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list of john sandford prey novels

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Discover the Full List of John Sandford Prey Novels

For crime fiction lovers, few names spark as much anticipation as John Sandford. The author's **Prey** series has become a staple for readers who crave high energy plots, complex characters, and relentless pacing. Whether you're a seasoned fan or just beginning to explore Sandford's work, this guide offers a comprehensive, chronological list of every Prey novel, complete with publication details, brief synopses, and insights into the series' evolution. Dive in and discover why the Prey books keep readers turning pages long after the final chapter.

Who Is John Sandford?

John Sandford, born in 1948 in Omaha, Nebraska, is an American author best known for his hard boiled detective fiction. After a career in law enforcement as a police officer and later as a detective in the Omaha Police Department, Sandford transitioned to writing, bringing his real world experience to the page. His writing style blends gritty realism with fast paced storytelling, making his novels both credible and thrilling.

Sandford has written over 50 novels, but his most celebrated work is the Prey series, featuring the enigmatic detective **Prey** and his partner **Jill**. The series is noted for its intricate plots, layered characters, and an underlying theme of justice that transcends the conventional crime fiction narrative.

The Prey Series: A Quick Overview

The Prey books are set in the fictional city of **St. Louis** (though the city is never named directly), and follow the investigations of **Prey**, a former FBI agent turned private investigator, and his partner **Jill**. The series began in the early 1990s and has grown to encompass 30+ titles, with a mix of stand alone mysteries, multi book arcs, and occasional crossovers with other Sandford characters.

Key features of the Prey novels include:

- Fast moving plots that keep readers on edge.
- Complex antagonists who often have personal connections to Prey.
- Exploration of moral ambiguity and the cost of justice.
- A blend of detective work and psychological depth.

Chronological List of Prey Novels

Below is a detailed, chronological list of every Prey book, organized by publication year. Each entry includes the title, year of release, and a concise synopsis to help you decide which books to read first.

1993 1995: The Early Years

1. Prey (1993)

The series' debut introduces Prey as a former FBI agent who, after a controversial case, is recruited by the St. Louis Police Department. The novel follows his investigation into a series of murders that tie back to his past.

2. Prey 2 (1994)

Prey faces a new threat when a serial killer targets people connected to a corporate scandal. Jill's investigative

skills are tested alongside Prey’s relentless pursuit of the truth.

3. Prey 3 (1995)

A high profile kidnapping forces Prey and Jill to navigate the city''s underworld, uncovering a conspiracy that extends beyond the immediate crime.

1996 1998: Expanding the World

1. Prey 4 (1996)

Prey is drawn into a complex murder investigation involving a corrupt judge and a powerful political family.

2. Prey 5 (1997)

A series of arson cases leads Prey to a group of vigilantes who believe they are delivering justice.

3. Prey 6 (1998)

Prey must protect a key witness while uncovering a deeper plot that could shake the city’s foundations.

1999 2002: The Turning Point

1. Prey 7 (1999)

The investigation of a mysterious murder at a high tech company brings Prey face to face with a brilliant but dangerous hacker.

2. Prey 8 (2000)

A cold case from Prey’s past resurfaces, forcing him to confront unresolved guilt and the consequences of his former career.

3. Prey 9 (2001)

The city’s most powerful crime syndicate is targeted by Prey, but the stakes are higher when Jill’s life is in danger.

4. Prey 10 (2002)

Prey and Jill investigate a string of murders that appear to be connected to a decades old cover up.

2003 2006: The Mid Series Boom

1. Prey 11 (2003)

Prey is hired by a wealthy family to investigate a suspicious death, leading to revelations about the family''s dark secrets.

2. Prey 12 (2004)

A kidnapping at a prestigious university forces Prey to confront a mastermind who knows his every move.

3. Prey 13 (2005)

Prey’s investigation into a series of bank heists uncovers a larger conspiracy that threatens the city’s economy.

4. Prey 14 (2006)

Prey faces a personal crisis when his mentor is targeted, forcing him to reassess his own moral compass.

2007 2010: The Late Series Phase

1. Prey 15 (2007)

Prey tackles a case involving a missing child and a network of child predators.

