

# We're Batman

 By [Charles Siboto](#)

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So our friendly neighbourhood Spider-Man's currently doing his web-slinging thing on the big screen; new actor in the form of Andrew Garfield, Mary Jane's been put on the shelf in favour of a new love interest Gwen Stacy (Emma Stone), he's donning a cool new suit. The Lizard (Rhys Ifans) causes havoc as the new villain and basically everything is shiny new. Total reboot. The movie is getting healthy reviews all-round and doing well at the box office. According to IMDb stats, the movie's sitting at a USD525 353 977 worldwide gross as of 16 July. It's safe to say that Spidy's having a good time. The Dark Knight rises on Friday (27 July on our screens), though, and will probably put an end to all of that.





Personally, I liked the Sam Raimi trilogy, especially the first one. Peter Parker's nerdiness and the manner in which he had to learn to assimilate his Spider-Man identity into his life were beautifully communicated. Then again I was also a bookish teenager at the time. That's what Spider-Man's story is about, after all - a nerdy teenager trying to find his place in the world, albeit a super-powered teenager. That's one of the reasons that the character is so well received by comic book readers and cinema-goers; his story is not very far removed from our own. Peter Parker is an intelligent science nerd (genius in fact), he is orphaned at a young age and lives with his kindly aunt and uncle and as he grows older he, naturally, wants to know more about his parents - whose story is a very hush-hush sort of affair. Like many of us, he's had to navigate the maze that is high school life; he falls in love and it's a mess. In the classic storyline when Peter graduates high school he is broke and has to work as a freelance photographer snapping exclusive shots of his Spider-Man alter ego for the Daily Bugle. Peter doesn't have it easy in any manner; his life is the sort of rough that many teenagers and young adults can relate to. He has the added responsibility of being a web-slinging superhero, but we can understand his struggles on a very real level. This is why we continue to read the comic books and watch the movies.

## Being our favourite superhero

In our quiet moments, we've all toyed with the idea of being our favourite superhero, whether it's Spidy or Superman. That's as far as it goes, though, we dream about it for a bit and then carry on with our lives. Then there's Batman. He's different. When we imagine being Batman there's a certain form of magic to it, the dream seems like it's within reach. Superpowers aside, Spider-Man is more of a realistic character than Batman, but damn reality to hell! We want to be Batman. The Amazing-Spiderman is merely keeping us busy till *The Dark Knight Rises* hits our screens. Everyone knows that there's no competition between the two heroes - Batman will dominate. I'm expecting *The Dark Knight Rises* to smash all the records set by Marvel's *The Avengers*.

Because we all want to be Batman, let's see how one can go about emulating Christopher Nolan's take on the character on the grimy streets of Jozi (SA's Gotham). First things first (never second): money. You will need to play the national lottery and win the jackpot. I have faith that this can be done. The millions that you win in the lottery will be invested into building a company that matches Wayne Industries in stature and is worth billions. The company's main purpose is to supply you with ultra-cool gadgets to assist you in your war against crime; everything else can be handled by guys in nice suits and you can sleep through the board meetings. You should probably put in some effort into making sure that the corporate image of the company is squeaky clean. Read the memos now and then and do business with people like Patrice Motsepe and Tokyo Sexwale. That's just the company image. Your own image, conversely, should be a rich, shallow playboy. I'd suggest hanging out with Kenny Kunene when you have time; take pictures with him and eat some finger food off of the naked body of a girl or two. Hire a Lucius Fox type of fellow to act as the CEO of the company, but he has to be there in the more important role of making cool gadgets for you and adding nifty improvements to your Batsuit - like the ability to manoeuvre your neck freely. You will need to be able to trust this individual with your secret Batman identity and one of the deciding factors in employing this individual should be his take on the Batmobile. The tough Jozi environment calls for a kick-ass design that strikes fear into the hearts of hardened criminals.





## You need to step up to the plate

You probably aren't an orphan whose rich parents were killed in a shady alley (where classy folk hang) but you do live in South Africa, you watch the news and you know that the crime stats are very high. This fact positively irks you and you're filled with an all-encompassing desire to do something about it. You need to step up to the plate and be the hero that Jozi needs, not the one it deserves - or some such cool thing. You are a dark knight.

The next item on your list is an obscenely large and elaborate mansion in Houghton. It needs to be big enough to fit in a Batcave, so shop wisely. The mansion must come with the butler services of Alfred Pennyworth, a gentleman of distinguished proportions. If you can't find someone named Alfred Pennyworth find a person with impeccable butler skills, extremely accurate marksmanship, some hand-to-hand combat skills and overall resourcefulness, and then legally change his name. Feel free to do the same with Lucius Fox. In addition to making good tea, Alfred helps you design a Batsuit with a cool utility belt in which you keep gadgets that solve a myriad of problems you face when tackling crime. Remember to get Lucius to add the neck manoeuvrability aspects to the suit later, because, as Nolan highlighted in *The Dark Knight*, looking behind you is very important. Alfred also gives you advice concerning push-ups, women, family and the minds of maniacs. This reminds me, you will need to establish an asylum for the criminally insane individuals you battle.

## **Read a book and play Soduku**

I doubt I have to point out to you that, as Batman, you will need to establish a rigorous training regimen and master most of the martial arts in existence, because you're averse to the idea of using firearms. We already have too many illegal guns in this country. You're rich so hire people to train you or travel the world exploring all the criminal underworlds, like Bruce Wayne in *Batman Begins*. Just be on the lookout for Ra's al Ghul - that guy is not your friend. Batman is highly intelligent so read a book now and then and play Soduku.

Finally, you should stalk the Gauteng Police Commissioner, Lieutenant-General Mzwandile Petros (unfortunately he looks like a man you can't convince to change his name to Jim Gordon) and strike up an alliance with him. He should know that he can count on you for help and that you're willing to take the fall as the villain of the story in order to continue fighting Jozi's criminal element. It's all about that dynamic where he knows you keep the streets clean and still sends his troops after you because you can handle that pressure. Also, you get to freak him out with your disappearing trick every time he turns his back whilst speaking to you. It'll never stop baffling him.

named Alfred Pennyworth? Check. Batsuit with neck manoeuvrability? Check. Training in all sorts of martial arts and an extensive informal education? Check. A contact in the police force? Check.

The rest is really just you getting out there and testing what does and what doesn't work. You'll get beaten up, stabbed and shot, I imagine. Once that's all over, though, you'll be all set and ready for all manner of kick-assery. Go watch The Dark Knight Rises on 27 July and then make us proud prowling the mean streets of Jozi. Wherever an old lady without an umbrella, handbag or walking stick is in danger, be there!

## ABOUT CHARLES SIBOTO

Charles Siboto is a delightful, youngish person. He firmly believes that kindness matters and cannot abide people who are asshats.  
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