

## Profitability of Star Wars Movies

Original Star Wars Trilogy	{	<i>Episode IV: A New Hope</i> (1977) <i>Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back</i> (1980) <i>Episode VI: Return of the Jedi</i> (1983)
Prequel trilogy	{	<i>Episode I: The Phantom Menace</i> (1999) <i>Episode II: Attack of the Clones</i> (2002) <i>Episode III: Revenge of the Sith</i> (2005)
Sequel trilogy	{	<i>Episode VII: The Force Awakens</i> (2015) <i>Episode VIII: The last Jedi</i> (2017) <i>Episode IX: The Rise of Skywalker</i> (2019)
Stand-alone Star Wars Anthology Films	{	<i>Rogue One: A Star Wars Story</i> (2016) <i>Solo: A Star Wars Story</i> (2018) <i>Third Untitled Anthology Film</i> (2020)

I've been looking at all of the Star Wars data. The productions of Star Wars movies are created as trilogies. The original trilogy was the 1977 release of *Star Wars*, then the *Empire Strikes Back* and, lastly, *The Return of the Jedi*.

After the *Return of the Jedi* there was a long wait for the start of the next series.

1. How many years passed before Star Wars hit the big screen again?

The *Phantom Menace* was followed at regular intervals by the *Attack of the Clones* and then *The Revenge of the Sith*. Then there was another hiatus.

2. How long was that second wait between trilogies?

The *Force Awakens* was the first film of the next trilogy.

3. *Episode VIII* opened in 2017. Was its timing consistent with the spacing of the other trilogies? Please explain your reasoning.

We found this data on how much it costs to make one of these films and how much the worldwide ticket sales earned for the film companies.

	Production cost	Worldwide Gross
<i>Episode IV: A New Hope</i> (1977)	\$11,000,000	\$775,398,008
<i>Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back</i> (1980)	\$18,000,000	\$538,375,066
<i>Episode VI: Return of the Jedi</i> (1983)	\$32,500,000	\$475,106,178
<i>Episode I: The Phantom Menace</i> (1999)	\$115,000,000	\$1,027,044,678
<i>Episode II: Attack of the Clones</i> (2002)	\$115,000,000	\$649,398,327
<i>Episode III: Revenge of the Sith</i> (2005)	\$113,000,000	\$848,754,769
<i>Episode VII: The Force Awakens</i> (2015)	\$245,000,000	\$2,088,220,000
<i>Rogue One: A Star Wars Story</i> (2016)	\$200,000,000	\$1,056,060,000
<i>Episode VIII: The last Jedi</i> (2017)	\$317,000,000	\$1,332,540,000
<i>Solo: A Star Wars Story</i> (2018)	\$275,000,000	\$392,920,000
<i>Episode IX: The Rise of Skywalker</i> (2019)	\$600,000,000	

Production costs and global box office revenue of Star Wars movies  
From 1977 to 2019 (in million U.S. dollars) (as of November 2019)

4. What does this list make you wonder? What would you like to find out?

5. How do you suppose that I should calculate the profit that these companies made from the movies?

6. What other factors should I try to account for in creating profit amounts that I could compare?

We don't think that it is fair to compare the profit made in 1977 to the profit made today. In 1977 a Hershey bar that weighed 1.2 ounces cost \$0.20. Today, that same sized Hershey bar costs at least \$1.10.

We have a few suggestions on how to make comparisons of the movies' earnings that might be fairer ... but feel free to choose a different method to calculate what you see.

1st. You could use the following past and present prices for a movie ticket to compare the net earnings.

2019	?	2008	\$7.18	1997	\$4.59	1986	\$3.71
2018	\$9.11	2007	\$6.88	1996	\$4.42	1985	\$3.55
2017	\$8.97	2006	\$6.55	1995	\$4.35	1984	\$3.36
2016	\$8.65	2005	\$6.41	1994	\$4.18	1983	\$3.15
2015	\$8.43	2004	\$6.21	1993	\$4.14	1982	\$2.94
2014	\$8.17	2003	\$6.03	1992	\$4.15	1981	\$2.78
2013	\$8.13	2002	\$5.80	1991	\$4.21	1980	\$2.69
2012	\$7.96	2001	\$5.65	1990	\$4.23	1979	\$2.51
2011	\$7.93	2000	\$5.39	1989	\$3.97	1978	\$2.34
2010	\$7.89	1999	\$5.06	1988	\$4.11	1977	\$2.23
2009	\$7.50	1998	\$4.69	1987	\$3.91		

Or

2nd. You might want to compare what percent of every dollar spent on the making of each movie returned in profits.

Or

3rd. You might want to use an inflation calculator, like this one: <http://www.usinflationcalculator.com> to compare the value of one year's prices with present day prices. This calculator won't calculate the millions that are the movie's revenues but you can easily find out what \$1.00 in 1977 currency (or whatever year you are using) becomes in 2019 dollars and then just multiply that dollar amount by the dollar amount that you are trying to convert to today's dollars.

7. Do some research and try to create comparisons in the costs and profits of these 8 films.

The last column has been left untitled so that you can choose what you want to calculate.

	Production cost	Worldwide Gross	Net earnings	
<i>Episode IV: A New Hope (1977)</i>	\$11,000,000	\$775,398,008		
<i>Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back (1980)</i>	\$18,000,000	\$538,375,066		
<i>Episode VI: Return of the Jedi (1983)</i>	\$32,500,000	\$475,106,178		
<i>Episode I: The Phantom Menace (1999)</i>	\$115,000,000	\$1,027,044,678		
<i>Episode II: Attack of the Clones (2002)</i>	\$115,000,000	\$649,398,327		
<i>Episode III: Revenge of the Sith (2005)</i>	\$113,000,000	\$848,754,769		
<i>Star Wars: The Clone Wars (2008)</i>	\$8,500,000	\$68,695,443		
<i>Episode VII: The Force Awakens (2015)</i>	\$245,000,000	\$2,088,220,000		
<i>Rogue One: A Star Wars Story (2016)</i>	\$200,000,000	\$1,050,988,488		
<i>Episode VIII: The Last Jedi (2017)</i>	\$317,000,000	\$1,332,540,000		
<i>Solo: A Star Wars Story (2018)</i>	\$275,000,000	\$392,920,000		
<i>Episode IX: The Rise of Skywalker (2019)</i>	\$600,000,000			

8. So, what can you conclude about the cost and final profit made by this set of films?

9. What do you guess the Worldwide Gross of *The Rise of Skywalker* will be?
  
10. Decide in what format you want to present your conclusions to your class. What sort of chart or graph would be most persuasive for demonstrating your conclusions?

Sources: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star\\_Wars](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Wars)  
<http://www.the-numbers.com/movies/franchise/Star-Wars-tab=summary>  
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/311356/star-wars-production-costs-box-office-revenue/>