

Elon Reeve Musk ([/ˈiːlɒn/](#); born June 28, 1971) is a businessman known for his key roles in the space company [SpaceX](#) and the automotive company [Tesla, Inc.](#) His other involvements include ownership of [X Corp.](#), the company that operates the social media platform [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), and his role in the founding of [the Boring Company](#), [xAI](#), [Neuralink](#), and [OpenAI](#). In November 2024, United States president-elect [Donald Trump](#) appointed Musk as the co-chair of the proposed [Department of Government Efficiency](#) (DOGE) in the [second Trump administration](#). Musk is the [wealthiest individual in the world](#); as of November 2024 [Forbes](#) estimates his net worth to be US\$304 billion.^[3]

Musk was born in [Pretoria](#), South Africa, and briefly attended the [University of Pretoria](#) before immigrating to [Canada](#) at the age of 18, acquiring citizenship through his Canadian-born mother. Two years later, he [matriculated](#) at [Queen's University at Kingston](#) in Canada. Musk later transferred to the [University of Pennsylvania](#) and received [bachelor's degrees](#) in economics and physics. He moved to California in 1995 to attend [Stanford University](#) but never enrolled in classes, and with his brother [Kimbal](#) co-founded the online [city guide](#) software company [Zip2](#). The startup was acquired by [Compaq](#) for \$307 million in 1999. That same year, Musk co-founded [X.com](#), a [direct bank](#). X.com merged with [Confinity](#) in 2000 to form [PayPal](#). In 2002, Musk acquired [US citizenship](#), and that October [eBay](#) acquired PayPal for \$1.5 billion. Using \$100 million of the money he made from the sale of PayPal, Musk founded SpaceX, a [spaceflight](#) services company, in 2002.

In 2004, Musk was an early investor in [electric-vehicle](#) manufacturer Tesla Motors, Inc. (later Tesla, Inc.), providing most of the initial financing and assuming the position of the company's chairman. He later became the product architect and, in 2008, the CEO. In 2006, Musk helped create [SolarCity](#), a solar energy company that was acquired by Tesla in 2016 and became [Tesla Energy](#). In 2013, he proposed a [hyperloop](#) high-speed [vactrain](#) transportation system. In 2015, he co-founded OpenAI, a nonprofit [artificial intelligence](#) research company. The following year Musk co-founded Neuralink, a [neurotechnology](#) company developing [brain–computer interfaces](#), and The Boring Company, a tunnel construction company. In 2018 the [U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission](#) (SEC) sued Musk, alleging that he had falsely announced that he had secured funding for a private takeover of Tesla. To settle the case Musk stepped down as the chairman of Tesla and paid a \$20 million fine. In 2022, [he acquired Twitter](#) for \$44 billion, merged the company into the newly-created X Corp. and rebranded the service as X the following year. In March 2023, Musk founded xAI, an artificial-intelligence company.

Musk's actions and [expressed views](#) have made him a polarizing figure. He has been criticized for making unscientific and misleading statements, including [COVID-19 misinformation](#), promoting right-wing [conspiracy theories](#), and endorsing an [antisemitic trope](#); he has since apologized for the latter. His [ownership of Twitter](#) has been controversial because of the layoffs of large numbers of employees, an [increase in hate speech](#), [misinformation and disinformation](#) posts on the website, and changes to website features, including [verification](#).

In early 2024, Musk became active in American politics as a vocal and financial supporter of Donald Trump, becoming Trump's second-largest individual donor in October 2024. In November 2024, Trump announced that he had chosen Musk along with [Vivek Ramaswamy](#) to co-lead DOGE, a new advisory board which aims to improve government efficiency through measures such as slashing "excess regulations" and cutting "wasteful expenditures".