

**Jeffrey Preston Bezos** (/ˈbeɪzoʊs/ *BAY-zohss*;<sup>[2]</sup> né **Jorgensen**; born January 12, 1964) is an American [business magnate](#) best known as the founder, executive chairman, and former president and CEO of [Amazon](#), the world's largest [e-commerce](#) and [cloud computing](#) company. He is the second [wealthiest person](#) in the world, with a net worth of [US\\$ 211 billion](#) as of July 16, 2024, according to [Forbes](#).<sup>[3]</sup> He was the wealthiest person from 2017 to 2021, according to both the [Bloomberg Billionaires Index](#) and [Forbes](#).<sup>[4][5]</sup>

Bezos was born in [Albuquerque](#) and raised in [Houston](#) and [Miami](#). He graduated from [Princeton University](#) in 1986 with degrees in [electrical engineering](#) and [computer science](#). He worked on [Wall Street](#) in a variety of related fields from 1986 to early 1994. Bezos founded Amazon in mid-1994 on a road trip from [New York City](#) to [Seattle](#). The company began as an online bookstore and has since expanded to a variety of other [e-commerce](#) products and services, including video and audio streaming, [cloud computing](#), and [artificial intelligence](#). It is the world's largest online sales company, the [largest Internet company by revenue](#), and the largest provider of [virtual assistants](#) and cloud infrastructure services through its [Amazon Web Services](#) branch.

Bezos founded the [aerospace manufacturer](#) and [sub-orbital spaceflight](#) services company [Blue Origin](#) in 2000. Blue Origin's [New Shepard](#) vehicle [reached space](#) in 2015 and afterwards successfully landed back on Earth; he flew into space on [Blue Origin NS-16](#) in 2021. He also purchased the major American newspaper [The Washington Post](#) in 2013 for \$250 million and manages many other investments through his [venture capital](#) firm, [Bezos Expeditions](#). In September 2021, Bezos co-founded [Altos Labs](#) with [Mail.ru](#) founder [Yuri Milner](#).<sup>[6]</sup>

The first [centibillionaire](#) on the [Forbes Real Time Billionaires Index](#) and the second ever to have eclipsed the feat since [Bill Gates](#) in 1999, Bezos was named the "richest man in modern history" after his [net worth](#) increased to \$150 billion in July 2018.<sup>[7]</sup> In August 2020, according to [Forbes](#), he had a net worth exceeding \$200 billion. On July 5, 2021, Bezos stepped down as the CEO and president of Amazon and took over the role of executive chairman. [Amazon Web Services](#) CEO [Andy Jassy](#) succeeded Bezos as the CEO and president of Amazon.

### Early life and education

Jeffrey Preston Jorgensen was born on January 12, 1964, in [Albuquerque, New Mexico](#),<sup>[8]</sup> as the son of [Jacklyn](#) (née Gise) and [Ted Jorgensen](#).<sup>[9]</sup> At the time of Jeff's birth, his mother was a 17-year-old high-school student and his father was 19.<sup>[10]</sup> Jorgensen was a [Danish American](#) unicyclist<sup>[11]</sup> born in Chicago to a family of Baptists.<sup>[12]</sup> After completing high school despite challenging conditions, Jacklyn attended night school, bringing her baby with her.<sup>[13]</sup> Jeff attended a [Montessori](#) school in Albuquerque when he was 2.<sup>[14]</sup>

Jorgensen drank and struggled financially.<sup>[15]</sup> Jacklyn left her husband to live with her parents, filing for divorce in June 1965 when Jeff was 17-months-old.<sup>[16]</sup> After his parents divorced, his mother married [Cuban immigrant Miguel "Mike" Bezos](#) in April 1968.<sup>[17]</sup> Shortly after the wedding, Bezos adopted 4-year-old Jeff, whose surname was then legally changed from Jorgensen to Bezos.<sup>[18]</sup> Gise, her husband and her son left the area and asked Jorgensen to discontinue contact, to which he agreed.<sup>[19]</sup>

After Mike had received his degree from the [University of New Mexico](#), the family moved to [Houston, Texas](#), so that he could begin working as an engineer for [Exxon](#).<sup>[20]</sup> Jeff attended [River Oaks Elementary School](#) in Houston from fourth to sixth grade.<sup>[21]</sup> Jeff's maternal grandfather was Lawrence Preston Gise, a regional director of the [U.S. Atomic Energy Commission](#) (AEC) in Albuquerque.<sup>[22]</sup>

