

Joe Biden



Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. (/ˈbaɪdən/ [ⓘ] *BY-də-n*; born November 20, 1942) is an American politician who is the 46th and current president of the United States. A member of the Democratic Party, he previously served as the 47th vice president from 2009 to 2017 under President Barack Obama and represented Delaware in the United States Senate from 1973 to 2009.

Born in Scranton, Pennsylvania, Biden moved with his family to Delaware in 1953. He studied at the University of Delaware before earning his law degree from Syracuse University. He was elected to the New Castle County Council in 1970 and to the U.S. Senate in 1972. As a senator, Biden drafted and led the effort to pass the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act and the Violence Against Women Act; and oversaw six U.S. Supreme Court confirmation hearings, including the contentious hearings for Robert Bork and Clarence Thomas. Biden ran unsuccessfully for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1988 and 2008. In 2008, Barack Obama chose Biden as his running mate, and Biden was a close counselor to Obama during his two terms as vice president. In the 2020 presidential election, Biden and his running mate, Kamala Harris, defeated incumbents Donald Trump and Mike Pence.

Taking office at age 78, Biden is the oldest president in U.S. history, the first to have a female vice president, and the first from Delaware. In 2021, he signed a bipartisan infrastructure bill, as well as a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus package in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent recession. Biden proposed the Build Back Better Act, which failed in Congress, but aspects of which were incorporated into the Inflation Reduction Act that was signed into law in 2022. Biden also signed the bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act, which focused on manufacturing, appointed Ketanji Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court and worked with congressional Republicans to prevent a first ever national default by negotiating a deal to raise the debt ceiling. In foreign policy, Biden restored America's membership in the Paris Agreement. He oversaw the complete withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan that ended the war in Afghanistan, during which the Afghan government collapsed and the Taliban seized control. Biden has responded to the Russian invasion of Ukraine by imposing sanctions on Russia

Joe Biden



Official portrait, 2021

46th President of the United States

Incumbent

Assumed office

January 20, 2021

Vice President Kamala Harris

Preceded by Donald Trump

47th Vice President of the United States

In office

January 20, 2009 – January 20, 2017

President Barack Obama

Preceded by Dick Cheney

Succeeded by Mike Pence

United States Senator from Delaware

In office

January 3, 1973 – January 15, 2009

Preceded by J. Caleb Boggs

Succeeded by Ted Kaufman

Member of the New Castle County Council

and authorizing civilian and military aid to Ukraine. In April 2023, he announced his candidacy for the Democratic Party nomination in the 2024 presidential election.

Early life (1942–1965)

Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. was born on November 20, 1942,^[1] at St. Mary's Hospital in Scranton, Pennsylvania,^[2] to Catherine Eugenia "Jean" Biden (née Finnegan) and Joseph Robinette Biden Sr.^{[3][4]} The oldest child in a Catholic family of largely Irish descent, he has a sister, Valerie, and two brothers, Francis and James.^[5]


Biden's father had been wealthy and the family purchased a home in the affluent Long Island suburb of Garden City in the fall of 1946,^[6] but he suffered business setbacks around the time Biden was seven years old,^{[7][8][9]} and for several years the family lived with Biden's maternal grandparents in Scranton.^[10] Scranton fell into economic decline during the 1950s and Biden's father could not find steady work.^[11] Beginning in 1953 when Biden was ten,^[12] the family lived in an apartment in Claymont, Delaware, before moving to a house in nearby Mayfield.^{[13][14][8][10]} Biden Sr. later became a successful used-car salesman, maintaining the family in a middle-class lifestyle.^{[10][11][15]}

At Archmere Academy in Claymont,^[16] Biden played baseball and was a standout halfback and wide receiver on the high school football team.^{[10][17]} Though a poor student, he was class president in his junior and senior years.^{[18][19]} He graduated in 1961.^[18] At the University of Delaware in Newark, Biden briefly played freshman football,^{[20][21]} and, as an unexceptional student,^[22] earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1965 with a double major in history and political science.^{[23][24]}

Biden had a stutter, and has mitigated it since his early twenties.^[25] He has described his efforts to reduce it by reciting poetry before a mirror.^{[19][26]}

Marriages, law school, and early career (1966–1973)

