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## Iron Man (Anthony Stark)

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**Universe**  
Marvel Universe

**Real Name**  
Anthony Edward "Tony" Stark

**Aliases**  
"Shellhead," "Golden Avenger," "Tetsujin"; formerly Crimson Dynamo, Iron Knight, Hogan Potts, "Spare Parts Man"; impersonated Cobalt Man (Ralph Roberts)

**Identity**  
Publicly Known

**Citizenship**  
U.S.A.

**Place of Birth**  
Long Island, New York

**First Appearance**  
Tales of Suspense #39 (1963)

**Origin**  
Tales of Suspense #39 (1963)

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A "cool exec with a heart of steel," Tony Stark is the invincible Iron Man, fighting for justice as a modern day knight in high-tech armor.

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### Before the Iron Mask



Anthony "Tony" Stark was born to Howard Anthony Stark and Maria Collins Carbonell Stark, owners of the prominent US firm, Stark Industries. As a boy, Tony was fascinated with building and controlling machines. At the age of 15 Tony entered the undergraduate electrical engineering program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and graduated with two master's degrees by age 19. Tony went to work for Stark Industries, but showed more interest in living a reckless playboy lifestyle than using his engineering skills. At the age of 21, Tony inherited Stark Enterprises when his parents were killed in a car accident secretly orchestrated by rival corporation Republic Oil (later ROXXON). Still lacking in business acumen, Tony promoted secretary Virginia "Pepper" Potts to be his executive assistant and left the majority of his workload on her so that he could avoid what he saw as a burden.

### A Self-Made Superhero

Tony personally attended a field test of his military hardware at one of his international plants; however, soon after his arrival Stark's party was attacked by a gang of terrorists led by the Sin-Cong revolutionary Wong Chu. During the skirmish, a land mine went off and lodged a piece of shrapnel near Tony's heart. Taken back to Wong-Chu's camp, Tony shared a cell with Professor Ho Yinsen, a world-famous physicist. Wong-Chu demanded that the two scientists

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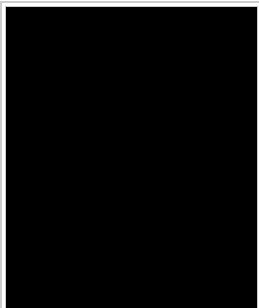
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The Many Armors of Iron Man

develop advanced weaponry for his forces. Knowing that he could not live long with the shrapnel so close to his heart, Tony proposed that he and Yinsen devote their gifts to creating one of the battlesuits he had been developing, equipped with a magnetic field generator to prevent the shrapnel from reaching his heart. The armor they created became the first true Iron Man armor and was equipped with crude magnetic weaponry for defense. While the armor's battery was being powered, some of Wong-Chu's men attempted to break in on the proceedings. Yinsen went to create a diversion and was shot to death by Wong-Chu's men. When the battery had finished charging, Tony went into battle as Iron Man and tore Wong-Chu's camp apart. He eventually returned to the USA with the aid of US Marine James "Rhodey" Rhodes. Tony offered Rhodey a job with his company should he ever need one.

At first, Tony found his new life a torment; his armor's chest plate had to be worn constantly and required frequent recharging. He kept the armor a secret from everyone, including his fiancée, Joanna Nivena. Turning suicidal and drinking heavily, Tony was supported by Joanna, with whom he shared his secret identity. Joanna encouraged him to use his armor as a

super hero, but ultimately called off the engagement knowing Tony would not be the family man she desired.

Tony worked to improve the Iron Man armor and claimed Iron Man was Tony Stark's personal bodyguard to disguise his identity. Tony played a dual-role with the formation of the Avengers both as the sponsor and, as Iron Man, as a founding member along with Thor, Ant-Man (Henry Pym), the Wasp (Janet van Dyne), and the Hulk. While pursuing Namor the Sub-Mariner, Iron Man came across the comatose body of Captain America (Steve Rogers) Rogers), the famous World War II super hero, preserved on ice. Revived, Captain America joined the Avengers and became an important teammate and friend to Tony. Later, Tony helped establish the international super-spy agency SHIELD to combat terrorist threats.

During these early years as a super hero, Iron Man battled Mandarin, Hawkeye, and the Black Widow(Natasha Romanova).

## A Change of Heart

Tony found himself drawn to the beautiful Whitney Frost, but she proved to be the daughter of the Avengers' foe Count Nefaria and a high-ranking member of the Maggia crime syndicate. Seeking to steal Tony's inventions, she pitted agents such as Whiplash (Mark Scarlotti) and Gladiator (Melvin Potter) against him. After using one of his Life Model Decoys (LMDs) to deceive the Mandarin and protect his identity, Tony was horrified when the LMD developed an independent personality and usurped his identity. The LMD, believing itself superior to Tony, obtained a suit of Iron Man armor and began running Stark Industries while the real Tony was away. Unable to prove his identity, Tony fell into the clutches of Madame Masque (a newly garbed Whitney Frost), agent of the gold-loving Mordecai Midas, who attempted to force Stark to turn over his fortune. Tony used his original Iron Man armor to destroy the LMD imposter, but suffered another heart attack in the process. The Avengers rushed him to a hospital where Dr. Jose Santini transplanted a synthetic heart into his chest so that Tony no longer required his chest plate to live.

Following the Avengers' involvement in the interstellar Kree-Skrull War, Iron Man joined Mr. Fantastic, Black Bolt of the Inhumans, Professor Xavier of the X-Men, sorcerer Dr. Stephen Strange and Namor in founding the Illuminati, a secret organization designed to share knowledge and pool resources against major threats.

## Hero of Iron, Feet of Clay

Renaming his corporation Stark International, Tony resolved to abandon munitions production in favor of electronics and computer engineering after witnessing firsthand the impact his company's weapons had on innocent lives.

Despite seeming to have everything a man could want, Tony was under much stress. The machinations of rival industrialist Justin Hammer and SHIELD's constant pressure drove Tony further into drinking. His girlfriend at the time, Bethany Cabe, kept Tony from continued succumbing to his alcoholism. Their relationship ended when Bethany's presumed-dead husband was discovered alive.

In opposing Obidiah Stane's attempts at forming a major multinational conglomerate, Tony unwittingly made Stane a driven enemy. Obadiah Stane set up games of psychological warfare against Tony, which included physical attacks by his Chessmen super-operatives, outbidding Stark International for key contracts and having his lackey Indries Moomji romance Tony, all in an attempt to drive Tony to resort to drinking. As Stane's pressure increased, Tony responded as anticipated, and after Indries rejected Tony, he virtually gave up trying to oppose Stane. When the villain Magma (Jonathan Darque) attacked Stark International, Tony proved too drunk to wage a competent battle and instead revealed his double identity to Rhodes. With Tony passed out, Rhodes donned the armor and defeated Magma. Tony told Rhodes to keep the armor and turned his back on Stark International while he proceeded to drink himself out of his company, property and fortune until all of his assets were frozen. Obadiah Stane stepped in and claimed Stark International, renaming it Stane International, but Rhodes prevented Stane from obtaining the Iron Man armors.

Tony had hit rock-bottom, homeless and perpetually drunk. However, helping deliver a baby put life into perspective and he began his path of recovery and sobriety joining Alcoholics Anonymous.

Tony, James, and James' friends, Morley and Clytemnestra Erwin set up a California-based new corporation: Circuits Maximus. Obadiah planted a bomb in their laboratory, killing Morley and badly injuring Rhodes. Tony constructed his most advanced armor yet at the new West Coast Avengers Compound and confronted Stane, who had designed his own armored identity as the Iron Monger. When Tony defeated the Iron Monger, Stane committed suicide.

## Armor Wars

After joining the West Coast Avengers, Iron Man provided sanctuary from reformed villain Force (Clay Wilson), an agent of Justin Hammer. Examining Force's armor, Tony recognized familiar circuitry patterns based on his own Iron Man armor designs. Tony discovered that his old foe Symbiote had stolen his designs and sold them to Hammer who armored several of his super villain clients, including the Beetle (Abner Jenkins), the Controller, the Mauler (Brendan Doyle), the Raiders and Stilt-Man (Wilbur Day). Enraged by the thought that innocent people might have been killed with his technology, Tony resolved to eliminate all traces of his technology that had fallen into outside hands. However, Iron Man falsely accused federal agent Stingray of possessing Stark's technology, forcing Tony to publicly fire his alter-ego. Steve Rogers was stripped of his Captain America identity, and became the Captain; Tony supplied him with a force shield. Unable to trust anyone using his armor technology, Tony targeted the Guardsmen at the Vault prison. The Captain tried to stop Iron Man, severely straining their friendship. Iron Man next attacked the Crimson Dynamo in Russia, and accidentally killed the Titanium Man, leading to Iron Man's expulsion from the Avengers. Tony faked Iron Man's death, and later rejoined the Avengers as the "new Iron Man." Eventually, the Avengers saw through Tony's facade.