Lawrence retired early to his family's ranch near [Cotulla, Texas](#), where his grandson would spend many summers in his youth <sup>[23]</sup> and which he would later purchase and expand from 25,000 acres (10,117 ha) to 300,000 acres (121,406 ha). <sup>[24][25]</sup> Jeff displayed scientific interests and technological proficiency and once rigged an electric alarm to keep his younger half-siblings out of his room. <sup>[26][27]</sup> The family moved to [Miami, Florida](#), where Jeff attended [Miami Palmetto High School](#). <sup>[28][29]</sup> In high school, he worked at [McDonald's](#) as a short-order [line cook](#) during the breakfast shift. <sup>[30]</sup>

Bezos attended the Student Science Training Program at the [University of Florida](#). He was high school [valedictorian](#), a [National Merit Scholar](#), <sup>[31][32]</sup> and a [Silver Knight Award](#) winner in 1982. <sup>[31]</sup> In his graduation speech, Bezos told the audience he dreamed of the day when mankind would [colonize space](#). A local newspaper quoted his intention "to get all people off the earth and see it turned into a huge national park". <sup>[33]</sup>

After graduating from high school in 1982, Bezos attended [Princeton University](#). He initially majored in [physics](#) but later switched to electrical engineering and computer science. <sup>[34]</sup> On 13 September 2018, during a talk at [The Economic Club of Washington, D.C.](#), Bezos revealed that his classmate at Princeton [Yasantha Rajakarunanayake](#) who was of Sri Lankan origin, some 30 years ago had defeated him to solve a mathematical problem and as a result, Bezos himself admitted that he gave up his dreams of becoming a theoretical physicist. <sup>[35][36][37][38][39]</sup>

Bezos was a member of the [Quadrangle Club](#), one of [Princeton's 11 eating clubs](#). <sup>[40]</sup> In addition, he was the president of the Princeton chapter of the [Students for the Exploration and Development of Space](#) (SEDS). <sup>[41][42]</sup> He had a 4.2 [GPA](#) and was elected to [Phi Beta Kappa](#) and [Tau Beta Pi](#). Bezos graduated from Princeton in 1986 with a [Bachelor of Science in Engineering](#) (BSE), [summa cum laude](#). <sup>[43]</sup>

## Business career

### Early career

After Bezos graduated from college in 1986, he was offered jobs at [Intel](#), [Bell Labs](#), and [Andersen Consulting](#), among others. <sup>[44]</sup> He first worked at Fitel, a [fintech](#) telecommunications [start-up](#), where he was tasked with building a network for [international trade](#). <sup>[45]</sup> Bezos was promoted to head of development and director of customer service thereafter. He transitioned into the banking industry when he became a product manager at [Bankers Trust](#) from 1988 to 1990. He then joined [D. E. Shaw & Co](#), a newly created [hedge fund](#) with a strong emphasis on mathematical modelling from 1990 until 1994. Bezos became D. E. Shaw's fourth senior vice-president by age 30. <sup>[46][44]</sup>

## Amazon

Main article: [Amazon](#)



Bezos (front row, center) at the Robot Co-op in 2005

In spring 1994, Bezos read that web usage was growing at a rate of 2300% a year and eventually decided to establish an [online bookstore](#).<sup>[47]</sup> He and his then-wife, [MacKenzie Scott](#), left their jobs at D. E. Shaw and founded Amazon in a rented garage in [Bellevue](#), Washington on July 5, 1994, after writing its [business plan](#) on a cross-country drive from New York City to [Seattle](#).<sup>[48][49]</sup> With Bezos at the helm and Scott taking an integral role in its operation—writing checks, keeping track of the books, and negotiating the company's first freight contracts—the foundation was laid for this garage-run operation to grow exponentially.<sup>[50]</sup> Prior to settling in Seattle, Bezos had investigated setting up his company at an [Indian reservation](#) near [San Francisco](#) in order to avoid paying taxes.<sup>[51]</sup> Bezos initially named his new company *Cadabra* but later changed the name to *Amazon* after the [Amazon River](#) in South America, in part because the name begins with the letter A, which is at the beginning of the alphabet.<sup>[52]</sup> At the time, website listings were alphabetized, so a name starting with "A" would appear sooner when customers conducted online searches.<sup>[53]</sup> In addition, he regarded "Amazon," the name of the world's largest river as fitting for what he hoped would become the world's largest online bookstore.<sup>[53]</sup> He accepted an estimated \$300,000 from his parents as an investment in Amazon.<sup>[49][54][55]</sup> He warned many early investors that there was a 70% chance that Amazon would fail or go bankrupt.<sup>[56]</sup> Although Amazon was originally an online bookstore, Bezos had always planned to expand to other products.<sup>[46][52]</sup> Three years after Bezos founded Amazon, he took it public with an [initial public offering](#) (IPO).<sup>[57]</sup> In response to critical reports from [Fortune](#) and [Barron's](#), Bezos maintained that the growth of the Internet would overtake competition from larger book retailers such as [Borders](#) and [Barnes & Noble](#).<sup>[52]</sup>

