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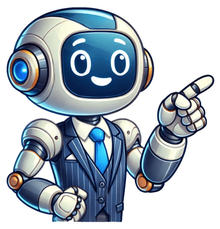

Photo: Demon in a Bottle is, not surprisingly, a tale of Tony's struggle with alcoholism. When this was written by David Michelinie and Bob Layton in the '70s, it was absolutely groundbreaking for taking on such a monumental issue in the panels of a comic book. Today, it remains quintessential to the character, and much of the storyline was adapted to Iron Man 2, including the introduction of Justin Hammer. It is a seminal work in Tony Stark's canon.144 votesPhoto: If you've seen Iron Man 3 you're familiar with Extremis (though, the purveyors of it are conflated in the movie). Extremis is a nanotechnology that enhances a subjects physicality and gives Tony Stark the added ability to mentally control his suit. Artist Adi Granov is largely responsible for creating the visual look adapted by the film franchise, and writer Warren Ellis gets credit for injecting new life into an old character in this not-quite-reboot, that inspired Tony's cinematic origin story. It's basically one of the freshest Iron Man stories out there, and it's relatively short, so check it out.150 votesPhoto: The Confession is one of the best storylines within Civil War. A repentant Tony laments the actions he took in his pursuit of Superhero Registration that resulted in the death of his friend Steve Rogers. There is even a little redemption for Tony in this, whose actions throughout Civil War were sometimes questionable. Written by comic book superstar Brian Michael Bendis, The Confession is a must read.144 votesPhoto: Armor Wars doesn't have quite as much substance as other Stark storylines, but there's no better arc as far as action goes. When Spy Master steals Tony's tech and sells it to a bunch of villains, Tony has to take them all down. David Michelinie and Bob Layton make up one of the better known Iron Man writing teams, and their skills are on display here.88 votesPhoto: Bob Layton and David Michelinie's Doomquest falls somewhere between Armor Wars and Demon in a Bottle - more substantive than the former, but a lot wackier than the latter. Iron Man and Doctor Doom are sent back in time (because magic) where they take opposite sides of a legendary battle, Tony joining forces with King Arthur and Doom with the sorceress Morgan le Fay. That's probably all you need to hear to appreciate the totally nanners nature of this story arc, but it's so fun that it must be read. Plus, it establishes the rivalry between Iron Man and Doctor Doom more so than any other storyline.53 votesPhoto: This story, with which you're new doubt familiar from the first Iron Man movie, is rather expansive and is actually made up of numerous arcs, but the core of the tale is the struggle between Tony Stark as Iron Man and Obadiah Stane as the Iron Monger. In it, Stane takes over Stark Industries and Tony turns to the drink as a coping mechanism. James Rhodes actually dons the Iron Man armor to try to take on Iron Monger, but when he fails, Tony has to step up, and he creates the Silver Centurion suit to do so. It's a great story, which is why it was used to launch the MCU.89 votes Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. Iron Man was first introduced in the 1963 Tales of Suspense #39. His most notable role in the comics was as a founding member of the Avengers, but Tony was far from a leading role in the comics until the success of the 2008 film kicked off the Marvel Cinematic Universe. For new readers, I would recommend Iron Man by Bendis (2015) as a very modern, complete, and really captivating story. Tales of Suspense (1963) There are two series of paperbacks where Marvel is collecting older issues: The older 'Masterworks' series, and the newer 'Epic Collection' series. If you can find them, Epic Collections are way better value. Unfortunately, they don't look like they are reliably in print yet. Marvel Masterworks: The Invincible Iron Man books 1-3, collecting Tales of Suspense #39-85: Extremis (2005) & Invincible Iron Man (2008) If you're looking for books that heavily inspired the Iron Man films, you will find them in the modern classics Extremis by Warren Ellis and Invincible Iron Man by Matt Fraction. Both are great places to start reading. The first book is Iron Man: Extremis, and all of Matt Fraction's Invincible Iron Man collected in two hardcovers: Iron Man by Bendis (2015) The most recent complete storyline begins with Tony Stark in Invincible Iron Man (2015) but grows to be so much more. Bendis really built a universe of characters and stories all around Tony Stark which feel like a comic universe all to themselves. There are two main threads to this story, the main storyline, and a complimentary second storyline. Invincible & Ironheart - Invincible Iron Man is the beginning of a brand new main storyline for Tony Stark and a great place for new readers to join his story. The storyline continues with Ironheart, featuring