

# CLASSICS OF SCIENCE FICTION

Here we present some of the most classic, seminal works of the genre. Naturally, any such list can't be entirely comprehensive, but if you consider yourself a Science Fiction reader, then you will want to read the books listed here (based on the content of [Strictly Science Fiction](#)).

## [Foundation](#) by Isaac Asimov (1951)

When the Galactic Empire started dying, a great psycho-historian set up the foundation colony to encourage art, science, and technology and preserve human culture. Also try the rest of the [Foundation series](#) as well as the [Robots series](#).

## [The Demolished Man](#) by Alfred Bester (1953)

In the year 2301, the wealthiest man in the universe is determined to commit murder in a world in which telepaths are used to detect possible crimes before they can happen. This novel won the first ever Hugo award. Also try [The Stars My Destination](#) (1956).

## [A Case of Conscience](#) by James Blish (1958)

Father Ruiz-Sanchez is a dedicated man, a priest who is also a scientist. He has found no insoluble conflicts in his beliefs or ethics ... until he is sent to Lithia. There he comes upon a race of aliens who are admirable in every way except for their total reliance on cold reason; they are incapable of faith or belief.

## [Fahrenheit 451](#) by Ray Bradbury (1953)

Guy Montag was a fireman whose job it was to start fires. The system was simple. Books were for burning ... along with the houses in which they were hidden. Then Guy met a professor who told him of a future in which people could think ... and he suddenly realized what he had to do! Also try Bradbury's classic [The Martian Chronicles](#) (1950).

## [Ender's Game](#) by Orson Scott Card (1985)

The Earth is under attack and the survival of the human species depends on a military genius who can defeat the alien "buggers." Recruited for military training, Andrew "Ender" Wiggin's childhood ends the moment he enters his new home: Battle School. Also try [Speaker for the Dead](#) (1986).

## [2001: A Space Odyssey](#) by Arthur C. Clarke (1968)

Two astronauts find their journey into space and their very lives jeopardized by the jealousy of an extraordinary computer named Hal. Also try [Rendezvous with Rama](#) (1973).

## [Babel 17](#) by Samuel Delaney (1966)

The fascinating tale of a famous poet bent on deciphering a secret language that is the key to the enemy's deadly force, a task that requires she travel with a splendidly improbable crew to the site of the next attack. Also try [The Einstein Intersection](#) (1967).

## [Man in the High Castle](#) by Philip K. Dick (1962)

It's America in 1962--where slavery is legal and the few surviving Jews hide anxiously under assumed names. All because some twenty years earlier America lost a war -- and is now occupied jointly by Nazi Germany and Japan.

## [Alas Babylon](#) by Pat Frank (1959)

Against all odds, a small town is spared the immediate and worst effects of nuclear attack. But, as staples and services disappear: first the phone, then money, then gas, then electricity, then food and medicine, then running water, they cope with a world in which a thousand years of civilization have been stripped away.

## [Neuromancer](#) by William Gibson (1984)

Case, a burned out computer whiz, is asked to steal a security code that is locked in the most heavily guarded databank in the solar system. This novel is credited with sparking the term "cyberpunk."

## [The Forever War](#) by Joe Haldeman (1975)

Drafted into the ranks of Earth's interstellar warriors, private William Mandella finds his fight against the Taurans secondary to the side-effects of faster-than-light space travel, which affects the rate at which he ages. Also try [Forever Peace](#) (1997) and [Forever Free](#) (1999).

## [Stranger in a Strange Land](#) by Robert Heinlein (1961)

Valentine Michael Smith is the stranger. A young human, reared by Martians on Mars, he is brought to Earth where he must adapt not only to the planet's strong gravitational field and rich atmosphere, but also to its social injustices and its population's foibles. Also try [Starship Troopers](#) (1959) and [The Moon is a Harsh Mistress](#) (1966).