In 1998, Bezos diversified into the online sale of music and video, and by the end of the year he had expanded the company's products to include a variety of other [consumer goods](#).<sup>[52]</sup> Bezos used the \$54 million raised during the company's 1997 [equity offering](#) to finance the aggressive acquisition of smaller competitors.<sup>[52]</sup> In 2000, Bezos borrowed \$2 billion from banks, as its cash balances dipped to only \$350 million.<sup>[58]</sup> In 2002, Bezos led Amazon to launch [Amazon Web Services](#), which compiled data from weather channels and [website traffic](#).<sup>[52]</sup> In late 2002, rapid spending from Amazon caused it financial distress when revenues stagnated.<sup>[59]</sup> After the company nearly went bankrupt, he closed distribution centers and laid off 14% of the Amazon workforce.<sup>[58]</sup> In 2003, Amazon rebounded from financial instability and turned a profit of \$35 million.<sup>[60][61]</sup> In November 2007, Bezos launched the [Amazon Kindle](#).<sup>[62]</sup> According to a 2008 [Time](#) profile, Bezos wished to create a device that allowed a "flow state" in reading similar to the experience of video games.<sup>[63]</sup> In 2013, Bezos secured a \$600-million contract with the [Central Intelligence Agency](#) (CIA) on behalf of Amazon Web Services.<sup>[64]</sup> In October of that year, Amazon was recognized as the largest online shopping retailer in the world.<sup>[65]</sup>



Bezos in 2010

In May 2016, Bezos sold slightly more than one million shares of his holdings in the company for \$671 million, the largest sum he had ever raised from selling some of his Amazon stock.<sup>[66]</sup> On August 4, 2016, Bezos sold another million of his shares for \$756.7 million.<sup>[67]</sup> A year later, Bezos took on

130,000 new employees when he ramped up hiring at company distribution centers.<sup>[68]</sup> By January 19, 2018, his Amazon stock holdings had appreciated to slightly over \$109 billion; months later he began to sell stock to raise cash for other enterprises, in particular, [Blue Origin](#).<sup>[69]</sup> On January 29, 2018, he was featured in Amazon's [Super Bowl commercial](#).<sup>[70]</sup> On February 1, 2018, Amazon reported its highest ever profit with quarterly [earnings](#) of \$2 billion.<sup>[71]</sup> Due to the growth of [Alibaba](#) in China, Bezos has often expressed interest in expanding Amazon into [India](#).<sup>[72]</sup> On July 27, 2017, Bezos momentarily became the [world's wealthiest person](#) over [Microsoft](#) co-founder [Bill Gates](#) when his estimated [net worth](#) increased to just over \$90 billion. His wealth surpassed \$100 billion for the first time on November 24, 2017, and he was formally designated the wealthiest person in the world by [Forbes](#) on March 6, 2018, with a net worth of \$112 billion.<sup>[73]</sup>



Bezos receives the [James Smithson Bicentennial](#) medal on June 14, 2016, for his work with Amazon.<sup>[74]</sup>

In March 2018, Bezos dispatched Amit Agarwal, Amazon's global senior vice president, to India with \$5.5 billion to localize operations throughout the company's [supply chain](#) routes.<sup>[75]</sup> Later in the month, U.S. President Donald Trump accused Amazon and Bezos, specifically, of [sales tax](#) avoidance, misusing [postal routes](#), and [anti-competitive](#) business practices.<sup>[76]</sup> Amazon's share price fell by 9% in response to the President's negative comments; this reduced Bezos's personal wealth by \$10.7 billion.<sup>[77]</sup> Weeks later, Bezos recouped his losses when academic reports out of [Stanford University](#) indicated that Trump could do little to regulate Amazon in any meaningful way.<sup>[78]</sup> During July 2018, a number of members of the U.S. Congress called on Bezos to detail the applications of Amazon's [face recognition](#) software, [Rekognition](#).<sup>[79]</sup>



