
Star Wars: The Force Awakens to open in Europe before US

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European fans of Star Wars will get to see new instalment The Force Awakens before their counterparts in North America, it has been announced.

JJ Abrams' film will open a day earlier than expected in the UK, on Thursday 17 December, while the French will get to see the movie a further 24 hours ahead of that, on Wednesday 16 December. The new dates were announced on the official [UK](#) and France Star Wars Facebook pages. The US and Canadian release date remains 18 December.

[According to IMDB](#), the first nation to see the first new Star Wars movie in more than a decade will be the United Arab Emirates – where [desert planet scenes for the film were shot last year](#) – on Tuesday 15 December. Belgium, Bahrain, Switzerland, Italy, Denmark and Sweden are among countries listed alongside France for 16 December and Brazil, Mexico, Germany and Russia join the UK on 17 December.

Star Wars: The Force Awakens has been the bookies' favourite to become 2015's highest-grossing film since the first teaser trailer for the film appeared in November last year. Abrams' film is also [predicted to smash the world record for biggest global box-office opening weekend](#), currently held by Jurassic World after [the dinosaur disaster epic's \\$524.4m bow in June](#).

The new release dates follow last week's Force Friday, the global unveiling of merchandise for the new movie. It is not known when the film will first be screened for critics, but Abrams said last year that [winners of Lucasfilm's "Force for Change" competition](#) would be given the chance

to see the movie before it arrives in cinemas.

In other Star Wars news, the story behind droid C-3PO's mysterious red arm in trailers for The Force Awakens is [set to be revealed in a new comic book](#). Star Wars Special: C-3PO will hit stores in December, just prior to the release of Abrams' movie. Meanwhile, descriptions for new Halloween costumes based on Adam Driver's nefarious Kylo Ren, John Boyega's Finn and Daisy Ridley's Rey [have revealed some choice details](#). Boyega is described as a "rogue stormtrooper" who was "once part of the New Order", while Driver's Knights of Ren are said to be fuelled by "the ultimate goal: to take over the entire galaxy, using the same power of the Force once used by the Galactic Empire". Finally, Rey is said to find herself poised to take on a whole room of stormtroopers and Ren knights in a pivotal fight scene from the movie.
