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## J.R.R. Tolkien Gift Set



## Synopsis

Enjoy the depth and wonder of these fully dramatized recordings from BBC Radio and Random House Audio. Each program features a full-cast performance, realistic sound effects, and stirring musical scores to give the listener an amazing audio experience. The works of J.R.R. Tolkien have never sounded better. This gift treasury includes: The Hobbit Tolkien's timeless tale of the adventures of Bilbo Baggins and the wizard Gandalf will captivate listeners from beginning to end. The Fellowship of the Ring The first story in the Lord of the Rings trilogy follows Frodo Baggins and his faithful servant, Sam, through the world of Middle-Earth. The Two Towers Part II in the trilogy finds the Fellowship scattered with Frodo and Sam traveling to the dark kingdom of Mordor in an attempt to destroy the Ring of Power. The Return of the King The amazing conclusion of the epic fantasy follows Frodo and Sam as they desperately struggle towards Mount Doom in order to destroy the Ring.

## Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Random House Audio (September 30, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0739310119

ISBN-13: 978-0739310113

Product Dimensions: 6.8 x 2.2 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #3,486,133 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #34 in Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > (T) > Tolkien, J.R.R. #2204 in Books > Books on CD > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Science Fiction #2598 in Books > Books on CD > Science Fiction & Fantasy > Fantasy

## Customer Reviews

John Ronald Reuel Tolkien was born on January 3rd, 1892 in South Africa. Tolkien was educated and taught Anglo-Saxon at Oxford University. Tolkien's other works include The Hobbit and The Silmarillion, which are both available on audio from Random House.

Excellent condition for used, good shipping on time, I've owned this box set before, don't lend to irresponsible people. Anyway this is a must have for fans and bookworms of Tolkien books, poems, songs and movies, BBC did an excellent job on creating a very entertaining audio dramatization of

the hobbit and trilogy, yes it has some verbal or acting battle violence with orcs etc, but nothing overly crude or morbid etc. Fun to listen to once in awhile and sing along with some of the songs.

**Summary:** This box set takes the BBC's versions of J.R.R. Tolkien's classics: "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings trilogy" and sticks them together into one convenient place. These are abridged versions of the books, and so they don't contain certain [relatively unimportant] parts and characters; for example Tom Bombadil isn't here. Each book is roughly 4 hours long and is spread over 4-5 CDs. The audio books were originally done by British actors and are all over twenty years old.

**Packaging:** The four audio books come in a large black box with a cool hologram picture on the front. Each book is in a triple CD case (Think: the case-size for the CD version of the Beatles White Album.) with art by John Howe (John Howe was also a major contributor to the Lord of the Rings movie art design.) covering the front of each. There is also a hand-drawn map of "Wilderland" included; unfortunately the map is mostly just of the Misty Mountains and Mirkwood, thus it can really only be used to find places that appear in The Hobbit. It would have been nice if there had been a few more extras included, such as perhaps a booklet explaining a few things, or a map of the entire Middle Earth. However, I'm being fairly nitpicky concerning these things. What really disappointed me by the packaging was the fact that there is nothing included which lists the names (Chapters) of the tracks. So, if you were trying to find a place on one of the audio CDs that corresponds with a place in one of the books, you would have a very difficult time doing so. It really doesn't make much sense and I don't know why tracks and chapters weren't listed on the CD cases or somewhere else in the packaging.

**Audio Quality:** The audio quality for these audio books leaves a few things to be desired. Some of the sound effects and music samples sound very dated and/or slightly fuzzy, esp. in The Hobbit. Also, the voices aren't always clear, with some not loud enough, and others with an echo sound to them. Furthermore, while the script music is very good and the musicians are very capable, the recordings sound like they are being played off of a record and not a CD; they just aren't as clear and clean as I would like. Still, while the audio quality isn't great, it also isn't terrible; in other words: it generally gets the job done. (Besides, these recordings are all over 20 years old, and a few audio quality problems should be expected.)

**Voice Acting:** This is definitely the high point of this audio book collection. The BBC has brought together a very talented cast and many are well-known British actors. Ian Holm plays Bilbo here (As he did in Peter Jackson's movies.), and he brings a lot of life into his character. The fellowship also sounds very good, as each actor makes you believe in the goal(s) of the quest.

**Version:** I was disappointed when I initially learned these weren't unabridged audio books. However, you'll find that what they did cut

out was relatively unimportant, and I never felt like they were cutting something out that is critical to the main story. Besides, most people listening to this have probably already read the books anyways and already know about the little characters and pieces of history that were left out. Think of these as expanded and more accurate versions of the movies, rather than shorter versions of the books. If you do, you'll be a lot happier with this set. Conclusion: Once you get past the mostly minor problems of this set, you'll find it is a very enjoyable audio experience with lots of excitement and excellent storytelling. The good far outweighs the bad here, and I really think these are the best audio book versions of these books. Trust me, if you are a fan of Tolkien, then you should enjoy this convenient set. These CDs are great for long trips in the car, and both adults and kids will enjoy them. I recommended this to any fan of good literature!

Compared to other reviewer, I actually found the Hobbit the best of the bunch, despite it being less 'professional' as far as sound goes, its older but they SOUND like Hobbits in it, and it has the feel and smell of Hobbit Holes and magic. Simplicity is often best in these, the narrator and main Hobbit have great personalities and voices. As for rest of the audio stories, more polished but i found the sounds not as amazing, but still they do the job and are well worth the listen. Gollum is great, fantastic job. I would have liked more sounds in the stories, but they dont take away from the storyline, so its no loss. All in all enjoyable, tho i listen to these things so fast Id prob go for the used and cheaper versions than the full price, tho you'll listen to these time and again so its still an investment. Try the Chronicles of Narnia if you liked these!

Loved the books then the movies. I tried and tried to enjoy the recording, but just couldn't take it any more after the first two CDs of the Hobbit. The "period music" is absolutely horrible; sounds like nails on a chalk board (I know it is intentionally that way, but that doesn't make it good). I also just couldn't get into the character voices, they all sounded wrong and some were too similar and annoying. Gandalf sounds like some 20 year old dork rather than a wise old man. The Hobbits sound like British versions of the Chipmunks with sore throats (Alvin!!!). So overall, my problem after a couple of hours of listening was that the pitch of everything in the audio was just too annoying to my ears; it didn't sound natural.

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