Bezos on October 25, 2017, on his visit to [Los Angeles Air Force Base](#).<sup>[80]</sup>

Criticism of Amazon's business practices continued in September 2018 when Senator [Bernie Sanders](#) introduced the Stop Bad Employers by Zeroing Out Subsidies (Stop BEZOS) Act and accused Amazon of receiving [corporate welfare](#).<sup>[81]</sup> This followed revelations by the non-profit group New Food Economy which found that one third of Amazon workers in [Arizona](#), and one tenth of Amazon

workers in [Pennsylvania](#) and [Ohio](#), relied on food stamps.<sup>[82]</sup> While preparing to introduce the bill, Sanders opined: "Instead of attempting to explore Mars or go to the moon, how about Jeff Bezos pays his workers a living wage?"<sup>[83]</sup> He later said: "Bezos could play a profound role. If he said today, nobody who is employed at Amazon will receive less than a living wage, it would send a message to every corporation in America."<sup>[84]</sup> Sanders's efforts elicited a response from Amazon which pointed to the 130,000 jobs it created in 2017 and called the \$28,446 figure for its median salary "misleading" as it included part-time workers.<sup>[85]</sup> However, Sanders countered that the companies targeted by his proposal have placed an increased focus on part-time workers to escape benefit obligations.<sup>[86]</sup> On October 2, 2018, Bezos announced a company-wide wage increase, which Sanders applauded.<sup>[87]</sup> The American workers who were being paid the minimum wage had this increased to \$15 per hour, a decision that was interpreted as support for the [Fight for \\$15](#) movement.<sup>[88]</sup>

In February 2021, Bezos announced that in the [third quarter](#) of 2021 he would step down from his role as CEO of Amazon to become the Executive Chairman of the Amazon Board. He was succeeded as CEO by [Andy Jassy](#).<sup>[89][90][91]</sup> On February 2, 2021, Bezos sent an email<sup>[92]</sup> to all Amazon employees, telling them the transition would give him "the time and energy [he] need[s] to focus on the [Day 1 Fund](#), the [Bezos Earth Fund](#), [Blue Origin](#), [The Washington Post](#), and [his] other passions."<sup>[93]</sup> In February 2024, Bezos sold 24 million shares in Amazon at a total value of \$4 billion. Bezos announced that he intended to sell 50 million shares in Amazon over the next year.<sup>[94]</sup>

## Blue Origin

Main article: [Blue Origin](#)



Bezos and [Rob Meyerson](#) (fifth from left) giving NASA Deputy Administrator [Lori Garver](#) (fourth from left) a tour of Blue Origin's crew capsule in 2011



Then U.S. Secretary of Defense [Ash Carter](#) meets with Bezos in 2016 at [The Pentagon](#).

In September 2000, Bezos founded Blue Origin, a [human spaceflight startup](#).<sup>[95]</sup> Bezos has long expressed an interest in space travel and the development of human life in the Solar System.<sup>[32]</sup> His 1982 high school [valedictorian](#) senior graduation speech was followed up with a [Miami Herald](#) interview in which he expressed an interest to build and develop hotels, amusement parks, and colonies for human beings who were in orbit.<sup>[96]</sup> The 18-year-old Bezos stated that he wanted to



preserve Earth from overuse through [resource depletion](#).<sup>[97]</sup> [Rob Meyerson](#) led Blue Origin from 2003 to 2017 and served as its first president.<sup>[98]</sup>

After its founding, Blue Origin maintained a low profile until 2006 when it purchased a large tract of land in [West Texas](#) for a launch and test facility.<sup>[99]</sup> After the company gained the public's attention during the late 2000s, Bezos additionally indicated his interest in reducing the [cost of space travel](#) for humans while also increasing the safety of extraterrestrial travel.<sup>[100]</sup> In September 2011, one of the company's uncrewed prototype vehicles crashed during a short-hop test flight. Although the crash was viewed as a setback, news outlets noted how far the company went from its founding-to-date in advancing [spaceflight](#).<sup>[101]</sup> After the crash, Bezos has been superstitiously wearing his "lucky" Texas [Cowboy boots](#) to all rocket launches.<sup>[102]</sup> In May 2013, Bezos met with [Richard Branson](#), chairman of [Virgin Galactic](#), to discuss commercial spaceflight opportunities and strategies.<sup>[103]</sup> He has been compared to Branson and [Elon Musk](#) as all three are billionaires who prioritize spaceflight among their business interests.<sup>[104]</sup>

