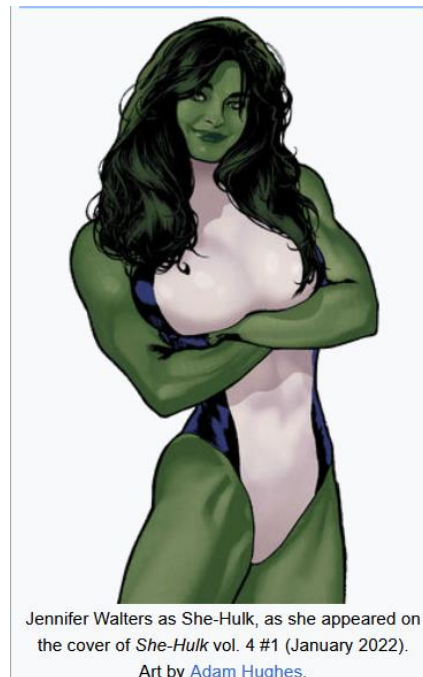


Who is She-Hulk?

Everything you need to know before
the next class November 16



Jennifer Walters as She-Hulk, as she appeared on
the cover of *She-Hulk* vol. 4 #1 (January 2022).
Art by [Adam Hughes](#).

First, Rainbow herself has an “Unofficial guide to She-Hulk”

<https://www.rainbowrowell.com/news/2022/1/13/my-very-unofficial-guide-to-she-hulk>

- ▶ ***What you need to know to enjoy my new Marvel comic***
By Rainbow Rowell
- ▶ ***Who is She Hulk?***
- ▶ Her real name is Jennifer Walters, and she’s the Hulk’s cousin. Way back when, Jen was shot by a mobster*, and her cousin Bruce Banner gave her a blood transfusion to save her life. His gamma-radiated blood turned her into a big green Hulk, like him.
- ▶ But not *just* like him, which is what makes Jen so interesting. Over the years, Jen has mostly had control over her Hulk form. She doesn’t transform when she’s angry; she transforms when she wants to. And she wants to be in Hulk form pretty much *all the time*.
- ▶ Bruce has felt cursed by being the Hulk. Jen chooses it. Being She-Hulk makes her feel strong, secure, confident, sexy, and better able to help people.
- ▶ One thing I love about She-Hulk is that she likes being a superhero. She’s not reluctant. She generally doesn’t have to be talked into it. She’s an attorney with a real love for the law and justice. Becoming a hero was a natural extension of herself.
- ▶ Jen is *good* - but she’s also *interesting*. And she’s very, very *funny*.
- ▶ Funny is rare for comic book heroes, especially for the women. But She-Hulk has been funny almost from the beginning. She was one of the first Marvel characters to break the fourth wall (though she hasn’t done that in her more recent appearances). And she’s one of the few characters who dependably crack jokes. I think that’s one reason she’s appeared in so many different books - writers love her.

You might be wondering where the conflict is. She-Hulk is beautiful, strong, smart, funny, everybody loves her... What makes her interesting?

- ▶ A LOT.
- ▶ One of Jen's problems is that she'll always be seen as the Hulk's girl cousin. He's such a dominant and destructive character in Marvel comics, Jen often gets dragged into his messes - or dragged behind him.
- ▶ One time, a bunch of other heroes tested a weapon on her that took away her powers, *just to see if it would work on the Hulk*. (I have not forgiven these guys - you're not good with me, Tony Stark!)
- ▶ She's often the person who gets sent to talk to Hulk when he's in a bad place. Jen loves Bruce and wants what's best for him. But she can't *save* him.
- ▶ The other problem Jen has - and this is related - is she's a classic B-lister. Her life gets rebooted and uprooted a lot. Some characters, like Spider-Man and Hulk, drive big Marvel stories. Some, like She-Hulk, are usually supporting players. That actually makes for an interesting character dynamic - She-Hulk continually struggles to reconcile her own identity and needs with the greater good. She's a great team player, but when she steps into the spotlight, she's complicated and fascinating.
- ▶ Speaking of teams, Jen has been on just about every big Marvel team... She's been a Defender, an Avenger and a member of the Fantastic Four. And because of that, she knows everyone in the Marvel Universe. And almost everyone likes her. She-Hulk is who Marvel characters call if they need a lawyer or a shoulder to cry on - or if they want to have fun. She gets invited to every Marvel bachelorette party.
- ▶ **“Rainbow, this sounds complicated!”**
- ▶ I know. It sort of is.
- ▶ But trust me when I say this:
- ▶ ***You do not need to know everything about She-Hulk to enjoy a She-Hulk comic!***

But here is a little background anyway from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/She-Hulk>