### **Dune by Frank Herbert (1965)**

Set on the desert planet Arrakis, Dune is the story of the boy Paul Atreides, who would become the mysterious man known as Muad'dib. He would avenge the traitorous plot against his family, and would bring to fruition mankind's most ancient and unattainable dream. Also try the rest of the [Dune Series](#).

### **The Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula K. Le Guin (1969)**

Genly Ai, an Earth ambassador, is sent to the planet of Gethen, whose inhabitants are androgynous. Through his relationship with a native, Estraven, Ai gains understanding of the consequences of his fixed sexual orientation, fidelity, betrayal, xenophobia and Gethenian life. Also try [The Dispossessed](#) (1974).

### **Solaris by Stanislaw Lem (1970)**

A scientist examining the ocean that covers the surface of the planet Solaris is forced to confront the incarnation of a painful, hitherto unconscious memory, inexplicably created by the ocean.

### **Out of the Silent Planet by C.S. Lewis (1943)**

Dr. Ransom is abducted by a megalomaniacal physicist and taken via spaceship to the red planet of Malacandra. He is in need of a human sacrifice, and Ransom would seem to fit the bill. Once on the planet, however, Ransom eludes his captor, risking his life and his chances of returning to Earth. *The Space Trilogy* continues with [Perelandra](#) (1943).

### **The Ship Who Sang by Anne McCaffrey (1969)**

Helva had been born human, but only her brain had been saved and implanted into the titanium body of an intergalactic scout ship. But first she had to choose a human partner, to soar with her through the daring adventures and exhilarating escapades in space.

### **A Canticle for Leibowitz by Walter M. Miller, Jr. (1961)**

In the Utah desert, Brother Francis of the Albertian Order of Leibowitz has made a miraculous discovery: the relics of the martyr Isaac Leibowitz himself, including the blessed blueprint and the sacred shopping list. They may provide a bright ray of hope in a terrifying age of darkness.

### **The Mote in God's Eye by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle (1974)**

From a star called the Mote, an alien ship ventures to the Empires of Man, but its pilot is accidentally killed before the races can meet. The Empire responds with a mission to the Mote: one ship carrying civilian scientists, the other bristling with weapons; teetering between thirst for knowledge and fear of the unknown. Also try Niven's [Ringworld](#) (1970).

### **The Time Traders by Andre Norton (1958)**

In two related adventures, Ross Murdock travels in time to Britain in 2000 B.C. to uncover the base from which Russians are gathering weapons, then investigates an alien spaceship wrecked in North America during prehistoric times. Also try [The Solar Queen](#) (1955).

### **Frankenstein by Mary W. Shelley (1818)**

A monster assembled by a scientist from parts of dead bodies develops a mind of his own as he learns to loathe himself and his creator. This novel marked the birth of the Science Fiction and Horror genres.

### **Journey to the Center of the Earth by Jules Verne (1864)**

When Axel deciphers an old parchment that describes a secret passage through a volcano to the center of the earth, nothing will stop his eccentric Uncle Lidenbrock. With silent Hans the guide, the two men embark on a perilous, astonishing, terrifying journey through the subterranean world! Also try [20,000 Leagues Under the Sea](#) (1870).

### **War of the Worlds by H.G. Wells (1898)**

H. G. Wells invented the myth of invasion from outer space. Martians land near London, conquering all before them, and ruin the metropolis; the fate of civilization and even of the human race remains in doubt until the very last. Also try [The Time Machine](#) (1895) and [The Island of Dr. Moreau](#) (1896).

### **Lord of Light by Roger Zelazny (1968)**

On a colony planet, a band of men has gained control of technology, made themselves immortal, and now rule their world as the gods of the Hindu pantheon. Only one dares oppose them: he who was once Siddhartha and is now Mahasamatman. Binder of Demons, Lord of Light.

\* Classic authors such as [Edgar Rice Burroughs](#), [Harlan Ellison](#), [Fritz Leiber](#), [Jack Williamson](#), [John Wyndham](#), and more are available to order, either through our catalog or [Inter-Library Loan](#), please ask us.