In 2015, Bezos announced that a new [orbital launch vehicle](#) was under development and would make its first flight in the late-2010s.<sup>[105]</sup> Later in November, Blue Origin's [New Shepard](#) space vehicle successfully rocketed into space and reached its planned test altitude of 329,839 feet (100.5 kilometers) before executing a [vertical landing](#) back at the launch site in West Texas. In 2016, Bezos allowed select journalists to visit, tour, and photograph his facility.<sup>[106]</sup> He has repeatedly called for increased inter-space energy and industrial manufacturing to decrease the negative costs associated with [business-related pollution](#).<sup>[107]</sup>

In December 2017, New Shepard successfully flew and landed [dummy passengers](#), amending and pushing its human space travel start date into late 2018.<sup>[108]</sup> To execute this program, Blue Origin built six of the vehicles to support all phases of testing and operations: no-passenger test flights, flights with test passengers, and commercial-passenger weekly operations.<sup>[109]</sup> Since 2016, Bezos has spoken more freely about his hopes to [colonize the solar system](#), and has been selling US\$1 billion in Amazon stock each year to capitalize Blue Origin in an effort to support this endeavor.<sup>[110][111]</sup> In May 2018, Bezos maintained that the primary goal of Blue Origin is to preserve the [natural resources of Earth](#) by making the human species [multi-planetary](#).<sup>[112]</sup> He announced that *New Shepard* would begin transporting humans into [sub-orbital space](#) by November 2018.<sup>[112]</sup> In July 2018, it was announced that Bezos had priced commercial spaceflight tickets from \$200,000 to \$300,000 per person.<sup>[113]</sup>

## Spaceflight

**Jeff Bezos**

**Space career**

**Commercial Astronaut**



**Flight time**    10m 18s

**Selection**     [Blue Origin](#)

**Missions**     [NS-16](#)

On July 20, 2021, he launched on the [NS-16](#) mission with his half-brother Mark Bezos, [Wally Funk](#), and [Oliver Daemen](#).<sup>[114]</sup> He launched nine days after [Richard Branson](#) launched on board the [Virgin Galactic Unity 22](#) mission. Bezos's [suborbital flight](#) lasted over 10 minutes, reaching a peak altitude of 66.5 miles (107.0 km).<sup>[115]</sup>

### ***The Washington Post***

See also: [The Washington Post](#)

On August 5, 2013, Bezos announced his purchase of *The Washington Post* for \$250 million in cash,<sup>[116]</sup> at the suggestion of his friend, [Don Graham](#).<sup>[117]</sup> To execute the sale, he established [limited liability company Nash Holdings](#) to serve as a [holding company](#) through which he would own the newspaper.<sup>[118]</sup> The sale closed on October 1, 2013, and Nash Holdings took control.<sup>[119]</sup> In March 2014, Bezos made his first significant change at *The Washington Post* and lifted the online paywall for subscribers of a number of U.S. local newspapers in [Texas](#), Hawaii, and [Minnesota](#).<sup>[120]</sup> In January 2016, Bezos set out to reinvent the newspaper as a media and technology company by reconstructing its digital media, mobile platforms, and analytics software.<sup>[121]</sup> After a surge in online readership in 2016, the paper was profitable for the first time since Bezos made the purchase in 2013.<sup>[122]</sup>

### **Bezos Expeditions**

Main article: [Bezos Expeditions](#)

Bezos makes personal investments through his [venture capital](#) vehicle, Bezos Expeditions.<sup>[123]</sup> He was one of the first [shareholders](#) in Google, when he invested \$250,000 in 1998. That \$250,000 investment resulted in 3.3 million shares of Google stock, worth about \$3.1 billion in 2017.<sup>[124][125]</sup> He also invested in [Unity Biotechnology](#), a life-extension research firm hoping to slow or stop the process of aging.<sup>[126]</sup> Bezos is involved in the healthcare sector, which includes investments in Unity Biotechnology, [GRAIL](#), [Juno Therapeutics](#), and [Zocdoc](#).<sup>[127]</sup> In January 2018, an announcement was made concerning Bezos's role within a new, unnamed healthcare company. This venture, later named [Haven](#), is expected to be a partnership between Amazon, [JPMorgan](#), and [Berkshire Hathaway](#).<sup>[128][129]</sup>

