At last! Marvel finally drops first trailer for Avengers: End Game



Enlarge / “Part of the journey is the end.” How many of the original Avengers will survive *Avengers: End Game*? We’ll have to wait until May 3, 2019 to find out.
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There is much rejoicing on the Internet today as Marvel Studios finally dropped the long-awaited first trailer for the movie formerly known as *Avengers 4*. Now we know it will be called *Avengers: End Game*, and, as expected, that’s exactly

what the trailer tells us it's going to be: a fitting conclusion to the shocking events of *Avengers: Infinity War*.

(Spoilers below for *Avengers: Infinity War* and *Ant-Man and the Wasp*)

Infinity War was technically an ensemble Avengers film, but Thanos (an intergalactic supervillain from Titan) is the central character. He is on a quest to collect all six Infinity Stones: the Power Stone, the Space Stone, the Time Stone, the Reality Stone, the Soul Stone, and the Mind Stone. Once collected and placed in the Infinity Gauntlet, they will give Thanos the power to wipe out half of all living beings in the universe. Why would anyone want to do such a thing? Thanos is the ultimate Malthusian, believing that the universe is overpopulated and will eventually run out of resources—precisely what happened to his own home town.

Despite the valiant collective efforts of pretty much every superhero in the Marvel cinematic universe, Thanos succeeds (at great personal cost). And with a single snap of his fingers, we get the Snappening: half of the universe dissolves into dust, including many of our beloved superheroes. It might be one of the ballsiest moves in film history, and it paid off royally for Marvel Studios. *Avengers: Infinity War* became the fourth film overall, and first superhero film, to gross more than $2 billion worldwide, and it was the highest-grossing film of this year (the fourth-highest grossing overall).

Reeling from a staggering loss

- Tony Stark (Robert Downey Jr.) is adrift in space.
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- With no more food or water, and dwindling oxygen, rescue seems unlikely.
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- A fitting symbol of the defeated Avengers and their

allies.
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- Nebula (Karen Gillan) mourns the loss of her sister.
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- Natasha Romanoff aka Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson) reflects on the enormity of the loss.
  Marvel Entertainment
- Steve Rogers/Captain America (Chris Evans) hopes their nascent plan will work.
  Marvel Entertainment
- Steve is familiar with sacrifice and loss. Could his long-lost love Peggy factor into the Un-Snappening?
  Marvel Entertainment

The Internet meme machine had a field day, including the website, DidThanosKillMe, where fans could click a button to learn if they would have survived the Snappening. By far the most ambitious fan effort was a subreddit, /r/thanosdidnothingwrong, which garnered some 700,000 subscribers (including both of the Russo brothers, who directed *Infinity War* and *End Game*) drawn by its promise to randomly ban half of them on July 9 of this year in its own version of the Snappening. Those banned, including Anthony Russo, joined a new subreddit, /r/inthesoulstone, reflecting the popular fan theory that those who disintegrated still survive in some sense in the Soul Stone.

So yeah, the film was a major pop-culture event. And it’s safe to say there has been a lot of anticipation about the sequel—and much speculation about exactly how our remaining superheroes plan to reverse the devastating effects of Thanos’ infamous snap. Let’s call it the Un-Snappening.

It’s worth taking a moment to review who was lost in the Snappening: Bucky Barnes, T’Challa/Black Panther, Groot, the Scarlet Witch (aka Wanda Maximoff), Doctor Strange, Sam Wilson/Falcon, Mantis, Drax, Peter Quill/Star-Lord, Nick Fury, Maria Hill, and—one of the most heartbreaking farewells—Tony

Stark's protege, young Peter Parker (Spiderman). All the original Avengers survived (Tony Stark/Iron Man, Steve Rogers/Captain America, Natasha Romanoff/Black Widow, Thor, and Bruce Banner/The Hulk), along with Rhodey/War Machine, Rocket, M'Baku, Nebula, and Okoye—and hopefully Shuri, although her fate is uncertain. Ditto for Hawkeye, who was largely absent from *Infinity War*.

The new trailer opens with Stark (Robert Downey Jr.) floating aimlessly in space, with no food or water left, and rapidly dwindling oxygen—and, he thinks, no hope of rescue. (I'll go out on a limb here and say someone rescues him.) He leaves one last message for Pepper Potts (Gwyneth Paltrow) believing he will die soon.

Avengers, regroup!

- The Avengers headquarters, at least, remains intact.
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- Who might this mysterious hooded personage be?
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- It's Hawkeye (Jeremy Renner), who survived the Snappening. All the original Avengers are accounted for.
  Marvel Entertainment
- Bruce Banner (Mark Ruffalo) assumes the worst for Scott Lang's/Ant-Man's fate.
  Marvel Entertainment
- "Remember me? We met a few years ago at the airport in Germany. I got really big."
  Marvel Entertainment
- Take courage, Thor! There's a plan that just might work.
  Marvel Entertainment

One by one we get glimpses of the other remaining Avengers: Thor (Chris Hemsworth), Black Widow (Scarlett Johansson), Banner (Mark Ruffalo), Rogers (Chris Evans), and (surprise!) Black Widow finds a brooding Hawkeye (Jeremy Renner) lurking

somewhere in Asia. Everyone is brooding, and that's understandable. They suffered a crushing defeat to Thanos, and half of all living things paid the price.

That's mostly it. What else could Marvel do with the first trailer other than focus on the original surviving Avengers? Anything else would give too much away. But they nonetheless hatch a plan, and Black Widow tells Rogers, "This is going to work." The logo shows pieces coming back together to form the title, an indication that she is correct: they will succeed in reversing the devastating losses.

There's been plenty of speculation about what that plan might entail, as well, particularly that it likely involves the quantum realm. That looks like a correct assumption. We get one final scene of Scott Lang/Ant-Man (Paul Rudd) showing up unexpectedly at the Avengers base. That means he and Hope van Dyne/The Wasp (Evangeline Lilly) escaped the quantum realm where they were presumably trapped at the end of *Ant-Man and The Wasp* (Hope's mother and father were among the disintegrated).

> *"Part of the journey is the end."*

The trailer gives nothing else away. But right before he hands over the Time Stone to Thanos to save Tony Stark's life in *Infinity War*, Doctor Strange uses his powers to run through millions of possible futures, concluding that there is only one scenario where Thanos loses and the Avengers are victorious. "It was the only way," he tells a devastated Stark as he dissolves into dust along with the others.

Alternate timelines—and specifically, the Many Worlds version of a multiverse—are a direct consequence of a literal interpretation of quantum mechanics. That's the most likely path toward fixing what Thanos has wrought. It's linked to the notion that a subatomic particle is in a superposition of all possible states at once, described by an equation called the

wave function, until some kind of measurement is made. Then the wave function collapses into a distinct reality.

But what happens to all those other realities Strange envisioned? Many Worlds says they still exist somewhere, in separate universes all their own. The catch: those universes can never interact with each other. That's only binding in real-world physics, however. In the Marvel cinematic universe, you can bend or even break the rules as the narrative requires. It remains to be seen precisely how this could work. But clearly Ant-Man and the quantum realm will be important.

Chances are, not all of the original Avengers will survive this final battle. It's called *End Game* for a reason. But as Tony Stark says, "Don't feel bad about this. Part of the journey is the end."

Avengers: End Game hits theaters May 3, 2019.

[embedded content]
Marvel's *Avengers: End Game* trailer.
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