

R2-D2

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(Redirected from R2D2)

R2-D2 (phonetically spelt **Artoo-Deeto**) (called "**Artoo**" for short), is a fictional character in the *Star Wars* universe, an astromech droid. R2-D2 is one of the only four characters to appear in all six *Star Wars* films, the others being Anakin Skywalker (Darth Vader), Obi-Wan Kenobi, and the droid companion C-3PO. R2-D2 was played by Kenny Baker.

The original R2-D2 chassis was specially created by Australian firm Petric Engineering and was precision made to a high standard with small tolerances. Many scenes also made use of radio controlled and CGI versions of the character.

R2-D2	
Droid type	Astromech droid
Manufacturer	Industrial Automaton
Master (owner)	Padmé Amidala, Anakin Skywalker, Captain Raymus Antilles, Princess Leia Organa, Luke Skywalker
Affiliation	Galactic Republic, Rebel Alliance, New Republic, Galactic Alliance, Jedi Order

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Prequel trilogy

In *Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace*, R2-D2 is introduced as a droid belonging to the Naboo defense forces, and helps repair Queen Padmé Amidala's starship as it attempts to get past the Trade Federation blockade. Later, R2-D2 becomes part of Qui-Gon Jinn's party in Tatooine and meets C-3PO and Anakin Skywalker. Later, he serves as the astromech droid for Anakin's starfighter during the film's climactic battle scene.

In *Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones*, set ten years later, R2-D2 is still in Padmé Amidala's possession, and he accompanies Anakin and Padmé to Naboo when her life is threatened, and then to Tatooine when Anakin tries to rescue his mother. Here, he is reunited with C-3PO, and the two get into various misadventures on Geonosis. He and C-3PO are later witnesses to Anakin and Padmé's secret wedding.

In *Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*, R2-D2 helps Anakin and Obi-Wan Kenobi in their mission to rescue Chancellor Palpatine from Count Dooku's capital ship, the *Invisible Hand*. He is attacked by B2 super battle droids, but manages to defeat both of them through ingenious tactics. R2-D2 accompanies Anakin throughout the rest of the movie, but does not play a large part in events. Later, C-3PO's memory is wiped clean to keep the knowledge of the locations of Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia Organa a secret from their father, who has fallen to the dark side and become Darth Vader. However, R2-D2's memory is not wiped. This lack of memory wipe makes R2-D2 the only character by the end of *Return of the Jedi* who knows the entire story of the Skywalker family. Both R2-D2 and C-3PO end up in the possession of Captain Raymus Antilles onboard the blockade runner *Tantive IV* at the end of *Revenge of the Sith*.

Original trilogy

In *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*, both R2-D2 and C-3PO are on board the *Tantive IV* along with Princess Leia of Alderaan, now an adult, when they come under attack by the Imperial Star Destroyer *Devastator*. Leia slips R2-D2 a disc containing a distress message and the plans for the Death Star battle station.

Once again on the planet Tatooine, R2-D2 and C-3PO are abducted by Jawas and bought by Owen Lars, adoptive uncle of Luke Skywalker. Luke discovers a part of the hidden message but does not act on it, and R2-D2 escapes on his own to seek out Obi-Wan Kenobi. Soon, by way of fate, Luke is forced to leave Tatooine with Obi-Wan, Han Solo, and Chewbacca, and they attempt to deliver R2-D2 to the Rebel Alliance. Along the way, they are captured by the Death Star I, but eventually rescue Leia and escape. R2-D2 delivers the plans to the Alliance, and becomes Luke's astromech droid during the attack on the station. R2 is severely damaged during the battle, but is restored before the awards ceremony at the end of the film.

In *Star Wars Episode V: The Empire Strikes Back*, R2 accompanies Luke to Dagobah and later to Cloud City, where he again helps to rescue and repair a heavily damaged C-3PO. He also manages to fix the *Millennium Falcon*'s hyperdrive, resulting in a last-minute escape from the Empire.

In *Star Wars Episode VI: Return of the Jedi*, R2-D2 plays a critical role in the rescue of Han Solo from Jabba the Hutt, and later joins the Rebel strike team on Endor.

R2's Gadgets

R2 has often been a "box of tricks" for the protagonists, including many apparatti and manipulators. Some of his gadgets include a taser, a gripping tool, a computer interface, and a periscope. This "box of tricks" image was parodied by Star Wars Spoofs with an image of R2 featuring such items as a popcorn machine and a bottle opener plus other traditional pocket knife items. In the original trilogy, R2 has a very strict set of tools, using some, such as his computer interface arm, far more than others. This set was expanded afterward in the prequel trilogy, adding jets, oil spray, and more. The films were criticized by a few viewers in that they exploited R2 as a method getting out of any

situation.

Behind the scenes

There were a total of 15 R2-D2s on the set of *Attack of the Clones*. Eight were radio-controlled; two were worn by Baker; the remainder were stunt models that could be moved by puppet strings or towed by wires.

The sound effects for R2-D2's "voice" were created by sound designer Ben Burtt, using an ARP 2600 analog music synthesizer, as well as his own vocalizations processed through other effects.

R2-D2 in popular culture

Inspiration

- Lucas has stated that Akira Kurosawa's 1958 feature film *The Hidden Fortress* (USA release 1962) was a strong influence, particularly Tahei and Matakishi, the two comic relief characters that serve as sidekicks to General Makabe.
- R2-D2 was partly inspired by the robots Huey, Dewey, and Louie from Douglas Trumbull's 1972 film *Silent Running*.
- The name is said to derive from when Lucas was making one of his earlier films, *American Graffiti*. Sound editor Walter Murch states that he is responsible for the utterance which sparked the name for the droid. Murch asked for Reel 2, Dialog Track 2, in the abbreviated form 'R-2-D-2'. Lucas, who was in the room and had dozed off while working on the script for *Star Wars*, momentarily woke when he heard the request and, after asking for clarification, stated that it was a "great name" before falling immediately back to sleep.^[1]
- In some Spanish-speaking countries R2-D2 is frequently referred to as *Arturito* ("little Arthur"), since it sounds similar to the English Artoo-deetoo.
- Around the same time that *A New Hope* was being shot, Ray Harryhausen had already created Bubo for the 1981 film *Clash of the Titans*. It was a metal owl with a big head that flew heavily and made whistles and tweets. Harryhausen denied a relation: "contrary to what some critics said at the time, Bubo was invented before R2-D2"^[2].

Expanded universe

- R2-D2 and C-3PO had their own animated series, *Star Wars: Droids*, set before they came into Luke Skywalker's possession.
- In the various *Star Wars* novels and comics, the droid duo have played a small but significant role. During the Black Fleet Crisis, for example, they were mostly out of the way, working with Lando Calrissian and Lobot to discover the mystery behind the Teljkon Vagabond. In the Expanded Universe novel *The Swarm War*, R2 inadvertently helps Luke and Leia come to grips with their heritage when an electronic glitch unearths long-concealed images of Anakin relating his fear of losing Padmé, and of Padmé's death.
- In *Star Tours*, he is seen in the queue with C-3PO repairing a StarSpeeder 3000 and during the ride as the navigator.
- In the latest issue of *Star Wars: Legacy* (#12), R2-D2 is revealed to have survived the resulting 88 years after his last appearance and has been upgraded to the latest technology. He is presented to Cade Skywalker by the old Jedi Order member K'Kruhk and Cade's Master Wolf

when Cade went to rescue a captured Jedi being held by Darth Krayt on Coruscant.

- R2-D2 appears in the 2008 animated film *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, and the spin-off series of the same name, which provide a canonical bridge between *Attack of the Clones* and *Revenge of the Sith*.

Popularity

- R2-D2 was inducted into the Robot Hall of Fame in 2003.
- Ewan McGregor, who portrayed Obi-Wan Kenobi in the prequel trilogy, said in an interview, "As soon as R2-D2 comes on the set, everyone goes a bit silly." He recalled how his then four-year-old daughter announced she was in love with R2-D2, and then confessed his own affections for the astromech: "...there is something about him that makes you feel great affection for him. I think it is a combination of his shape, his high-pitched voice. He's just incredibly appealing. In fact, I believe he is George [Lucas]'s favorite actor." Lucas confirms this in the audio commentary of the *Episode III* DVD.

Notable appearances outside the Star Wars series

- R2-D2 was mentioned in the 2nd season episode of *Stargate Atlantis*, *The Lost Boys*. Major Sheppard is shown flying a wraith dart and the auto pilot activates. Sheppard asks "Artoo" to deactivate the auto pilot.
- R2-D2 and C-3PO guest starred in a series of segments on the children's television show *Sesame Street*, aired in 1978, where he falls in love with a fire hydrant in one.
- R2-D2 and C-3PO were featured as presenters at the 50th Academy Awards.
- Together with Luke Skywalker and Chewbacca, R2-D2 and C-3PO appeared on *The Muppet Show*.
- R2-D2 and C-3PO have appeared in numerous *Star Wars*-based commercials, television specials, and productions.
- Both R2-D2 and C-3PO appear as hieroglyphs in the Well of Souls in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.^[3]
- It appears hung upside down over the bottom side of the UFO mothership of *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* when it slowly appears over the Devils tower, following the *making of* documentary in the extra disc of the DVD special edition of the Steven Spielberg's movie.
- The PC video game *Sam & Max Hit the Road* features a bonus shooting gallery during the ending credit roll, and one of the moving targets is a miniature R2-D2. *Sam & Max* was published by LucasArts, which explains the cameo.
- Beepboopbeep is R2's counterpart in the spoof, *Thumb Wars*.
- R2-D2 and C-3PO were the hosts of the Imax film *Special Effects: Anything Can Happen*.
- R2-D2 appears in three episodes of *The Simpsons*.
 - In "The Regina Monologues", R2-D2 plays bass in Bart's "Moon Party" fantasy.
 - In "Mayored to the Mob", R2-D2 and C-3PO are presented as "the gay robots from *Star Wars*" who wrestle the Cylons from the original *Battlestar Galactica*. In a clip of the battle, it shows C-3PO being beaten up and him begging R2-D2 to help him to which he declines and runs off leaving C-3PO to suffer in *Robot Wars*.



A R2-D2 themed mailbox in Boston, Massachusetts as part of the celebration for *Star Wars*' 30th anniversary

- In the "Treehouse of Horror XVI" episode "I've Grown a Costume on Your Face", Apu Nahasapeemapetilon is dressed in an R2-D2 costume. He later becomes R2-D2 when a witch turns everyone into their costume.
- In the British television comedy series *The Goodies*, R2-D2 (played by Kenny Baker) guest stars as a robot called EB-GB (Electronic Brain of Great Britain). The episode, "U-Friend or UFO?", is a spoof of the movie *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and has EB-GB (R2-D2) take on the personality of a Dalek. When asked by one of the Goodies characters, "EB-GB, how do you speak to aliens?" he replies, "Exterminate!"
- R2-D2 makes a brief appearance in *The Ultimate Showdown of Ultimate Destiny*.
- R2-D2 (along with Chewbacca and C-3PO) made a cameo in "Blind Ambition", an episode of the animated TV show *Family Guy*. The episode ends with a reenactment of the ending of *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*, allowing the appearance of these characters. He reappears in "Blue Harvest" and is portrayed by Cleveland Brown.
- In the final *Pinky and the Brain* episode, which includes many of the *Animaniacs* cast. A parody of *A New Hope* features Brain as a spoof of R2-D2 called Brain2 Me2.
- An R2-D2 likeness has been placed on numerous postal boxes around the US in anticipation of the release of a series of Star Wars-themed postage stamps.
- R2 appeared on the April 2, 2007 episode of *Dancing With The Stars* at Joey Fatone's rehearsal for a Star Wars-themed Tango.
- In one episode of the cartoon series *Muppet Babies* Kermit the Frog was turned into R2-D2 and was on a couple of occasions mistaken for a trash can.
- In Nintendo's *Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time*, the droid can be seen on the music machine at the Bombchu Bowling Alley.
- R2-D2 is parodied in the online cartoon *House of Cosbys*. He is known as BCD2 (Bill Cosby D2) and is shaped similar to R2-D2, with similar voicings.
- R2-D2 is parodied in the 23 minute *Star Wars* spoof *HardWare Wars*. In this spoof, he is known as Arty Deco and is accompanied by 4Q2 (a parody of C3PO).

See also

- C-3PO
- 111 Huntington Avenue

Notes

1. Wallace, Daniel. (2002). *Star Wars: The Essential Guide to Characters*. Del Rey. p.138. ISBN 0-345-44900-2. Note: Canon sources are mixed as to whether R2-D2 has a gender, but Wallace (an official source) indicates that the droid has *masculine programming*.

References

1. ^ Film Freak Central Interviews Editor Walter Murch (page 4) (<http://www.filmfreakcentral.net/notes/wminterview4.htm>)
2. ^ Ray Harryhausen and Tony Dalton, *Ray Harryhausen: An Animated Life*, page 270 (London: Aurum Press Ltd, 2003) ISBN 1854109405. Quoted in Term Paper: Clash of the Titans: Gregory Gangemi (<http://a.parsons.edu/~ggangemi/hoa/images/clash.pdf>) .
3. ^ http://s6.invisionfree.com/braltar_nirk/ar/t2001.htm

External links

- R2-D2 (<http://www.starwars.com/databank/droid/r2d2/>) in the *Star Wars* Databank
- R2-D2 on Wookieepedia, an external wiki
- The Robot Hall of Fame (<http://www.robothalloffame.org/r2d2.html>) - 2003 Inductee
- The Official Website of the R2 Builders Club (<http://www.astromech.net>)
- R2-D2 Translator (<http://www.r2d2translator.com/>)

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