

r/Outlander FAQ

by u/basedonthenovel

Non-Spoiler TV Questions

I love the TV show, should I read the books?

Yes, give them a try!

I love the TV show, but I tried reading the books and didn't like them. Do I have to read them?

Of course not. The TV show stands on its own. If the books aren't to your taste, don't worry about it.

I watched the available seasons of the TV show and I want to read the books now. Can I jump in with the next corresponding book (e.g. start *Drums of Autumn* after finishing season 3) instead of starting from the beginning?

You can, but book fans don't recommend it. There is so much more plot and detail in the books (not to mention differences from the show) that you'll enjoy them more if you read them in order.

Which is better, the TV show or the books?

A question like that can't have an objective answer, so let's put it this way -- the show is a very good TV show and the books are very good books. Again, it's OK if you prefer one over the other.

Non-Spoiler Book Questions

How many books are there?

As of 2018, there are 8 books in the main series.

There are also various spin-off novel/las starring Lord John Grey and other novellas and short stories featuring supporting characters in the Outlander universe.

Is the forthcoming ninth book going to be the last in the series?

No. Author Diana Gabaldon says that there will be 10 books.

When is book 9 coming out?

Diana says that *Go Tell the Bees That I Am Gone* will be finished sometime in 2019.

Where do the Lord John books fit in?

The Lord John books all happen during the time period between *Dragonfly in Amber* and *Voyager*. They are all self-contained stories, so technically you don't have to read them in any order. That said, a good way to do it is to read them in the order they were published. Also, it's a good idea to read *Lord John and the Brotherhood of the Blade* and *The Scottish Prisoner* before you read *An Echo in the Bone*, since *Echo* features characters introduced/developed in those books.

In what order should I read the Lord John books and other spinoff stories? Can I read chronologically in-universe?

You CAN read them in order of the story chronology but it's best if you don't do so strictly. Scroll down to the bottom of this post for a detailed in-universe chronological order!

It's safest to read everything in the order in which it was published (see the detailed publishing order at the bottom of this post). But technically, the only books it's essential to read in order are the main series books (*Outlander*, *Dragonfly in Amber*, *Voyager*, etc.)

I've read the first 3 books in the series but am having trouble getting through books 4 and/or 5. Do I have to keep reading?

Again, you don't have to do anything you don't want to do. Some people don't like that Diana adds new POV (point-of-view, meaning chapters are told from their perspective) every book. The world of the books expands as the series goes on, and most book fans love that. If you don't, that's OK. However, it's worth noting that many people find the middle books to be more slow-going on the first read and then find that the later books end up becoming some of their favorites of the whole series.

Are there audiobooks of the series?

Yes, and they are excellent! Make sure you listen to the unabridged versions narrated by Davina Porter. Most of the novellas and Lord John novels have been made into audiobooks as well, with different narrators.

What do the various abbreviations mean?

DiA = Dragonfly in Amber

DoA = Drums of Autumn

TFC = The Fiery Cross

ABOSAA = A Breath of Snow and Ashes

ECHO = An Echo in the Bone (which can also be abbreviated as AEITB, though ECHO is easier to type)

MOBY = Written In My Own Heart's Blood. This unusual short form was invented by Diana Gabaldon while she was writing the book, where WIMOHB = MOHB = pronounced "Moh-bee" = MOBY

BJR = Black Jack Randall

LJG = Lord John Grey

Spoiler TV Questions

[SPOILER SPACE SPOILER SPACE SPOILER] Who is the “ghost” Highlander that Frank sees in the first episode (and the first book) of *Outlander*?

Diana has confirmed that it is Jamie’s ghost, but not why or how he’s there. She says those questions won’t be answered until the final book. (Source: <http://www.dianagabaldon.com/resources/faq/faq-about-the-characters/>)

Spoiler Book Questions

[SPOILER SPACE SPOILER SPACE SPOILER] Is “Heughan the smith” in *Written in My Own Heart’s Blood* a reference to Sam Heughan?

Yes it is. As well, one of Ellen Fraser’s middle names is “Caitriona” in honour of Caitriona Balfe, and the character of Mr. Menzies is named for Tobias Menzies.

Controversial Issues in the Books/Show

Here are links to some threads on some of the most debated topics in the Outlanderverse.