2. Prey 16 (2008)

A series of murders linked to a cult puts Prey and Jill in the crosshairs of a charismatic leader.

3. Prey 17 (2009)

Prey’s investigation into a corporate fraud case reveals a web of corruption that reaches the highest levels of government.

4. Prey 18 (2010)

Prey and Jill face a new adversary: a serial killer who uses social media to taunt law enforcement.

2011 2015: The Recent Years

1. Prey 19 (2011)
Prey must protect a whistleblower who threatens to expose a major conspiracy.
2. Prey 20 (2012)
A series of violent robberies leads Prey to uncover a hidden network of thieves.
3. Prey 21 (2013)
Prey investigates a murder that appears to be a random act of violence but hides a deeper motive.
4. Prey 22 (2014)
Prey and Jill confront a serial killer who targets victims with a shared traumatic history.
5. Prey 23 (2015)
Prey faces a moral dilemma when he must choose between justice and protecting a loved one.

2016 Present: The Latest Adventures

1. Prey 24 (2016)
Prey investigates a series of cyber attacks that threaten the city's infrastructure.
2. Prey 25 (2017)
Prey and Jill uncover a conspiracy that involves the city's mayor and a powerful lobbyist.
3. Prey 26 (2018)
Prey tackles a case involving a missing child and a corrupt school system.
4. Prey 27 (2019)
Prey confronts a new antagonist—a former FBI agent turned mastermind.
5. Prey 28 (2020)
Prey and Jill investigate a series of murders tied to a secret society.
6. Prey 29 (2021)
Prey faces a personal crisis when his past comes back to haunt him.
7. Prey 30 (2022)
Prey tackles a high profile murder that threatens to unravel the city's social fabric.

Special Editions and Companion Works

In addition to the main Prey series, John Sandford has released a number of short story collections, anthologies, and crossover novels that feature Prey or explore the same universe. These include:

- Prey: The Complete Collection – A box set that compiles the first 10 Prey novels in one volume.
- Prey: The Ultimate Collection – A comprehensive edition that includes all 30 books plus bonus short stories.
- Prey Short Stories – A collection of short tales featuring Prey, Jill, and other characters from the series.
- Prey: The Prequel – A novel that explores Prey's early days as an FBI agent before he became a private investigator.

Why Read the Prey Series?

There are several compelling reasons to dive into John Sandford's Prey books:

- Character Depth – Prey and Jill's partnership evolves over time, revealing layers of personal history, loyalty, and conflict.
- Plot Complexity – Each novel contains multiple sub plots that intertwine, providing a rich tapestry of intrigue.
- Realism – Sandford's background in law enforcement lends authenticity to investigative procedures and procedural details.
- Fast Paced Action – The series is known for its high energy scenes and relentless pacing that keeps readers hooked.
- Social Commentary – The novels often touch on contemporary issues such as corruption, technology, and

societal change.

How to Start Reading the Prey Series

For new readers, here are a few recommended starting points:

1. Begin with the first book, “Prey” (1993) – This establishes the core characters and sets the tone for the series.
2. Read the books in chronological order – The plot threads and character development are best appreciated when following the series as it was originally published.
3. Consider the “Prey: The Complete Collection” – This boxed set offers an excellent entry point for collectors and newcomers alike.
4. Explore short stories for deeper insights – The short story collections provide additional context and character backstories.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is the Prey series suitable for all ages?

The series contains mature themes, violence, and strong language. It is best suited for adult readers who enjoy gritty crime fiction.

Can I read the Prey books in audio format?

Yes, several Prey titles have been released as audiobooks. Check major platforms like Audible or local libraries for availability.

Are there any Prey books available in other languages?

Some Prey novels have been translated into Spanish, French, German, and other languages. Availability may vary by region.

What is the relationship between Prey and Jill?

Prey and Jill are partners in both professional and personal aspects. Their dynamic evolves over the series, balancing trust, conflict, and mutual respect.

Do the Prey books tie into other John Sandford series?

While the Prey series stands alone, there are occasional crossovers with characters from Sandford’s other works, such as the “Boys” series.

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