Bezos also supports philanthropic efforts through direct donations and non-profit projects funded by Bezos Expeditions.<sup>[130]</sup> Bezos used Bezos Expeditions to fund several philanthropic projects, including an Innovation center at the Seattle Museum of History and Industry and the Bezos Center for Neural Circuit Dynamics at [Princeton Neuroscience Institute](#).<sup>[131][132]</sup> In 2013, Bezos Expeditions funded the recovery of two [Saturn V](#) first-stage [Rocketdyne F-1](#) engines from the floor of the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>[133]</sup> They were positively identified as belonging to the [Apollo 11](#) mission's [S-1C stage](#) from July 1969.<sup>[134][135]</sup> The engines are currently on display at the [Seattle Museum of Flight](#).<sup>[136][137]</sup>

### **Altos Labs**

Main article: [Altos Labs](#)

In September 2021, Bezos co-founded Altos Labs with [Mail.ru](#) founder [Yuri Milner](#). Altos Labs is a well-funded biotechnology company dedicated to harnessing [cellular reprogramming](#) to develop [longevity therapeutics](#).<sup>[6]</sup> The company has recruited prominent scientists such as [Juan Carlos Izpisua Belmonte](#) (known for work on rejuvenation through reprogramming), [Steve Horvath](#) (known for work in [epigenetic aging clocks](#)), and [Shinya Yamanaka](#) (the [Nobel Prize](#)-winning inventor of cellular reprogramming in mammalian cells).<sup>[6]</sup> The company left [stealth mode](#) and launched on January 19, 2022, with a start capital of \$3 billion and an executive team led by [Hal Barron](#).<sup>[138]</sup>

## Public image



Bezos at a [naturalization](#) ceremony on June 14, 2016

Journalist [Nellie Bowles](#) of [The New York Times](#) has described the [public persona](#) and personality of Bezos as that of "a brilliant but mysterious and coldblooded corporate titan".<sup>[139]</sup> During the 1990s, Bezos earned a reputation for relentlessly pushing Amazon forward, often at the expense of [public charity](#) and social welfare.<sup>[139][140]</sup> Journalist Mark O'Connell criticized Bezos's relentless customer focus as "very small" in terms of impact on humanity as a whole,<sup>[141]</sup> a sentiment technologist [Tim O'Reilly](#) agreed with.<sup>[142]</sup> His business practices projected a public image of [prudence](#) and parsimony with his own wealth and that of Amazon. In 1999, Bezos was worth \$10 billion yet drove a 1996 [Honda Accord](#).<sup>[143]</sup> Throughout the early 2000s, he was perceived to be geeky or nerdy.<sup>[144][145][146]</sup>

Bezos was seen by some as needlessly quantitative and data-driven.<sup>[147][148]</sup> This perception was detailed by Alan Deutschman, who described him as "talking in lists" and "[enumerating] the criteria, in order of importance, for every decision he has made."<sup>[144]</sup> Select accounts of his persona have drawn controversy and public attention. Notably, journalist Brad Stone wrote [a book](#) that described Bezos as a demanding boss as well as [hyper-competitive](#),<sup>[140][147]</sup> and opined that Bezos perhaps "bet the biggest on the Internet" than anyone else.<sup>[149]</sup> Bezos has been characterized as a notoriously opportunistic CEO who operates with little concern for obstacles and [externalities](#).<sup>[150][151]</sup>

During the early 2010s, Bezos solidified his reputation for aggressive business practices, and his public image began to shift. Bezos started to wear [tailored clothing](#); he [weight trained](#), pursued a regimented diet and began to freely spend his money.<sup>[152]</sup> His physical transformation has been compared to the transformation of Amazon; he is often referred to as the [metonym](#) of the company.<sup>[153][154]</sup> Since 2017, he has been portrayed by [Kyle Mooney](#) and [Steve Carell](#) on [Saturday Night Live](#), usually as an undercutting, domineering figure.<sup>[155]</sup> His physical appearance increased the public's perception of him as a symbolically dominant figure in business and in popular culture, wherein he has been [parodied](#) as an enterprising [supervillain](#).<sup>[156][157][158]</sup>

