

Jane Austen

Portrait, c. 1810^[a]

Born	16 December 1775 Steventon Rectory , Hampshire, England
Died	18 July 1817 (aged 41) Winchester , Hampshire, England
Resting place	Winchester Cathedral , Hampshire
Period	1787–1817
Relatives	Family and ancestry

Signature

Jane Austen (/ˈɒstɪn, ˈɔːs-/; 16 December 1775 – 18 July 1817) was an English novelist known primarily for her six novels, which implicitly interpret, critique, and comment upon the British [landed gentry](#) at the end of the 18th century. Austen's plots often explore the dependence of women on marriage for the pursuit of favourable social standing and economic security. Her works are an implicit critique of the [novels of sensibility](#) of the second half of the 18th century and are part of the transition to 19th-century [literary realism](#).^{[2][b]} Her deft use of social commentary, realism and biting irony have earned her acclaim among critics and scholars.

The anonymously published *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), and *Emma* (1816), were a modest success but brought her little fame in her lifetime. She wrote two other novels—*Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, both published posthumously in 1818—and began another, eventually titled *Sanditon*, but died before its completion. She also left behind three volumes of juvenile writings in manuscript, the short epistolary novel *Lady Susan*, and the unfinished novel *The Watsons*.

Since her death Austen's novels have rarely been out of print. A significant transition in her reputation occurred in 1833, when they were republished in Richard Bentley's Standard Novels series (illustrated by Ferdinand Pickering and sold as a set). They gradually gained wide acclaim and popular readership. In 1869, fifty-two years after her death, her nephew's publication of *A Memoir of Jane Austen* introduced a compelling version of her writing career and supposedly uneventful life to an eager audience. Her work has inspired a large number of critical essays and has been included in many literary anthologies. Her novels have also inspired many films, including 1940's *Pride and Prejudice*, 1995's *Sense and Sensibility* and 2016's *Love & Friendship*.