Bros. Studio Tours in London and Tokyo, and the Platform 9 ¾ shops. Warner Bros. Discovery recently announced that the Harry Potter stories would be adapted to a new TV series on MAX. This new adaptation will be authentic to the original books.
25. If all the Harry Potter books ever sold were placed end to end, they would go around the equator over 16 times.

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