

# [***Biden-Trump Gaffe Tracker: Biden Gets 2021 Inflation Rate Wrong, Trump Bizarrely Riffs About Hot Dogs, Hannibal Lecter And Sinatra***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BGP-C2R1-JBCM-F2DW-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** Biden, 81, is the oldest president in history and Trump, 77, would be the second-oldest if he wins in November. And they re increasingly frequent misspoken comments have drawn increased scrutiny and concern.

**Body**

**Topline**

As concerns have grown that former President Donald Trump, 77, and President Joe Biden, 81, are too old to serve another term amid repeated rhetorical missteps since announcing their campaigns, here s a list of the most notable recent gaffes.

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US President Joe Biden speaks to reporters before boarding Air Force One at Hagerstown Regional Airport in Hagerstown, Maryland, on March 5, 2024. (Photo by MANDEL NGAN/AFP via Getty Images)

AFP via Getty Images

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**Key Facts**

**Biden (May 14)** Bidentold Yahoo Financeinflation was at 9% when I came in, repeating a claim he made in aCNN interviewearlier this month (inflation was at 1.4% year-over-year when Biden took office in January 2021, according to the Consumer Price Index).

**Trump (May 11)** Trump referred to former President Jimmy Carter as Jimmy Connors, chuckling as he caught the error during a campaign speech in New Jersey, clarifying that Jimmy Carter had a bad reputation, but right now he is considered a totally brilliant president by comparison to Biden.

**Trump (May 11)** The former president bizarrely congratulated the late, great Hannibal Lecter, the serial killer cannibalist character from a series of Thomas Harris novels, then pointed out we have people that are being released into our country that we don t want in our country, referring to undocumented migrants.

**Trump (May 11)** In another odd reference, Trump told the crowd in New Jersey he had just eaten a hot dog, against advice he said Frank Sinatra once gave him to never eat before you perform, to which Trump said he responded I m not performing, I m a politician, but Sinatra died in 1998, before Trump s entrance into ***politics***.

**Biden (May 9)** The president said Candace Parker a two-time WNBA Most Valuable Player and Olympic gold medalist who retired from the Aces after 16 seasons in the league will be considered one of the greatest all-time coaches while honoring the Aces for their 2023 WNBA championship win at the White House, according to a transcript of his remarks.

**Trump (May 9)** The former president got the age of his 18-year-old son Barron wrong in an interview with Telemundo,telling the TV station he s pretty young, I will say, he s 17, while reacting to the news that Barron wastapped to be a delegate for the Republican National Convention in July (Barron turned 18 in March).

**Biden (April 26)** Biden repeated a heavily disputed claim that he was arrested while standing on the porch with a Black family who was moving in to Lynnfield, Delaware, as it was being desegregated and protesters gathered outside, recalling to radio host Howard Stern he was brought back home by the police previous fact-checks bymultiple outletsinto Biden s oft-repeated claim have unearthed newspaper articles from 1959 reporting arrests at protests outside two homes of Black families near where Biden was living at the time, but there s no evidence Biden was among those taken into custody.

**Biden (April 24)** Biden appeared to read out loud a direction from his teleprompter to pause during a speech before the North America Building Trade Union: Imagine what we can do next, four more years, pause, Biden said, before the crowd began chanting four more years, a frequent Biden rallying cry.

**Biden (April 17)** Biden twice suggested during a visit to a Scranton, Penn., World War II memorial honoring his uncle, Ambrose Finnegan, that his body may have been eaten by people, saying, [H]e got shot down in New Guinea, and they never found the body because there used to be a lot of cannibals, for real, in that part of the New Guinea. But the official military account of his death states that his Air Force plane crashed into the ocean off the coast of New Guinea and that neither his body nor the aircraft were recovered.

**Biden (April 16)**In aninterviewwith a localCBS affiliatein Birmingham, Ala., Biden said, I made it clear to the Israelis don t move on Haifa likely referring to Rafah, the southern Gaza Strip city where millions of Palestinians have taken refuge and the U.S. haswarned Israelnot to carry out a potentially devastating invasion. Haifa is a major port city in northern Israel.

**Trump (March 25)** Trump also claimed the top person at the NYSE was very, very upset and mortified that TMTG did not trade on the exchange, and claimed he said I m losing business because of New York, because people don t want to be in New York and they don t want to go into the New York Stock Exchange, but, it is unclear who Trump is referring to, as both the exchange s president, Lynn Martin, and board chair Sharon Bowen, are women.

**Trump (March 25)**At apress conferencefollowing a hearing for hishush money trial, Trump claimed that Trump Media & Technology Company, which owns his Truth Social network andwent publicafter adeal was approvedlast week, decided not to trade on the New York Stock Exchange due to his ongoing court cases: the New York Stock Exchange wants to have us badly, and I told them we can t do the New York Stock Exchange, you re treated too badly in New York, but Trump Media began trading on Tuesday on the Nasdaq stock exchange, which is also located in New York.

**Trump (March 16):**At arally in Dayton, Ohio,Trump again mistakenly referred to former President Barack Obama, this time possibly confusing himself with Obama, though it remains unclear what he might have meant: Joe Biden won against Barack Hussein Obama, has anyone ever heard of him? Trump asked the crowd, before adding, every swing state, Biden beat Obama but in every other state, he got killed.

**Trump (March 9):**At aspeechin Rome, Georgia, Trump claimed the polls are rigged while discussing his appeal to suburban housewives, before abruptly backtracking and saying disregard that last statement, I love the polls so much.

**Biden (State of the Union speech, March 7):**the president misidentifiedLaken Riley, the student murdered on the University of Georgia campus, calling her Lanken, while holding up a pin with her name on it.

**Biden (State of the Union speech, March 7):**the president briefly said the 2021 Capitol riot took place on July 6, before correcting himself and saying January 6.

**Biden (State of the Union speech, March 7):**after speaking about capping prescription drug prices, Biden made an off-the-cuff remark and invited Congress to fly with him and see lower prices for their medications in Toronto, Berlin, Moscow I mean, excuse me well, even Moscow, probably.

**Trump (March 2):** Trumpseemedto confuse former President Barack Obama with President Joe Biden alleging during a rally in Virginia Putin has so little respect for Obama that he s starting to throw around the nuclear word, markingat leastthe eighth time in recent months it s happened.

**Trump (Feb. 24):** In a speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference, Trumpappearedto endorse Biden, telling the audience he agrees with Russian President Vladimir Putinin preferringBiden over Trump.

**Trump (Feb. 24):** In the same CPAC speech, Trumpappearedto forget the name of his wife, Melania Trump, responding to loud applause in the crowd by saying Mercedes, that s pretty good! though his campaign claimed it was a reference to Mercedes Schlapp, a political commentator and the wife of American Conservative Union (CPAC organizer) chair Matt Schlapp, who he mentioned later in the speech.

**Biden (Feb. 8):** Biden referred to Egyptian PresidentAbdel Fattah El-Sisias the president of Mexico, ironically during a press conference where he contested ascathing reportby Special Counsel Robert Hur that depicted Biden as an elderly man with a poor memory.

**Biden (Feb. 7):** Biden referred to German Chancellor Angela Merkel as the late German leader Helmut Kohltwicewhile speaking at campaign events in New York, days after confusing French President Emmanuel Macron with his late predecessor Francois Mitterrand during a speech in Las Vegas.

**Trump (Jan. 19):** Trumpconfusedhis sole remaining opponent in the GOP primary race, former South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, with former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., during a New Hampshire campaign speech, telling the crowd Nikki Haley was in charge of security on Jan. 6, 2020, as he has repeatedly sought, without evidence, to allege that Pelosi rejected his offer to send more troops to the Capitol that day.

**Biden (Nov. 20):** The president mistakenly referred to Taylor Swift as Britney [Spears] whileattempting a jokeat the White House s annual turkey pardoning ceremony, which took place on his 81st birthday.

**Trump (Oct. 23):** Trumpconfusedthe leaders of Turkey and Hungary in a New Hampshire campaign speech and botched a geographical reference, telling the crowd Hungary s far-right Prime Minister Viktor Orbán is the leader of Turkey, and stating that Turkey shares a front with Russia (neither Hungary nor Turkey border Russia and Turkey s president is Recep Tayyip Erdo an).