- ▶ **She-Hulk (Jennifer Susan Walters)** is a character in comics published by [Marvel Comics](#). Created by writer [Stan Lee](#) and artist [John Buscema](#), the character first appeared in *The Savage She-Hulk #1* in November of 1975.
- ▶ Walters is a lawyer who, after an injury, received an emergency blood transfusion from her cousin, [Bruce Banner](#), THE Hulk. As a result, she acquired a milder version of his Hulk condition.
- ▶ Walters soon discovered that she becomes a large, powerful, green-hued version of herself whether she wants to or not.
- ▶ Unlike Banner in his Hulk form, who becomes much meaner and greener, Walters largely retains her normal personality, intelligence, and emotional control in her She-Hulk form. She can even argue a case in court!
- ▶ That said, She-Hulk is still susceptible to outbursts of anger and becomes much stronger when enraged. In the latest iteration, by Rainbow Rowell, she can change into and out of her Hulk-self sometimes at will, sometimes not.
- ▶ She-Hulk often breaks the [fourth wall](#) for humorous effect and running gags, as the first major Marvel character to do so frequently, ahead of the more famous fourth wall breaker [Deadpool](#).
- ▶ She-Hulk has been described as one of Marvel's most notable and powerful female heroes in comics. In 2022, She-Hulk made her live-action debut on as part of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) with the Disney series “She-Hulk: Attorney at Law.”

Want a more detailed history?

- ▶ You can read the entire history of the comic since 1975 on Wikipedia, but it is not necessary for our class. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/She-Hulk>
- ▶ Here is a little recent history from that page to put the comics we are reading in context:
- ▶ She-Hulk was a member of the Avengers where she met with “Jack of Hearts” who has the ability to absorb radiation. Exposure to him caused Jen to lose her ability to change form. She flees, eventually finding a scientist who gives her “gamma-charge” so she regains full control over her transformations.
- ▶ In 2016, a series was created to reflect the Marvel Avenger’s movies in which she sustains injuries at the hands of Thanos from the Civil War (portrayed in cinema). She appeared grey, and she was portrayed without her usual light-hearted adventures. This series was not popular and ended in 2018.
- ▶ Afterwards, Jennifer decides to try to reassemble her life and professional career again, and is hired by her old rival Mallory Book, and Mallory’s romantic and professional partner Awesome Andy, to handle legal representation and counselling for other superhumans.
- ▶ In order to help Jennifer, her good friend Janet van Dyne, The Wasp, also gave her a spacious new apartment. During this time Jennifer also made peace with her old foe Titania (although they decided to keep each other as regular sparring partners under lawful circumstances), and she gradually entered a romantic relationship with her old teammate Jack of Hearts.
- ▶ April, a scientist with intelligence enhanced by gamma-radiation, and her superhumanly strong husband Mark, also sought to drain She-Hulk of her powers in order to stabilize their own mutations. They failed in their attempt, but as a result Jack lost control over his powers to a sufficient degree to automatically drain Jennifer of her powers if they physically touch each other, so their relationship had to turn platonic from that point.
- ▶ The story continues in the new series. In 2022, *She-Hulk* returned as an ongoing series by writer Rainbow Rowell and artist Rogê Antônio. The series returned to the lighthearted tone of the previous comics and focuses on She-Hulk’s return to practicing law.

Need less? Here is an Easy to Read Synopsis of the Comic we will be reading:

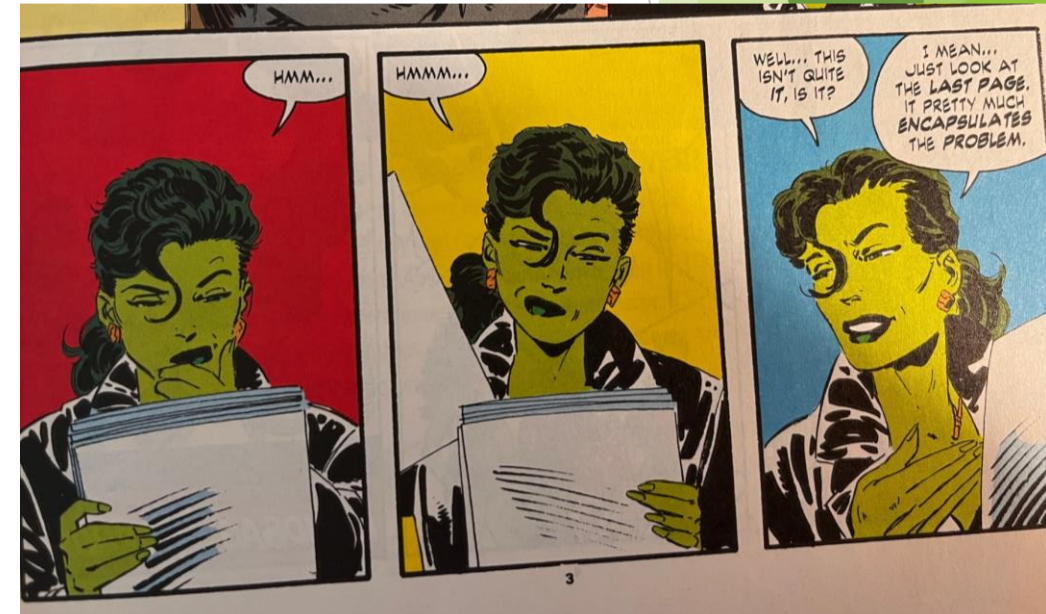
<https://www.marvel.com/articles/comics/sensational-she-hulk-everything-you-need-to-know>