In May 2014, the [International Trade Union Confederation](#) named Bezos the "World's Worst Boss", with its general secretary [Sharan Burrow](#) saying: "Jeff Bezos represents the inhumanity of employers who are promoting the North American corporate model",<sup>[159]</sup> while in 2019, [Harvard Business Review](#), which ranked Bezos the best-performing CEO for 4 years in a row since 2014, did not rank him even in the top 100, citing Amazon's "relatively low ESG ([environment](#), [social](#), and [governance](#)) scores" that reflect "risks created by [working conditions](#) and employment policies, [data security](#), and [antitrust](#) issues."<sup>[160]</sup>

During the late 2010s, Bezos reversed his reputation for being reluctant to spend money on non-business-related expenses.<sup>[24]</sup> His relative lack of philanthropy compared to other billionaires has drawn a negative response from the public since 2016.<sup>[161][24]</sup> Bezos has been known to publicly contest claims made in critical articles, as exemplified in 2015 when he sent a memo to employees denouncing a *New York Times* piece.<sup>[162][163]</sup>



## Leadership style

"Day 1" Management Philosophy

Day 1: [start up](#)

Day 2: [stasis](#)

Day 3: [irrelevance](#)

Day 4: "excruciating, painful decline"

Day 5: [death](#)

*Bezos has stated "it is always Day 1" to describe his [growth mindset](#).*<sup>[164][165]</sup>

Bezos used what he called a "regret-minimization framework" while he worked at [D. E. Shaw](#) and again during the early years of Amazon. He described this [life philosophy](#) by stating: "When I'm 80, am I going to regret leaving Wall Street? No. Will I regret missing the beginning of the Internet? Yes."<sup>[166]</sup> During the 1990s and early 2000s at Amazon, he was characterized as trying to quantify all aspects of running the company, often listing employees on spreadsheets and basing executive decisions on data.<sup>[34]</sup> To push Amazon forward, Bezos developed the [mantra](#) "Get Big Fast", establishing the company's need to [scale](#) its operations to produce market dominance.<sup>[52]</sup> He favored diverting Amazon profits back into the company in lieu of allocating it amongst shareholders in the form of [dividends](#).<sup>[144]</sup>

Bezos uses the term "work–life harmony" instead of the more standard "[work–life balance](#)" because he believes that *balance* implies that you can only have one and not the other. He believes that work and home life are interconnected, informing and calibrating each other.<sup>[167]</sup> Journalist [Walt Mossberg](#) dubbed the idea that someone who cannot tolerate criticism or critique should not do anything new or interesting "[The Bezos Principle](#)".<sup>[168]</sup> Bezos does not schedule early morning meetings and enforces a two-pizza rule—a preference that meetings are small enough for two [pizzas](#) to feed everyone in the boardroom.<sup>[169]</sup> When interviewing candidates for jobs at Amazon, he has stated he considers three inquiries: can he admire the person, can the person raise the [common standard](#), and under what circumstances could the person become exemplary.<sup>[170]</sup>

In 2018, it was reported that he met with Amazon investors for just six hours a year.<sup>[169]</sup> Instead of using [presentation slides](#), Bezos requires high-level employees to present information with six-page narratives.<sup>[171]</sup> Since 1998, Bezos has published an annual letter for Amazon shareholders wherein he frequently refers to five principles: focus on customers, not competitors; take risks for [market leadership](#); facilitate staff morale; build a [company culture](#); and empower people.<sup>[172][173]</sup> Bezos maintains the email address [jeff@amazon.com](mailto:jeff@amazon.com)<sup>[174]</sup> as an outlet for customers to reach out to him and the company. Although he does not respond to the emails, he forwards some of them with a question mark in the subject line to executives, who then attempt to address the issues.<sup>[175]</sup> Bezos has cited [Jeff Immelt](#) of [New Enterprise Associates](#),<sup>[176]</sup> [Warren Buffett](#) of [Berkshire Hathaway](#), [Jamie Dimon](#) of [JPMorgan Chase](#), and [Bob Iger](#) of [The Walt Disney Company](#) as major influences on his leadership style.<sup>[176][177]</sup>