Riri Williams, a 15-year-old black woman and engineering student from Chicago. Stark is very much a presence in every single issue, but Riri establishes herself as a beloved character isn't going anywhere. International & Infamous - International Iron Man was published alongside Invincible and deals with Tony trying to learn more about his past. The story continues under Infamous Iron Man, published alongside Ironheart, featuring Doctor Doom looking to keep the Iron Man legacy alive. These are less Iron-Man-y books. The art is like painting, and the storyline is mystery, intrigue, and resurfacing past pains, very reminiscent of Bendis' work on Jessica Jones. You can read International & Infamous alongside Invincible & Ironheart as listed below, or you can skip them completely. Iron Man by Bendis in paperback reading order: Tony Stark: Iron Man by Dan Slott (2018) A new writer and a new starting point for new readers has just begun. Only one paperback has been published, so I don't have much I can say yet, but so far the series has a strong supporting cast and tackles ideas like AI and virtual reality in ways that are really cool. I'm excited to continue reading. Written by Robert Kuykendall Doctor Strange Captain America Squirrel Girl Wasp Iron Man was first introduced in the 1963 Tales of Suspense #39. His most notable role in the comics was as a founding member of the Avengers, but Tony was far from a leading role in the comics until the success of the 2008 film kicked off the Marvel Cinematic Universe. For new readers, I would recommend Iron Man by Bendis (2015) as a very modern, complete, and really captivating story. 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The art is like painting, and the storyline is mystery, intrigue, and resurfacing past pains, very reminiscent of Bendis' work on Jessica Jones. You can read International & Infamous alongside Invincible & Ironheart as listed below, or you can skip them completely. Iron Man by Bendis in paperback reading order: Tony Stark: Iron Man by Dan Slott (2018) A new writer and a new starting point for new readers has just begun. Only one paperback has been published, so I don't have much I can say yet, but so far the series has a strong supporting cast and tackles ideas like AI and virtual reality in ways that are really cool. I'm excited to continue reading. Written by Robert Kuykendall Doctor Strange Captain America Squirrel Girl Wasp Iron Man has become remarkably popular since the Robert Downey Juniorfication of the character in 2008's MCU debut. So naturally, I saved his reading order for last among the founding Avengers (#timelycomics). Here it is in all it's glory. The Iron Man reading order! Iron Man Reading Order I) Invincible Iron Man Origins! Tales of Suspense Issues: #39 to #57 Iron Man's first appearance, origins, and original series. There's also an omnibus for collected editions. Avengers Issues: #1 to #4 Avengers #1 occurs after Tales of Suspense #44. Avengers #4 after Tales of Suspense #51. This is Iron Man's first run with the Avengers as a founding Avenger. As you very well know, Iron Man will continue with the Avengers in and out throughout the next 50-plus years of Marvel continuity (and may he for 50 more!). Much like the Thor reading order, I will not be detailing every Avengers appearance. If you're jones-ing for Avengers specific reading, there's always my Avengers guide for that. Tales of Suspense Issues: #58 to #99 From Tales of Suspense #58 to #99 the title features Iron Man and Captain America in a shared book. Like best pals! Avengers Issues: #5 to #16 As noted above, this continues Iron Man's first run as a founding Avenger. II) Iron Man Enters the 70's Through Demon in a Bottle The Invincible Iron Man Issues: #1 to #115 Iron Man's first solo title begins in 1968. 70's conclude with Iron Man "Demon in a Bottle," issues #120 to #128, which you'll see included in the David Michilinie run on Iron Man below. Issue #55 of Invincible Iron Man is notable for the first appearance of Thanos! Iron Man – Demon in a Bottle Issues: #116 to #157 Marks the first complete run by David Michilinie, Bob Layton, and John Romita Jr. Includes "Demon in a Bottle" (issues #120 to #128) as well as Doomquest (issues #149 to #150). III) West Coast Avengers & Armor Wars Iron Man Issues: #160 to #200 Denny O'Neil (of Green Arrow / Green Lantern 'Hard Travellin' Heroes', and Batman fame) wrote a sustained Invincible Iron Man. This time period deals with Stark's alcoholism in much greater detail, giving us both James Rhodes as Iron Man, and Obadiah Stane (Jeff Bridges' villain from the first Iron Man movie). Culminates in the Iron Monger storyline. If you're looking to fill in Rhodey's journey to Battleword during Secret Wars, that can be read really anytime between Iron Man #181 and Iron Man #190. I'd also note that issue #197 is a Secret Wars II tie-in. West Coast Avengers Issues: #1 to #4 Iron Man plays a prominent