On August 27, 1966, Biden married Neilia Hunter, a student at Syracuse University,^{[23][27]} after overcoming her parents' reluctance for her to wed a Roman Catholic. Their wedding was held in a Catholic church in Skaneateles, New York.^[28] They had three children: Joseph R. "Beau" Biden III, Robert Hunter Biden, and Naomi Christina "Amy" Biden.^[23]

	from the 4th district
	In office
	January 5, 1971 – January 3, 1973
Preceded by	Lawrence T. Messick
Succeeded by	Francis R. Swift
	Personal details
Born	<div>Joseph Robinette Biden Jr.</div> <div>November 20, 1942</div> <div><u>Scranton</u>, <u>Pennsylvania</u>, U.S.</div>
Political party	<u>Democratic</u> (since 1969)
Other political affiliations	<u>Independent</u> (before 1969)
Spouses	<div><u>Neilia Hunter</u></div> <div>(m. 1966; died 1972)</div> <div><u>Jill Jacobs</u> (m. 1977)</div>
Children	<u>Beau</u> · <u>Hunter</u> · <u>Naomi</u> · <u>Ashley</u>
Relatives	<u>Biden family</u>
Residence	<u>White House</u>
Education	<div><u>University of Delaware</u> (BA)</div> <div><u>Syracuse University</u> (JD)</div>
Occupation	Politician · lawyer · author
Awards	<u>List of awards and honors</u>
Signature	
Website	<div><u>Campaign website</u></div> <div>(http://joebiden.com)</div> <div><u>White House website</u> (https://whitehouse.gov/administration/president-biden/)</div>

In 1968, Biden earned a Juris Doctor from Syracuse University College of Law, ranked 76th in his class of 85, after failing a course due to an acknowledged "mistake" when he plagiarized a law review article for a paper he wrote in his first year at law school.^[22] He was admitted to the Delaware bar in 1969.^[1]

In 1968, Biden clerked at a Wilmington law firm headed by prominent local Republican William Prickett and, he later said, "thought of myself as a Republican".^{[29][30]} He disliked incumbent Democratic Delaware governor Charles L. Terry's conservative racial politics and supported a more liberal Republican, Russell W. Peterson, who defeated Terry in 1968.^[29] Biden was recruited by local Republicans but registered as an Independent because of his distaste for Republican presidential candidate Richard Nixon.^[29]

In 1969, Biden practiced law, first as a public defender and then at a firm headed by a locally active Democrat^{[31][29]} who named him to the Democratic Forum, a group trying to reform and revitalize the state party,^[32] Biden subsequently reregistered as a Democrat.^[29] He and another attorney also formed a law firm.^[31] Corporate law did not appeal to him, and criminal law did not pay well.^[10] He supplemented his income by managing properties.^[33]

In 1970, Biden ran for the 4th district seat on the New Castle County Council on a liberal platform that included support for public housing in the suburbs.^{[34][35]} The seat had been held by Republican Henry R. Folsom, who was running in the 5th District following a reapportionment of council districts.^{[36][37][38]} Biden won the general election by defeating Republican Lawrence T. Messick, and took office on January 5, 1971.^{[39][40]} He served until January 1, 1973, and was succeeded by Democrat Francis R. Swift.^{[41][42]} During his time on the county council, Biden opposed large highway projects, which he argued might disrupt Wilmington neighborhoods.^[42]

Biden had not openly supported or opposed the Vietnam War until he ran for Senate and opposed Richard Nixon's conduct of the war.^[43] While studying at the University of Delaware and Syracuse University, Biden obtained five student draft deferments, at a time when most draftees were sent to the war. In 1968, based on a physical examination, he was given a conditional medical deferment; in 2008, a spokesperson for Biden said his having had "asthma as a teenager" was the reason for the deferment.^[44]

1972 U.S. Senate campaign in Delaware

In 1972, Biden defeated Republican incumbent J. Caleb Boggs to become the junior U.S. senator from Delaware. He was the only Democrat willing to challenge Boggs, and with minimal campaign funds, he was given no chance of winning.^{[31][10]} Family members managed and staffed the campaign, which relied on meeting voters face-to-face and hand-distributing position papers,^[45] an approach made feasible by Delaware's small size.^[33] He received help from the AFL–CIO and Democratic pollster

Joe Biden's voice

6:23

Joe Biden speaks on the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan and the fall of Kabul.
Recorded August 16, 2021

Other offices [show]

▪ 2007–2009: Chair of the International Narcotics Control Caucus

▪ 2001^[a]–2003, 2007–2009: Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee

▪ 1987–1995: Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee



Biden in the Syracuse 1968 yearbook