

# Neymar Jr. Biography

Neymar da Silva Santos Junior is a professional Brazilian footballer, who plays as a forward for the national team and French club Paris Saint Germain. Commonly known as Neymar, he was born on 5 February 1992 in Mogi das Cruzes, Brazil. Neymar is regarded as one of the best players of his generation.

The versatile attacker is dominant on the left wing but can play on the right wing and as a striker or second striker as well. The Brazilian has 202 club goals from 346 appearances and 53 goals from 83 international caps.

## Background

Neymar Jr. started playing football after drawing inspiration from his father who was a professional footballer himself. Neymar had the typical Brazilian footballer traits in him and owing to playing futsal in his childhood, he became renowned for his pace, fluid dribbling skills, great vision, chance creation and his trademark feints.

In 1999, he joined the Portuguesa Santista Youth Club and became one of the best upcoming talents of the country soon.

## Debut

Neymar joined the youth side of Portuguese team Santos FC at the age of 11. He made his debut on 7 March 2009, aged 17. He put up a stellar performance in his debut season scoring 14 goals in 48 games and was given the 'Best Young Player' award.

Neymar has previously represented the Brazil U-17 team at the 2009 FIFA Under-17 World Cup. He made his first international debut on 10 August 2010 against England in a friendly match, aged 18. He was named in the starting 11 and wore the number 11 jersey.

Brazil won the match 2-0 with Neymar scoring the decisive goal as he headed in a cross from Andre Santos in the 28th minute to clench the win.

## **Club Career**

In his five-year career with Santos, Neymar scored 70 goals and assisted 35 times in 134 appearances. He led the club to their first Copa Libertadores title in 43 years, during which he also scored the FIFA Goal of the Year and finished the 2012-13 season with a career best total of 43 goals.

Neymar Jr. then moved to Spanish club FC Barcelona in May 2013 in reported transfer deal worth 57.1 million euros. The move shaped up the 21-year old's career, with Neymar developing into a world class player. Neymar formed the famed MSN trio with Lionel Messi and Luis Suarez, helping the club to one of its most successful seasons.

## **Rise to Glory**

Neymar made his competitive debut for FC Barcelona in the 2013–14 La Liga season against Levante, replacing Alexis Sánchez in the 68th minute with Barcelona winning the first match of the season 7–0.

He scored the first goal for the club in Spanish Cup first-leg match against Atletico Madrid. The match ended as a draw with Neymar equalizing at 1-1. On 11 December, Neymar hit his first Champions League goal against Celtic FC, by scoring a hatrick in a 6-1 win.

After an impressive international debut, Neymar was a part of the Brazil squad for the 2013 Confederations Cup. Neymar scored in three consecutive games and was awarded Player of the

Match in each. He assisted the first and scored the second goal in the final, where Brazil defeated Spain 3-0. Neymar was awarded the Golden Ball after the tournament.

Having settled in Spain and adapted to Barca's style of play, Neymar scored 39 goals in the Spanish League and netted in 10 goals in the European Cup, finishing as the UEFA joint top scorer with Cristiano Ronaldo and teammate Lionel Messi.

Barcelona won the treble- the domestic league, domestic cup and the international cup- for the year 2014-15 for a record second time, becoming the only club in history to do so.

The next season, Neymar scored 31 goals and assisted 27 times in 49 matches. He won the Spanish Champions Trophy for the second time with FC Barcelona, with the club boasting of a domestic double this time.

Neymar's performance put him in the elite league of footballers when he was shortlisted and finished third in the FIFA Ballon d'Or rankings, behind Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi.

In the 2016 Rio Olympics, Neymar was appointed as the captain of the team and guided his team to success, scoring the only goal in the 1-1 draw between Brazil and Germany. He slotted home the winning penalty in the shootout to give Brazil its first Olympic football gold medal.

On 9 March 2017, Neymar and Barcelona pulled off the biggest comeback ever in the football history as they bounced back from a 4-0 deficit to win the home leg 6-1 against PSG. Neymar was the star man of the show as he converted a penalty kick and scored from a brilliant free kick to level the score at full time, before assisting Sergi Roberto with the match winning goal in the injury time.

Following the 2016-17 season, Neymar created headlines when he joined Paris Saint Germain from Barcelona for \$ 200 million on 3 august 2017, becoming the most expensive footballer in history.

The move received criticism from fans, but Neymar has been exceptionally good with the French side, linking up well with fellow strikers Kylian Mbappe and Edinson Cavani. He has scored 27 goals from 26 games for PSG, assisting 17 times.

### **Low Points**

During the 2014 FIFA World Cup, Neymar was performing brilliantly for his national side, but in the quarter final match against Colombia, the forward endured a knee to the back from Zuniga and broke his spine.

He missed the rest of the World Cup and his role as the team's talisman came to the fore as Brazil were beaten 7-1 in the semi-finals against Germany, who went on to win the cup.