role with the West Coast Avengers, as you'll see in this initial four issue miniseries (the title would launch again for a more sustained period in 1985). Unfortunately, Marvel Unlimited's West Coast library is extremely limited. Iron Man – Armor Wars Issues: #215 to #234 Iron Man – Armor Wars II Issues: #258 to #266 IV) The 90's Were a Weird Time For All of Us / Hulkbuster Iron Man – Dragon Seed Saga Issues: #270 to #275 The Dragon Seed Saga. (See also: the best Mandarin stories) Iron Man Issues: #278 to #291 Iron Man issues #278 and #279 are Avengers: Galactic Storm tie-ins, and then James Rhodes, as War Machine is featured during a trying time for Tony Stark. Iron Man – Hulkbuster Issues: #305 I'll be skipping a big chunk of the 90's Iron Man for a few reasons, namely I'm not as familiar with these comics and they lead to "The Crossing" which is an absolute mess of an Avengers crossover. That said, Iron Man #305 features some sweet Hulkbuster action (technically begins in Iron Man #304). Onslaught Mega Marvel event that sets the stage for… Heroes Reborn: Iron Man Issues: #1 to #12 Heroes Reborn happened. This is the Iron Man 1996 to 1998 series in Marvel Unlimited. V) Iron Man Enters the 2000's Iron Man by Busiek & Chen Issues: #1 to #25 Collected omnibus by Kurt Busiek and Sean Chen. Iron Man Issues: #26 to #83 Poorly collected, oft-overlooked Iron Man comics leading up to Avengers Disassembled. In my experience, these aren't really hidden gems, but there are some interesting concepts at play, such as Tony Stark working as the United States Secretary of Defense (issues #73 to #78). Crimson Dynamo Issues: #1 to #4 VI) Golden Avenger Shake Up – Disassembled & Extremis Avengers Disassembled Iron Man Disassembled Issues: #84 to #89 Iron Man disassembled during Avengers Disassembled. New Avengers Issues: #1 to #6 Breakout story arc following Avengers Disassembled. Iron Man remains a major player in New Avengers throughout the 2000s, you can follow most easily with my Avengers collection guide. Iron Man: Extremis Issues: #1 to #6 Warren Ellis and Adi Granov crafted "Extremis" with their opening 6 issues. It's one of my absolute favorite Iron Man storylines, and the basis of Iron Man in the MCU and the character as we tend to know him today. House of M: Iron Man Issues: #1 to #3 For the full House of M reading order. Iron Man: Inevitable Issues: #1 to #6 Miniseries that gives full attention to Iron Man's rogues gallery. Iron Man Execute Program Issues: #7 to #12 The Knauff brothers take on post-Extremis Iron Man in their underrated time on the title. VII) Iron Man in Civil War and SHIELD Civil War Iron Man is one of the two most important players in Civil War, taking a stand against Captain America and company. In addition to Civil War and the Iron Man tie-ins below, I recommend Civil War: Frontline, Iron Man/Captain America: Casualties of War, and Amazing Spider-Man for the full look at Tony Stark's time in Civil War. Iron Man Issues: #13 to #14 Civil War tie-in issues. These two issues mark the end of the Iron Man numbering that began in 2004 (ending in 2007). Iron Man: Director of SHIELD Issues: #15 to #18 Civil War changes the status quo for Tony Stark, the world's new Top Cop. Iron Man retitles to Iron Man: Director of SHIELD, although the numbering continues, starting at issue #15. Mighty Avengers Issues: #1 to #6 Tony founds the Mighty Avengers in the wake of Civil War as the Initiative is taking full force. Iron Man: Director of SHIELD Issues: #19 to #20 World War Hulk tie-ins here as the Hulk returns for Tony and his pals in the Illuminati. Definitely worth reading World War Hulk for the impact on Iron Man as well. Iron Man: Director of SHIELD Issues: #21 to #28 + Annual #1, #29 to #32 Iron Man: Hypervelocity Issues: #1 to #6 Iron Man: Enter the Mandarin Issues: #1 to #6 Flashback look at the Mandarin's early years fighting Iron Man. Iron Man: Legacy of Doom Issues: #1 to #4 Rounds out the Iron Man vs. Doctor Doom Camelot trilogy. Iron Man: Viva Las Vegas Issues: #1 to #4 This feels like a hoax, but a four issue Marvel Knights story from Jon Favreau (director of 2008's Iron Man) and Adi Granov. First issue cover is basically Marvel U exploitative cheesecake, so if that's your bag… Invincible Iron Man Issues: #1 to #7 Matt Fraction and Salvador Larroca begin their four year run on Invincibile Iron Man. Iron Man: The End Issues: #1 A "final" Iron Man single issue. VIII) Iron Man – The Fraction & Larroca Era Secret Invasion Secret Invasion is a game-changer for post-Civil War Iron Man. Iron Man: Director of SHIELD – War Machine Takeover Issues: #33 to #35 Iron Man: Director of SHIELD wraps up as Secret Invasion hits and War Machine owns the title for the final three issues. Invincible Iron Man Issues: #8 to #19 Tony Star is the "World's Most Wanted" for the duration of Dark Reign! War Machine Issues: #1 to #12 Bewildering and strangely compelling War Machine solo series. Invincible Iron Man Issues: #20 to #24 Takes you through Siege and up to the Heroic Age. Indomitable Iron Man Black and White Issues: #1 Marvel takes a page from DC's Batman: Black and White, and gives us 48 pages of black and white Iron Man stories. Invincible Iron Man Issues: #25 to #33, Annual #1, #500 to #502 Believe it or not, the Invincible Iron Man annual is one of the best Mandarin stories of the decade. Iron Man Noir Issues: #1 to #4 Elseworlds noir title, most appealing because it comes from Scott Snyder just before he became one of the biggest comic writers in the world with New 52 Batman. Iron Man: Titanium Issues: #1 Iron Man Legacy Issues: #1 to #11 Iron Man: The Rapture Issues: #1 to #4 Iron Man 2.0 Issues: #1 to #4 You can't have two Iron Man movies without War Machine getting his own spinoff series. Invincible Iron Man – Fear Itself and Shattered Heroes Issues: #503 to #511 Iron Man 2.0 Issues: #5 to #7 Fear Itself tie-ins Iron Age Issues: Iron Age: Alpha, Iron Age #1 to #3, Iron Age: Omega From what I can tell, this mini event is not collected in its entirety on Marvel Unlimited. Iron Man 2.0 Issues: #7.1 to #12 Invincible Iron Man Issues: #512 to #527 Invincible Iron Man wraps up in dramatic fashion prior to the launch of Marvel NOW! He's seen better IX) Marvel NOW! Iron Man Marvel Now The Marvel NOW! guide will give you all Iron Man comics from 2012 to 2015. Be sure to also include Guardians of the Galaxy, as Iron Man plays a central role in the early issues. Likewise, Avengers and New Avengers will find Stark back in his Illuminati mode, and are very essential in leading to Secret Wars. X) All-New All-Different Iron Man For the full context of Iron Man's placement in the Marvel Universe you can check out the All-New All-Different Marvel reading order. Invincible Iron Man Vol. 1: Reboot (Invincible Iron Man #1 to #5) International Iron Man Vol. 1 (International Iron Man #1 to #3) Note that the Bendis & Maleev Iron Man crosses over with Civil War II during issue #4, so you should only read the first three issues prior to the mega crossover event! Civil War II Reading Order Civil War 2 is a major event for Iron Man, with Tony Stark once again leading a faction of heroes, this time against Captain Marvel (Carol Danvers). Invincible Iron Man: Ironheart Vol. 1 Rebooted Iron Man series with Invincible Iron Man #1 to #6. Infamous Iron Man Vol. 1 (Infamous Iron Man #1 to #6) Invincible Iron Man: Ironheart Vol. 2: Choices Collects: Invincible Iron Man (2016) #7-11 Riri Williams versus A.I. Tony Stark! Infamous Iron Man Vol. 2: The Absolution Of Doom Collects: Infamous Iron Man (2016) #7-12 Heroic Victor von Doom versus the evil Reed Richards of the Ultimate Universe, the Maker! Secret Empire Reading Order Tony Stark plays a prominent role during the 2017 Marvel event. Generations Collects: Generations: Banner Hulk & Totally Awesome Hulk #1, Generations: Captain Marvel & Captain Mar-Vell (2017) #1, Generations: Captain Marvel & Ms. Marvel (2017) #1, Generations: Hawkeye & Hawkeye (2017) #1, Generations: Iron Man & Ironheart (2017) #1, Generations: Miles Morales Spider-Man & Peter Parker Spider-Man (2017) #1, Generations: Phoenix & Jean Grey (2017) #1, Generations: Sam Wilson Captain America & Steve Rogers Captain America (2017) #1, Generations: The Unworthy Thor & The Mighty Thor (2017) #1, Generations: Wolverine & All-New Wolverine (2017) #1 Riri and Tony get a special moment out of time and space to celebrate their generational legacy. More of the Tony as Future Sorcerer Supreme story. Marvel Legacy Collects: Marvel Legacy (2017) #1, Marvel Legacy Primer pages, FOOM Magazine (2017) The mystery of Tony's comatose body begins here! Marvel Two-In-One Vol. 1: Fate Of The Four Collects: Marvel 2-In-One (2017) #1-6 Infamous Iron Man accompanies Thing and the Human Torch on a multiversal quest for their missing family members! Marvel Two-In-One Vol. 2: Next Of Kin Collects: Marvel 2-In-One (2017) #7-12, Annual #1 Out in the multiverse, Doom begins the backslide to his villainous ways. Invincible Iron Man: The Search For Tony Stark Collects: Invincible Iron Man (2016) #593-600 Tony's body goes missing (or does it?) as the Bendis era concludes. Marvel Fresh Start – Iron Man Comics Tony Stark: Iron Man Vol. 1: Self-Made Man Collects: Tony Stark: Iron Man (2018) #1-5 Tony's back in charge! The Dan Slott era begins here! For the full view of where Iron Man comics fit with, say, the Avengers, check out Comic Book Herald's complete Marvel Fresh Start reading order. Tony Stark: Iron Man Vol. 2: Stark Realities Collects: Tony Stark: Iron Man (2018) #6-11 The Controller returns as Tony battles on a new virtual realty platform: The eScape! Ironheart Vol. 1: Those With Courage Collects: Ironheart (2018) #1-5 Riri gets her own solo series! Tony Stark: Iron Man Vol. 3 Collects: Tony Stark: Iron Man (2018) #12-16 Featuring guest writer Gail Simone on War Of The Realms tie-ins! Ironheart Vol. 2 Collects: Ironheart (2018) #6-11 Guest starring the Unstoppable Wasp, Dr. Strange and more! Latest Additions: Tony Stark: Iron Man Vol. 4: The Ultron Agenda Collects: Tony Stark: Iron Man (2018) #15 to #19 Iron Man 2020 Collects: Iron Man 2020 (2020) #1 to #6 Black Cat (2019) Vol. 3: All Dressed Up by Jed MacKay Collects: Black Cat (2019) #11 to #12, Black Cat Annual (2019) #1, FCBD 2020 (Spider-Man/Venom) #1 Iron Man Vol. 1: Big Iron by Christopher Cantwell and Cafu Cafu Collects: Iron Man (2020) #1 to #5 Iron Man Vol. 2: Books of Korvac II — Overclock by Christopher Cantwell and Cafu Cafu Collects: Iron Man (2020) #6 to #11 Iron Man Vol. 3: Books of Korvac III — Cosmic Iron Man by Christopher Cantwell and Cafu Cafu Collects: Iron Man (2020) #12 to #19 Iron Man Vol. 4: Source Control by Christopher Cantwell and Cafu Cafu Collects: Iron Man (2020) #20 to #25 King In Black: Iron Man/Doom Check of CBH's full King in Black Reading Order! Dark Ages by Taylor & Coello Collects: Dark Ages (2021) #1 to #6, FCBD 2020 (X-Men/Dark Ages) #1 Shang-Chi Vol. 2: Shang-Chi vs. The Marvel Universe by Gene Luen Yang and Dike Ruan Collects: Shang-Chi (2021) #1 to #6 The Darkhold Collects: The Darkhold Alpha (2021) #1, The Darkhold: Blade (2021) #1, The Darkhold: Wasp (2021) #1, The Darkhold: Iron Man (2021) #1, The Darkhold: Black Bolt (2021) #1, The Darkhold: Spider-Man (2021) #1, The Darkhold Omega (2020) #1 Death of Doctor Strange: Avengers Check out CBH's full Death of Doctor Strange Reading Order! Captain America/Iron Man: The Armor & The Shield by Landy & Unzueta Collects: Captain America/Iron Man (2021) #1 to #5 Iron Cat Collects: Iron Cat #1 to #5 Secret Invasion (2022) Collects: Secret Invasion (2022) #1 to #5 Invincible Iron Man Vol. 1: Demon In The Armor by Gerry Duggan and Juan Frigeri Collects: Invincible Iron Man (2022) #1 to #6 Invincible Iron Man Vol by Gerry Duggan and Juan Frigeri Collects: Invincible Iron Man (2022) #7 to #14 No collected volume yet as of 11.13.23 I Am Iron Man by Ayodele & Akande Collects: I Am Iron Man #1 to #5 X-Men #23 Ultimate Invasion Collects: Ultimate Invasion #1 to #4 Check out CBH's full Ultimate Invasion Reading Order! X-Men #26 ComicsPublished August 16, 2020Have you tried Marvel Unlimited yet? It's your all-access pass to over 27,000 Marvel comics, all available at your fingertips. Sign up now and get your first year for $60! READ MORE ICONIC IRON MAN HERE! Tony Stark is Iron Man. He is also a genius-level billionaire industrialist with the best toy box in the Marvel Universe. Whether forging the future as the CEO of Stark Unlimited or building a new set of armor as Iron Man, this self-made Avenger is defined by a smart mouth and an even sharper mind. Since his debut in 1963's TALES OF SUSPENSE #39, Stark has slipped up, triumphed, failed, and even died a couple of times. (Don't worry, it didn't take.) He has also been humbled—but not too much. If you love Tony Stark from the screen or the comics, you'll want to check out these Iron Man starter stories on Marvel Unlimited. All are defining moments in his fifty-five-plus year history and are good jumping-on points for new readers. FIRST APPEARANCE (TALES OF SUSPENSE #39) Start at the very beginning. Although a time capsule of an issue, this origin established the fatal injury that first required Stark to don the Iron Man suit. Jet-setting socialite Stark had a significant dose of reality when he was kidnapped and made a working hostage by the terrorist Wong-Chu. With shrapnel lodged inches from his heart, Stark and Professor Ho Yinsen used their (likely) last days to escape their captors and create the first Iron Man. This "Mark 1" armor was loaded if not a little clunky. But for a first draft built by a dying man, it was astounding. Stark had bulletproof access to destroy Wong-Chu's operation, starting with its leader. More notably, Ho Yinsen's sacrifice remained Stark's constant marker as a hero. SOLO STAR (1968's IRON MAN #1) Looking for a retro read? Try Iron Man's first titular series. Five years after he assembled in AVENGERS (1963) #1, Marvel's original futurist launched into this solo run, now suited up in the classic red and gold. And in the first issue alone, Stark went up against the machinations of A.I.M., and three Iron Men… all replicated from Stark's tech. In this now-famous arc by David Michelinie, Bob Layton, John Romita, Jr., and Carmine Infantino, Iron Man faced an implacable personal demon—alcoholism. After a stressful series of events involving Namor and the Roxxon Corporation, Tony Stark found his resolve waning. Then, a public armor malfunction ended in death for a diplomat, sending him completely over the edge. In a matter of days, Stark's carefully constructed image took a careening nosedive. And, as Tony turned to drinking for stress relief and comfort, those closest to him struggled to break his pattern of addiction. One of Stark's darkest chapters, but an important one. In this 21st century reboot, Stark underwent a 2.0 tune-up following an imprisonment in Afghanistan. He returned to the fold as Iron Man, now on the cusp of a "New World Order." In the "Extremis" arc, a nanite serum was introduced to the weapons market by the Futurepharm Corporation, a mega-industry with military intent. And, once their Extremis tech evolved into a virus, it overtook human biology giving way to meta-human makeovers – with explosive results. In this six-part saga, Iron Man combated the next frontier of war, packaged as a utopian promise. CIVIL WAR (CIVIL WAR #1) Captain America. Iron Man. Whose side are you on? In CIVIL WAR, hundreds were left dead in Stamford, Connecticut, casualties of a nuclear superhuman incident that left a chasm of grief and confusion in the Super Hero community. As the decision to monitor heroes loomed large, Iron Man, staunch supporter of the Superhuman Registration Act, opposed the underground resistance of Captain America, leader of the Anti-Registration camp. One of the most iconic battles in comics history, former friends became bitter enemies in a Civil War that was anything but. Read the full event! [RELATED: Our 'Civil War' Scoreboard] DIRECTOR OF S.H.I.E.L.D. (2008's INVINCIBLE IRON MAN #1) Fans of Marvel Studios' Iron Man: Read this series. Iron Man went full throttle in this Eisner-winner by Matt Fraction and Salvador Larroca that saw Stark in a new day job—as Director of S.H.I.E.L.D.! Assuming this command after the events of CIVIL WAR, a relatively cool and collected Stark faced imminent danger in the form of Ezekiel Stane, son of Tony's greatest nemesis, Iron Monger. Obadiah's son was younger, faster, and even a touch brighter than Tony, a true blow to the ego. Zeke was also revealed as the mastermind behind a series of global arc reactor attacks – the \same tech that powers Iron Man. This is also the series that gave Pepper Potts her first Rescue armor! IRON MAN: BELIEVE (2012's IRON MAN #1) This series penned by Kieron Gillen kicked things off with the worst scenario possible. When the Extremis tech was re-released on the black market, Stark tapped into his greatest streak of brilliance to contain its spread. Four separate buyers, four evil agendas. All set to a race against the clock that drew in Tony's closest allies and friends. This run also gave us "The Secret Origin of Tony Stark," played out in IRON MAN #9-17. An arc that covered the hidden history of Stark's parentage, its outcome was as shocking for readers as it was for Tony. The interplanetary Avengers! In one of our favorite team lineups ever, Captain America and Iron Man assembled a crew of heroes to address Earth-bound and intergalactic threats. Big risks, big ideas, big idealism—any fan of the cinematic Avengers will want to start here. Continue with NEW AVENGERS (2013), or read right through this series into Jonathan Hickman's SECRET WARS (2015). RETURN TO FORM (2015's INVINCIBLE IRON MAN #1) Sleek, stylish, and purely cinematic. From the creators that brought you ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN comes cutting-edge armor, international danger, and the reemergence of an old villain with a new face. Intrigued? You will be after a shocker in the first issue. This ongoing series also collided with the CIVIL WAR II event, a superhuman ethics battle waged between Iron Man and Captain Marvel over the right to protect, or prevent, the future. Continue with INVINCIBLE IRON MAN (2016) for Riri Williams' (AKA Ironheart's) solo turn in armor. THE BIG THREE (2018's AVENGERS #1) Iron Man. Captain America. Thor Odinson. These three foundational Avengers have been to Hel, space, and thwarted time-traveling/interdimensional beings alike. But when facing the 2,000-foot-tall space gods known as the Dark Celestials, these heavy hitters needed their most varied team yet. In one of the Avengers' most cosmically-epic arcs, acclaimed THOR writer Jason Aaron teamed with artists Ed McGuinness, Paco Medina, David Curiel, and Mark Morales to introduce the Avengers of prehistory, the first class of Earth's Mightiest Heroes from 1,000,000 BC. STARK: UNLIMITED (TONY STARK: IRON MAN #1) This 2018 run focused on the man outside the armor. It also marked a new beginning for Stark's business reach, and it's a fresh start for readers too. Backed by a team of high-profile engineering and robotics experts, Tony founds Stark Unlimited to share his vision for the future on a greater scale. As always, this venture finds a few critics and rivals. It's also the lead-in to the IRON MAN 2020 event currently playing out on Marvel Unlimited! [RELATED: Who Is Arno Stark?] Want to read more comic stories featuring the Armored Avenger? Join Marvel Unlimited today! Marvel Unlimited, Marvel's digital comics subscription service, offers members unlimited access to over 27,000 issues of Marvel's classic and newer titles, delivered digitally through your desktop web browser and the award-winning Marvel Unlimited