- ▶ SHE-HULK (2022) found Jen Walters at something of a low point in her life. She had no job, no active team affiliations, no home, and only one suit to her name... and then her nemesis [Titania](#) attacked. As usual for Jen, she managed to turn her situation around by burying the hatchet with Titania, and the two formed a mutually beneficial fight club—a "Punch Club," if you will—where they could cut loose.
- ▶ Fortunately, She-Hulk's friend [Janet Van Dyne](#), AKA the [Wasp](#), also swooped in to let Jen live in her fabulous (spare) Manhattan apartment—one full of glamorous, Hulk-sized clothes from the last time Jen stayed there. To top it off, She-Hulk got a job at the law office of another old nemesis, [Mallory Book](#), although business was rough at first (on account of Mallory's "no cape clients" rule, which changed quite quickly).
- ▶ While She-Hulk enjoyed her windfall, life threw her another curve ball in the form of Jack Hart. The former Avenger known as [Jack-of-Hearts](#) appeared on She-Hulk's doorstep in the middle of the night, amnesiac and barely holding it together. While Jen didn't hesitate to help a fellow Avenger in need, she did wonder why Jack came to her first, especially considering their fraught history....
- ▶ There is more! Go to the website to keep reading.
- ▶ See you in two weeks!

In 1992, John Byrne, who worked for Marvel and wrote She-Hulk since it began, left for DC. A 50th Anniversary Special Edition was written in his honor.



The premise is that her beloved writer has died, and a new writer was proposing new issues for She Hulk that she had to approve.



Most of them were awful.



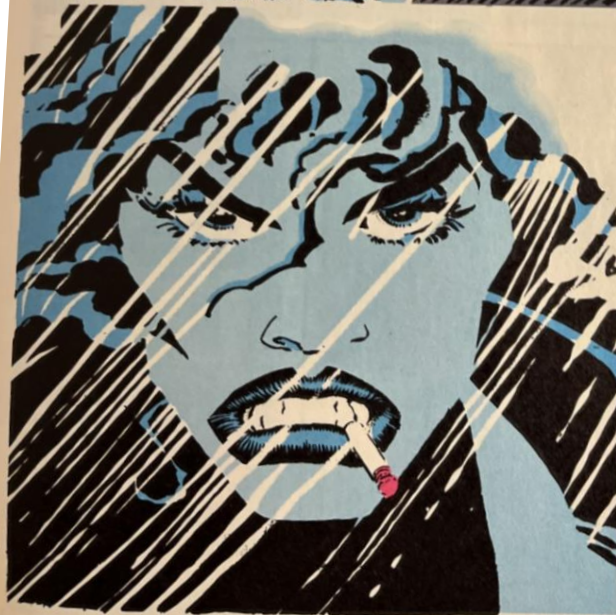
SUPPORTING CHARACTERS THEY START OUT MUMBLE BUT FIRST CHANCE THEY GET THEY'RE GRABBING WHOLE SUBPLOTS.

BEFORE YOU KNOW IT THEY'RE JOCKEYING FOR A MAINCOURSE OF THEIR OWN. I'VE SEEN IT HAPPEN, IT ISN'T PRETTY.

OKAY, SO BYRNE WAS A LITTLE FULL OF HIMSELF, SO HE NEVER LET ME WEAR ANYTHING THAT DIDN'T SHOW ME OFF LIKE AN AEROBICS VIDEO.

BUT HE MADE ME LOOK GORGEOUS. HE MADE ME FEEL LIKE A WOMAN.

AND NOW HE'S DEAD AS IMPACT COMICS.



MY THOUGHTS GO WILD, MY LETTERING GOES ITALIC, THEY SAY BYRNE'S DEATH WAS AN ACCIDENT BUT I'M NOT BUYING IT, NOT FOR A SECOND. THAT'S TOO EASY, TOO EASY AND TOO DAMN CONVENIENT, AND IT DOESN'T GIVE ME THE KIND OF REVENGE MOTIVE I NEED.

THERE'S SOMEBODY OUT THERE WHO'S GOING TO PAY AND PAY BIG. I'LL POKE HIM IN THE EYE AND TIE HIS SHOELACES TOGETHER AND WHEN HE BEGS FOR MERCY I'LL START WITH THE TICKLING.

BECAUSE BYRNE IS DEAD AS HECK.

AND I'M MAD AS HECK.



Some were not half bad, but...



Turns out, Byrne had been tied up in a closet.



Then she finds out what he was writing:

