Former U.S. President Trump goes on trial for rape

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Former United States President Donald Trump has gone on trial, where the writer E Jean Carroll is accusing him in a civil lawsuit of raping her in a department store dressing room in the mid-1990s.  
  
Jury selection began yesterday in Manhattan federal court in the former Elle magazine advice columnist’s case, where Carroll is also accusing Trump of defamation.  
  
Trump, 76, has denied raping Carroll, 79.  
  
He called her claim a “hoax” and “complete scam” in an October 2022 post on his Truth Social platform. Trump also said she made up the encounter to promote her memoir and declared that she was “not my type!”  
  
The trial is expected to last one to two weeks.  
  
It is part of a slew of lawsuits and investigations facing Trump, the Republican front-runner in the 2024 presidential race, and could be politically damaging as witnesses discuss his alleged sexual misconduct, all of which he denies.  
  
The trial began the same day President Joe Biden, a Democrat, said he would seek a second White House term.  
  
Trump was not in the courthouse and not required to attend the trial, and lawyers have indicated he likely will not testify in his defence. Carroll’s lawyers also do not plan to call Trump as a witness.  
  
Carroll is seeking unspecified damages for what she calls significant pain and suffering, lasting psychological harm, and invasion of privacy.  
  
Before juror questioning began, U.S. District Judge Lewis Kaplan instructed Trump’s and Carroll’s lawyers to tell their clients and witnesses not to make statements that could “incite violence or civil unrest.”  
  
Kaplan is also keeping jurors anonymous from the public, including the lawyers, to shield them from potential harassment by Trump supporters.  
  
Trump has repeatedly attacked Carroll and in personal terms, once calling her mentally ill, since she first publicly accused him of rape in June 2019.  
  
Carroll said her encounter with Trump at the Bergdorf Goodman store occurred in late 1995 or early 1996.  
  
She said Trump recognised her, calling her “that advice lady,” and asked for help in buying a gift for another woman.