**Biden (Sept. 11):** Biden falsely stated he was in New York on Sept. 12, 2001 while delivering an anniversary speech to troops in Alaska, claiming he surveyed the damage at Ground Zero the day after the attacks (then-Sen. Biden actually visited Ground Zero on Sept. 20, 2001).

**Biden (June 27):** Biden has repeatedly mixed up the wars in Ukraine and Iraq, including twice in 24 hours in June, after telling a crowd in Florida inNovemberinflation was tied to a war in Iraq, then quickly corrected himself, saying excuse me, the war in Ukraine, a misstep that came moments before he wrongly stated his son Beau Biden, who served a year in Iraq in the Delaware Army National Guard, died there (Beau Biden died of brain cancer in the U.S. in 2015).

**Key Background**

Biden is the oldest president in history and Trump would be the second oldest if he were elected again in November. Though the two are just four years apart, polls consistently show Biden s age is a far greater concern for voters than Trump s, including a February Bloomberg/Morning Consultpollthat found 82% of voters said Biden or both candidates were too old, compared to 47% who said the same about Trump or both candidates. The age concerns, exacerbated by the candidates various rhetorical missteps, have fueled calls for one, or both candidates, to drop out of the race, including a Februaryop-ed and podcastby New York Times writer Ezra Klein.Trump perhaps aware that criticizing Biden s age could appear hypocritical has repeatedlysaidBiden isn t too old to be president, but is too incompetent. Biden, meanwhile, has sought toflip the scripton concerns about his own age by highlighting Trump s missteps on the campaign trail and makingjokesabout his own age. In an appearance on Late Night With Seth Meyers earlier this year, Biden took a jab at Trump for appearing to mix up Melania and Mercedes Schlapp, telling Meyers that Trump is about as old as I am, but he can t remember his wife s name.

**Tangent**

Biden s verbal missteps have been coupled with trips and falls throughout his tenure, often on the stairs of Air Force One, that have heightened concerns about his mental and physical fitness. In one particularly concerning incident, Bidentook a hard fallon stage at an Air Force Academy graduation ceremony in Colorado in June last year, an incident his team blamed on a sandbag on stage.

**What To Watch For**

Biden and Trump are poised for a historic, and closely contested rematch, in November with polls showing Biden trailing Trump by less than half of a percentage point, according to Real Clear ***Politics*** polling average.

**Contra**

Experts havecautionedagainst reading into the candidates verbal slip-ups on the campaign trail, arguing they can t necessarily be attributed to old age. "We make mistakes. The probability of slip-ups rises as we get older. That has nothing to do with judgment," S. Jay Olshansky, a professor in the School of Public Health at the University of Illinois at Chicago, told Reuters, adding Someone commenting on Trump turning right when he should have turned left? Big deal. Tripping? Join the club. A misspoken word? It happens to all of us. None of us would survive a 24/7 camera."

**Chief Critic**

Biden, who has a penchant for gaffes dating back to his 36 years in the Senate, has argued his age is symbolic of his decades of experience, telling reporters in response to the Hur report I know what the hell I am doing. Hereleasedresults of his annual physical exam earlier this year that found he is a healthy, active, robust 81-year-old male, who remains fit to serve as president, White House physician Dr. Kevin O Connor wrote. The test did not include a cognitive exam, something White House Press Secretary Karine Jean Pierre argued wasn t necessary, telling reporters he passes a cognitive test every day, referring to the rigors of the presidency. Trump, meanwhile, has claimed he purposely confuses Obama and Biden and Haley and Pelosi, claiming Haley and Pelosi are interchangeable and alluding to the unfounded right-wing conspiracy that Obama is secretly pulling the strings at the White House.

**Surprising Fact**

Trump and his allies have repeatedly called for Biden to undergo cognitive testing, but it sunlikelyany attempts to mandate the tests would pass legal muster, based on the qualifications laid out in the Constitution for holding the office of the presidency. Trump has said repeatedly he s aced two cognitive exams, but he has not released the formal results of either report.

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