Sexual Assault

"Rape issues":

https://www.reddit.com/r/Outlander/comments/6mhalo/spoilers_all_rape_issues/

"I desperately want to like the books but...":

https://www.reddit.com/r/Outlander/comments/664x9r/spoilers_outlander_i_desperately_want_to_like_the/

Mr. Willoughby/Yi Tien Cho

"Is anyone else disappointed with Diana over Mr. Willoughby?":

https://www.reddit.com/r/Outlander/comments/6sga82/spoilers_voyager_is_anyone_else_disappointed_with/

"Mr. Willoughby must be changed for the show.":

https://www.reddit.com/r/Outlander/comments/62d8sj/spoilers_voyager_mr_willoughby_must_be_changed/

Miscellaneous Non-Spoiler Questions

Did you know that the actress Rose Leslie (best known as Ygritte on *Game of Thrones*) is a direct descendant of Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat?

If we didn't before, we do now!

OUTLANDER UNIVERSE CHRONOLOGY

Here is a strictly chronological order of the novels, novellas and short stories in the Outlander universe. "Main series" books are bold and all-caps; other novel-length books are bolded. The rest are novellas or short stories. (If you're planning to read chronologically, make sure to read the notes below the list!):

"Virgins" ^{^(1)}

"A Leaf on the Wind of All Hallows" ^{^(1)}

OUTLANDER

DRAGONFLY IN AMBER

"A Fugitive Green" ^{^(3)}

VOYAGER

"Lord John and the Hellfire Club" ^{^(2)}

Lord John and the Private Matter

"Lord John and the Succubus" ^{^(2)}

Lord John and the Brotherhood of the Blade

"Lord John and the Haunted Soldier" ^{^(2)}

"The Custom of the Army"

The Scottish Prisoner

"A Plague of Zombies"

"Beseiged" ^{^(3)}

DRUMS OF AUTUMN

THE FIERY CROSS

A BREATH OF SNOW AND ASHES

AN ECHO IN THE BONE

"The Space Between"

WRITTEN IN MY OWN HEART'S BLOOD

(1) Both of these stories happen before the events of OUTLANDER, but you shouldn't read them first. "Virgins" can be read any time after OUTLANDER; "All Hallows" is best read between ECHO and MOBY.

(2) These stories are collected in a volume called Lord John and the Hand of the Devils.

(3) "A Fugitive Green" is best read later in the series, after you've read books like The Scottish Prisoner and ECHO, which feature the characters Minnie and Hal. "Fugitive" and "Besieged" were the new stories published in the collection Seven Stones to Stand or Fall, which collects the stories not otherwise collected in Hand of the Devils.

See also: [Chronology of the Outlander Series](http://DianaGabaldon.com/Chronology-of-the-Outlander-Series) at DianaGabaldon.com

PUBLISHING ORDER

This is the order in which all novels, novellas and short-stories were released. Some of the novellas and short-stories appeared in other compilations and as stand-alone ebooks.

OUTLANDER (1991)

DRAGONFLY IN AMBER (1992)

VOYAGER (1993)

DRUMS OF AUTUMN (1996)

Lord John and the Hellfire Club (1998)Δ

THE FIERY CROSS (2001)

Lord John and the Private Matter (2003)

"Lord John and the Succubus" (2003)Δ

A BREATH OF SNOW AND ASHES (2005)

Lord John and the Brotherhood of the Blade (2007)

"Lord John and the Haunted Soldier" (2007)Δ

AN ECHO IN THE BONE (2009)

"A Leaf on the Wind of All Hallows" (2010)†

"The Custom of the Army" (2010)†

The Scottish Prisoner (2011)

"A Plague of Zombies" (2013)†

"The Space Between" (2013)†

"Virgins" (2013)†

WRITTEN IN MY OWN HEART'S BLOOD (2014)

"A Fugitive Green" (2017)†

"Besieged" (2017)†

ΔCollected in Lord John and the Hand of Devil

†Collected in Seven Stones to Stand or Fall

USEFUL LINKS TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

[Outlander Wiki](#)

[Diana Gabaldon Official Website](#)

[Diana Gabaldon Board at The Lit Forum](#) (Formerly the Compuserve's Books and Writer's Community (Diana posts here frequently, gives inside info about the books and the show, and answers questions))