**Sundar Pichai – An Inspiration**

Born on July 12, 1972 in Madras (now Chennai), Sundar Pichai hails from a middle-class Tamil family.

His father Regunatha Pichai, worked as an electrical engineer for GEC and managed a factory that made electrical components. His mother used to be a stenographer before having Pichai and his younger brother. The Pichai home during Sundar’s young days was a two-room apartment. As a boy growing up in [Madras](https://www.britannica.com/place/Chennai), Pichai slept with his brother in the living room of the cramped family home. Like any Indian middle-class family in the 80s, even to buy a scooter Pichai’s father had to wait for three years.

At an early age Pichai displayed an interest in technology because he understood how technology could save a lot of time. When his mother was sick once, he had to travel to a very far off place to collect blood reports for her. It took him more than an hour to reach the place and he had to wait at the center for hours which annoyed him a lot. But when his family bought their first rotary telephone, he valued it a lot, since with one phone call he would know when reports would arrive. His family realized his skill to memorize a lot of things very early on. As a child Pichai would surprise everyone by remembering many phone numbers. He was also intrigued by the refrigerator his family bought. He said in one of his talks, “We waited a long time to get a refrigerator, too, and I saw how my mom’s life changed: she didn’t need to cook every day, she could spend more time with us. So, there is a side of me that has viscerally seen how technology can make a difference, and I still feel it. I feel the optimism and energy, and the moral imperative to accelerate that progress”

He excelled in studies at his school Jawahar Vidyalaya in Chennai and earned a seat at the Indian Institute of Technology in Kharagpur, where he did his B. Tech in metallurgical engineering and earned a silver medal.

“He was doing work in the field of electronics at a time when no separate course on electronics existed in our curriculum. His thesis dealt with implanting molecules of other elements in silicon wafers to alter its properties. It was very clear from the beginning that he was enthused about electronics and materials,” [said Pichai’s teacher Prof Sanat Kumar Roy.](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/it-services/Meet-Googles-new-Android-chief-Sundar-Pichai/articleshow/19003698.cms)

During the course at IIT, he won a scholarship to study materials science and semiconductor physics from Stanford University from where he went on to complete his M.S. After M.S, he pursued MBA from Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in 2002.

Following a short stint at the management consulting firm McKinsey & Co., Pichai joined [Google](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Google-Inc) in 2004 as the head of product management and development. He was entrusted initially with Google Search toolbar which gave users of Internet Explorer and Firefox easy access to Google search. He also went on to work on many other important products like Google Gears, Gadgets, Google Pack, all of which are no longer available.

That same year Pichai was named vice president of product development, and he began to take a more-active public role. By 2012 he was a senior vice president, and two years later he was made product chief over both Google and the [Android](https://www.britannica.com/technology/Android-operating-system) [smartphone](https://www.britannica.com/technology/smartphone) [operating system](https://www.britannica.com/technology/operating-system).

Then came the turning point in Pichai’s career and Google’s growth journey. Pichai came up with the idea of developing Google’s own browser. Though initially the idea was not encouraged by seniors, his perseverance and faith in his product convinced cofounders of Google, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, to launch Google’s own browser. Over the next few years, he was directly involved in the development of [Chrome](https://www.britannica.com/technology/Chrome), which was released to the public in 2008.

The product changed the way the world works and took Pichai became an internationally popular figure. To date, Chrome stands as the number one browser in the world, way ahead of Internet Explorer and Firefox.

In 2013, Pichai was taking care of running Android. Another important contribution from him was Android One, low-cost smartphones. He also went on and took charge of search, maps, research, Google+, Android, Chrome, infrastructure, commerce and ads, and Google Apps. Under Pichai, Android cemented its place as the world’s leading operating system and the CEO also managed to strengthen various weak points in Android’s architecture, from the point of view of security and integration of Google Assistant etc.

He also was known to have helped negotiate Google’s $3.2 billion deal to acquire Nest Labs in 2014. Therefore, when Google cofounders [Larry Page](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Larry-Page) and [Sergey Brin](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Sergey-Brin) announced the creation of Alphabet Inc., in [August](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/August) 2015, it came as no surprise to industry insiders that Pichai was named CEO of Google, which was reorganized as a subsidiary. In December 2019 he also was named CEO of [Alphabet](https://www.britannica.com/animal/Alphabet-Inc), replacing Page, who stepped down.

“Sundar brings humility and a deep passion for technology to our users, partners and our employees every day. He’s worked closely with us for 15 years, through the formation of Alphabet, as CEO of Google, and a member of the Alphabet Board of Directors. He shares our confidence in the value of the Alphabet structure, and the ability it provides us to tackle big challenges through technology. There is no one that we have relied on more since Alphabet was founded, and no better person to lead Google and Alphabet into the future.”

[The letter](https://blog.google/inside-google/alphabet/letter-from-larry-and-sergey/) from cofounder Page and Brin sums up Pichai’s achievements and what the future holds for Google and Alphabet with Pichai at the helm of affairs.