## Start of the Breakdown

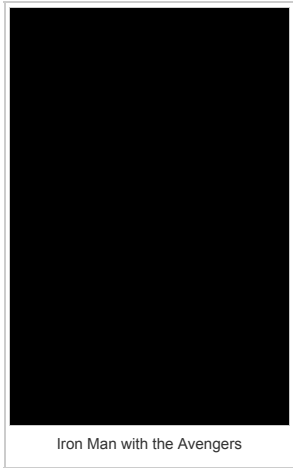
After being shot and paralyzed by former love interest Kathleen Dare, Tony installed a biochip into his body to regain mobility. The biochip gained the attention of corporate foe Kearson DeWitt, who held grievances against Tony. DeWitt hijacked the biochip and took control of Tony's nervous system. Though Tony regained control of his body using his armor, but by the time he had defeated DeWitt his body was so damaged he could barely move. Tony donned a skintight neuronet suit to help him function, but his armor became the only certain way to keep himself alive. After defeating the Mandarin, and using a rogue team of Avengers to seemingly destroy the Supreme Intelligence (against Avengers' leader Captain America's command), he expressed his regret to Captain America and the two began trying to repair their fractured relationship. As Tony's health continued to deteriorate, he designed his variable threat assessment armor (model 11, also called the "War Machine") and won back Stane International's assets from its last owner, Justin Hammer. Succumbing to total nervous system failure, Tony seemingly died on an operating table. In his will, he made Rhodes the new CEO of Stark Enterprises and left the War Machine armor for him to carry on as Iron Man. Rhodes respected his wishes.

A New Beginning

Tony was secretly in cryogenic storage while his body's entire nervous system was essentially rebuilt. Revived, Tony had to undergo intense physical therapy. Rhodes, who was infuriated at being deceived, immediately quit Stark Enterprises. Tony allowed Rhodes to keep the War Machine armor and launched a new model of armor, the Neuromimetic Telepresence Unit 150 (NTU-150), which he could control remotely while he recovered. He also used artificial intelligences to aid him in his work, including HOMER and PLATO.

Outfitted in his new modular armor, Tony agreed to end the West Coast Avengers, but formed Force Works. Providing his team with full access to his cutting edge technology.

Teen Tony



Some time later the villain Immortus, posing as his alternate reality version of himself Kang the Conqueror, took control of Tony Stark as a sleeper agent. Tony was forced to kill Yellowjacket (Rita DeMara) and Crystal's Nanny, Marilla. To battle the combined forces of Iron Man and "Kang," the Avengers were forced to recruit an alternate reality's teenage version of Tony Stark from Earth-96020. Teen Tony stole a suit of armor from Stark International and aided the Avengers in battle. When the adult version came face to face with his teenage self he was finally able to overcome Immortus' control. Tony sacrificed himself to save the younger Tony's life and defeated Immortus.

Teenage Tony Stark continued to fight with the Avengers and took control of Stark International. The mutant Onslaught manifested, threatening life on Earth. The young Tony and many of the world's super heroes fought Onslaught in New York City's Central Park where young Iron Man, the Fantastic Four, Thor, the Hulk, and other heroes seemingly lost their lives defending the Earth. However, they were actually brought into a pocket universe created by Reed and Sue Richards' son, Franklin. Events soon forced Franklin to choose a world to survive; he restored the original world. Upon returning, the still-adult Tony found he had the collective memories and experiences of the original Tony Stark merged with those of the Earth-96020 Tony and the person he had been on Counter-Earth.

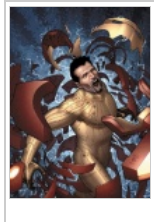
Secrets and Lies

When Iron Man defeated the villain Mentallo, Tony took advantage of the situation and used Mentallo's global mind control device to erase all knowledge of his often-compromised secret identity from every person on Earth. He then revealed it to those people he deemed trustworthy, causing them to remember the memories he had buried.

