



REFERENCE NOTES

The Final Frontier – Breaking into the world of *Star Trek*

Whether you are a long time sci-fi lover or brand new to the world of science fiction, you have probably heard of the much beloved Gene Roddenberry creation *Star Trek*. The enormous futuristic fantasy world encompassing fifty-six years of television shows, movies, books, comics, and more can be daunting for those wanting to learn more.

The stories in each series follow the space-bound adventures of the crews of a number of ships belonging to quasi-militaristic organization Starfleet on their quest “to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before”. This article will provide a brief overview of where one can begin to delve into the live-action television series in order to get the most enjoyment out of it.

Star Trek: The Original Series first aired from 1966 to 1969. This is perhaps the most recognizable *Star Trek* series, starring William Shatner as USS Enterprise captain James T. Kirk, and Leonard Nimoy as pointy-eared first officer Spock. For those wanting to explore the history of the series, or who really enjoy vintage television, *The Original Series* is an excellent place to start. With one of the first multiracial casts in US television, the series is itself a piece of civil rights history.

If, however, the “classic” special effects are too unrealistic for your tastes, or if 60’s style sexism would make watching the series difficult, you may want to start with one of the later series.

The 1987 reboot, *Star Trek: The Next Generation* is the highest rated series out of the franchise, and a favorite “breaking in” point for many fans. Starring Patrick Stewart as captain Jean-Luc Picard (a character so well-loved he is brought back in the brand new series *Star Trek: Picard*) *The Next Generation* remains on the USS Enterprise but encounters new friends and foes, and delves deep into topics such as humanity and personhood in several award winning episodes.

In the wake of *The Next Generation*’s success, Paramount Studios began releasing a slew of new spin-offs, with *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* airing in 1993, *Star Trek: Voyager* following two years later in 1995, and prequel *Star Trek: Enterprise* in 2001. While *Deep Space Nine* and *Voyager* were well received, *Enterprise*, which had made a number of plot and stylistic changes, was poorly reviewed and its cancelation after the fourth season ended the run of new *Star Trek* series.

Each of the spin-offs has its draws for a first-time viewer – especially if you are looking for more representation in your sci-fi. *Deep Space Nine* stars Avery Brooks as the first African American central character in a *Star Trek* series and *Voyager* features the first female captain, with Kate Mulgrew playing Cathryn Janeway.

If what you are looking for in a series is the most up to date special effects, current humor, and timely social commentary, all with a classic *Star Trek* flair, you may be most interested in the recent *Star Trek* resurgence. In 2017, after the success of the rebooted films, Paramount released *Star Trek: Discovery* on their streaming service followed by *Star Trek: Picard* in 2020. While the new shows tend to feel darker or more grown up than their predecessors, they have received good reviews so far.

With the emergence of so many new *Star Trek* series, it’s no surprise that people are curious about the origins of the franchise. Once you’ve explored and become familiar with the live-action shows, continue to explore the *Star Trek* universe in novels, comics, movies, and animated series!

PATHFINDER

| <u>Call numbers</u> | <u>Book Titles</u> | <u>Authors</u> | <u>Locations</u> | <u>Websites</u> |
|---------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| <u>813.54</u> | <u>Star Trek Captain's peril</u> | <u>Shartner, William</u> | <u>Juliette Hampton Morgan Library</u> | <u>https://www.startrek.com/</u> |
| <u>SF STAR TREK</u> | <u>Star Trek: gateways what lay beyond</u> | <u>Berman, Rick</u> | <u>Rufus A. Lewis Library</u> <u>Governor's Square Library</u> | <u>https://memory-alpha.fandom.com/wiki/Portal:Main</u> |
| <u>791.45</u> | <u>The ethics of Star Trek</u> | <u>Barad, Judith A</u> | <u>El Lowder Library</u> | <u>https://www.st-minutiae.com/</u> |
| <u>791 REEVES</u> | <u>Star Trek: The next generation The continuing Mission</u> | <u>Reeves-Stevens, Judith</u> | <u>El Lowder Library</u> | <u>https://www.trekcore.com/</u> |
| <u>301471.2</u> | <u>Star Trek and philosophy: The wrath of Kant</u> | <u>Eberl, Jason T</u> | <u>Juliette Hampton Morgan Library</u> | |
| <u>SF</u> | <u>Star Trek: the return</u> | <u>Shatner, William</u> | <u>Juliette Hampton Morgan Library</u> | |

WORKS CITED

"*Star Trek*." *Wikipedia*, 20 Mar. 2022. *Wikipedia*, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Star_Trek&oldid=1078315352.

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine. Paramount Television, 1993.

Star Trek: Discovery. CBS Television Studios, Living Dead Guy Productions, Master Key Production, 2017.

Star Trek: Picard. CBS Television Studios, Roddenberry Entertainment, Secret Hideout, 2020.