mobile app. Follow Marvel Unlimited on Twitter and Facebook to stay tuned in to weekly announcements, articles, and more, all at @MarvelUnlimited. Follow us today to join the conversation with thousands of fellow fans, and let us know what you're reading! When you want to start reading comics from Batman, there's so much material that you might not know which are the best, nor where to start with. Maybe due to the fact that it's one of the most human superheroes around, maybe because of it's great gallery of villains, or even to the more than […] If you have been reading articles from this site, it's no secret that The Sandman is one of my all time favorite comics. The Sandman created a universe of its own, with many titles and spin-offs that are worth reading to expand the experience of reading the main book. In this article, we'll explore which […] Because of the Marvel Cinematic Universe, Iron Man is experiencing a level of mainstream love and recognition he's never had outside of devoted comic book circles. While it may seem hard to believe today, Kevin Feige's decision to kick off an expansive film franchise with Iron Man in 2008 was considered a pretty risky move, as the character was never really seen as an A-lister like Hulk or Wolverine. Thanks to the pitch-perfect performance of Robert Downey Jr., the gamble paid off, and the MCU is now one of the most lucrative film franchises of all time. And it all started with a little movie about a guy who builds a red and gold suit in his garage. Robert Downey Jr. may have said goodbye to the legendary role in 2019's "Avengers: Endgame," but luckily for fans of the high-tech hero, there are still decades of "Iron Man" comics to enjoy, many of which have served as direct inspiration for the cinematic version of the character. Because of the decades of "Iron Man" comics that have been published, it can be a daunting task for the casual reader to simply pick up an issue and understand the many years of backstory. That's why we've created this handy guide of the 15 best "Iron Man" comics for you to read so you can instantly see what's made the character so enduring for more than half a century. "Iron Man: Hypervelocity" #1 — 6 This 2007 miniseries sees Tony Stark build a wicked new suit that not only improves his physical speed but his intellectual speed as well. You see, Stark figures that if his body is injured or incapacitated in some form, it shouldn't stop Iron Man from saving the day. So Stark builds a digital version of his intellect, personality, and brain waves and uploads it into his latest armor. However, the suit's technology allows its artificial intelligence to grow at a rapid rate and gain sentience, which attracts the attention of S.H.I.E.L.D.'s new hero-hunting paramilitary team. "Hypervelocity" is an incredibly fun story that does a great job exploring the idea of an Iron Man without Tony Stark. There's a lot more technical jargon than the typical "Iron Man" comic, which may be a bit cumbersome for those looking for a breezy read, but it really does add to the verisimilitude of the plot. However, the story also has plenty of character development, as it dives deep into his addictions, namely alcohol, women, and tech-tinkering. As this story doesn't have a lot of connection to mainstream "Iron Man" canon, it's a great jumping-on point for casual readers. "Iron Man" Vol. 1 #190 — 200 While Obadiah Stane didn't suit up as the Iron Monger until the climax of this saga in issue #200, he'd spent much of his time in the comics gradually wrecking Tony Stark's life. During this time, Stane pushed a sober Stark back into alcoholism and took over Stark International. With Stark essentially living in the gutter, his close friend James Rhodes takes over as Iron Man. Meanwhile, Stane uses his powerful position to engage in unethical business dealings and hires a group of scientists to look at Stark's Iron Man suit designs to build a set of armor that's even more advanced and dangerous. This years-long storyline is a terrific example of a classic heroic plot: Take away everything that made the hero great until they're reduced to almost nothing and watch as they rise stronger and wiser than ever before. The "Iron Monger Saga" was one of the biggest shake-ups in Tony Stark's life, giving him his most difficult challenge yet with ramifications that are still felt today. Jeff Bridges brought Obadiah Stane to life in 2008's "Iron Man," which included some elements from this storyline. "Tales of Suspense" #39 Every great superhero has an equally great origin story, and Iron Man is no exception. Tony Stark is a wealthy inventor and industrialist who's been building some advanced weaponry for the military. He arrives in Vietnam to demonstrate some of his newest weapons but accidentally sets off a tripwire while in the jungle. The resulting explosion leaves Tony wounded, with shrapnel that's dangerously close to his heart. He is then abducted by