Former Avenger Jocasta, a creation of the villainous robot Ultron, was forced to prepare the Iron Man armor to become Ultron's new home; the process accelerated when Iron Man was hit by a lightning bolt, causing Tony to suffer a heart attack at the same time. Thinking that the armor had been granted its own consciousness, Tony attempted to teach the armor; the benign Ultron-12 aspect of its personality was receptive, but the cruelty of most past Ultron models corrupted the armor and it murdered Whiplash during a fight. However, the armor ultimately sacrificed its "life" to save Tony, whose heart was failing. After implanting a robotic "heart" in Tony's chest that saved him, the armor deactivated.

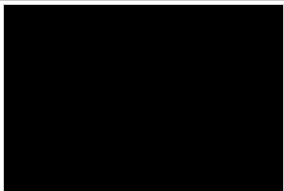
Tony later decided to reveal his secret identity to the world, and was offered work as a contractor for the US Department of Defense. Though turning down that opportunity, he accepted the post as the President's Secretary of Defense to monitor the use of his technology by the United States military. Tony's tenure as Secretary of Defense ended in scandal when the insane Scarlet Witch caused him to engage in drunken and belligerent behavior at the United Nations. Disgraced, Tony was quickly drummed out of his position. The Scarlet Witch's growing insanity led to the dissolution of the Avengers when her out-of-control powers wrecked Avengers Mansion and killed several teammates. Tony was further smeared when one-time corporate rival Clarence Ward stole Iron Man armor, using it to kill the Stark Industries board and Rumiko, Tony's girlfriend. Iron Man defeated Ward and recalled all of the Iron Man armors he had granted to the military. He then publicly "resigned" as Iron Man but secretly intended to continue operating, again claiming it was another man wearing the armor.

Extremis



Iron Man clashed with Mallen, a terrorist enhanced by the Extremis virus, a techno-organic agent designed by Tony's one-time classmate Maya Hansen and intentionally leaked so that the world could see its destructive potential. Mallen defeated Iron Man, nearly mortally wounding Tony in the process. Tony had Maya inject him with the Extremis, gambling on it saving his life and increasing his strength so that he could face Mallen as an equal. The process resulted in Tony's body rebuilding itself with superior organs and he found that he could now link to virtually any computer on Earth; the newly enhanced Tony killed Mallen in a rematch.

Civil War



Captain America fighting Iron Man

During a televised raid of a house containing escaped super villains from the Raft, the explosive villain Nitro detonated himself killing the majority of the New Warriors, children at a nearby elementary school and other local residents. In the wake of the tragedy, the federal Superhuman Registration Act was passed, requiring all super-powered beings to register their identities and subject themselves to federally mandated standards. While Tony spearheaded the support for the Act, convincing Spider-Man (Peter Parker) to publicly unmask in support of the Act, Captain America led an underground resistance defending heroes' rights of privacy. Stark was accepted the position of Director of S.H.I.E.L.D.

The Hammer Strikes the Shield

When the alien Skrull's Queen Veranke led an invasion of Earth, Earth's defenses were disabled through a virus which ran through Tony's Extremis-based powers, taking out all Stark-based technology. Although the heroes of Earth routed the Skrulls, it was "reformed" criminal Norman Osborn who slew Veranke and took the credit. Tony Stark was vilified for the failure of his technology to stop the Skrull invasion. S.H.I.E.L.D. was dismantled and Osborn put in charge of the replacement agency H.A.M.M.E.R. Osborn demanded Stark surrender the Superhuman Registration Database containing the secret identities of many heroes. Stark refused and loaded the database's only copy into his brain. Evading capture by Osborn, Tony gradually wiped his mind. Tony was aided by Maria Hill, whom he sent to retrieve a hard drive containing a backup copy of his mind, and Pepper Hogan, whom he left in charge of Stark Industries and gifted with a suit of armor called Rescue, operated by an artificial intelligence named J.A.R.V.I.S. As Tony's mind deteriorated he was finally assaulted in Dubai by the Iron Patriot-armored Osborn. By then Stark was virtually brain-dead and, as their battle was being televised, Osborn was forced to bring him in alive or risk being exposed for murdering a helpless man. Transferred to the custody of Dr. Donald Blake — actually Stark's old friend Thor — Tony left directions which enabled his friends to restore his mind and awaken him from his coma. Iron Man returned to action in time to help in Osborn's ultimate defeat.

Contributors: MikeFichera, Acotilletta2, WSST, Jc1569 and Jstephens

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