the ruthless dictator Wong-Chu and forced to build weapons for him on the condition that he gives Tony the help he needs to take care of his injury. Tony agrees but secretly forges a metal suit that he uses to bust out of his prison, take down Wong-Chu, and begin his career as a superhero. While the main villain and setting of this story may not be familiar to fans of the MCU, the overall plot probably does, as 2008's "Iron Man" lifts quite a bit from this 1963 story. Elements of it are pretty dated, but quite a bit of it still holds up and perfectly introduces many aspects of the character that live on today. "Iron Man" Vol. 4 #1 — 6 Iron Man's classic origin story is old hat in some ways, but that's totally fine, as writer Warren Ellis and artist Adi Granov took it upon themselves to update it while also fitting it in the context of a killer story: "Extremis." The plot deals with Tony Stark wrestling with his failed mission to improve the world through technology, as Extremis, an experimental military serum designed to replicate the serum that gave Captain America his abilities, is being used by a terrorist group. To confront an enemy who can breathe fire and heal from almost any wound, Tony Stark must upgrade himself like never before. "Extremis" gives Iron Man a much-needed reboot, as the character was mired in years of complicated continuity and questionable changes to his status. Not only did Ellis and Granov bring the character into the 21st century with stunning results, but they also paved the way for Robert Downey Jr.'s iconic take of ol' Shellhead in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Both "Iron Man" and "Iron Man 3" borrow liberally from this storyline (with Guy Pearce playing Aldrich Killian) and for good reason. "Iron Man" Vol. 1 #225 — #232 "Armor Wars" kicks off with Tony Stark discovering that his technology has been floating around on the black market for some time — well before he built his current armor. With the help of Scott Lang, aka Ant-Man, he learns that industrial espionage expert and supervillain Spymaster got ahold of his tech and sold it to Tony's industrialist rival Justin Hammer. Tony suits up and goes on a quest to take down every villain who's been using his designs before they can do real harm. However, his risky methods attract the attention of Nick Fury and S.H.I.E.L.D., Captain America, and the West Coast Avengers, who all believe he's being reckless. "Armor Wars" sees Iron Man go on the offense for a change. At this point in his life, Tony Stark is contemplating the potential for damage and devastation his technology has and is focusing on ensuring that his work helps mankind. In his pursuit to bring about peace and safety, Tony sometimes goes over the edge to the point of alienating his allies, making this one of the more morally complex stories in the "Iron Man" canon. This arc will also be adapted into a live-action miniseries on Disney+. "Iron Man" Vol. 1 #120 — 128 After a team-up with Namor the Submariner against soldiers from the corrupt Roxxon Oil Corporation, Iron Man flies home only to experience a weird glitch with his suit. The suit glitches again, this time in public, which results in the accidental death of a foreign ambassador. While Iron Man is ultimately cleared of all charges, Tony is stuck with the mystery of who's sabotaging his armor and trying to ruin his life and reputation. He turns to alcohol to deal with the stress of his life, but this only compounds his problems and strains his relationships with those closest to him. We're used to superheroes dealing with supervillains who can be punched into submission. However, it's not often we see superheroes dealing with the one who can cause the most damage — themselves. "Demon in a Bottle" came out in the 1970s, an era that saw superhero comics begin to address darker real-world topics. This story of addiction and its effects on those around us is often uncomfortable, yet its poignancy holds up today. Some plot elements from "Demon in a Bottle" were featured in "Iron Man 2" (although Marvel Studios refused to include any of its darker moments). If you or anyone you know is struggling with addiction issues, help is available. Visit the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration website or contact SAMHSA's National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357). "Iron Man" Vol. 1 #237 "Armor Wars" may have seen Iron Man successfully retrieve his stolen tech, but his reckless actions have left him in some legal trouble. However, the U.S. government is willing to drop the many lawsuits against Iron Man if he agrees to investigate the mysterious murders of scientists stationed in a NASA space lab. After upgrading his suit to allow him to survive in space, Iron Man heads to the heavens and arrives at the orbital lab where he discovers that the murderer is a genetically engineered creature designed by A.I.M. in an old Stark space station they h