

Ajinkya Rahane

Ajinkya Madhukar Rahane (born 6 June 1988) is an Indian cricketer. He plays primarily as a middle-order batsman in the Test format and as a top-order batsman in white-ball forms of the game.^[1] He is currently the vice captain of the Indian cricket team in Test cricket.

Rahane made his first-class debut in 2007–08 season for Mumbai and averaged an impressive 77.04 after 100 innings. He scored over 1500 runs three times in his first five seasons. He made his international debut in a Twenty20 International against England at Manchester in August 2011.^{[1][2]} With batsman Shikhar Dhawan injuring his fingers, Rahane made his Test debut in the March 2013 Border–Gavaskar Trophy. His first Test century came at Basin Reserve, Wellington against New Zealand.^[3] Rahane scored his 10th hundred against West Indies on 25 August 2019 in a tough situation to win India by 318 runs. Rahane was named player of the match by scoring 184 runs including a century and half century.

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Ajinkya Rahane



Ajinkya Rahane in June 2016

Personal information	
Full name	Ajinkya Madhukar Rahane
Born	6 June 1988 <div>Ashwi KD, Sangamner, Maharashtra, India</div>
Nickname	Ajju, Jinks
Height	5 ft 7 in (1.70 m)
Batting	Right-handed
Bowling	Right-arm medium
Role	Batsman
International information	
National side	India (2011–present)
Test debut (cap 278)	22 March 2013 v Australia
Last Test	29 February 2020 v New Zealand
ODI debut (cap 111)	3 September 2011 v England
Last ODI	16 February 2018 v South Africa
ODI shirt no.	27
T20I debut (cap 39)	31 August 2011 v England
Last T20I	28 August 2016 v West

Early life

He was born in Ashwi KD, Ahmednagar district to Madhukar Baburao Rahane and Sujata Rahane. The family came from the village of Chandanapuri, Tal-Sangamner.^[4] He has a younger brother and sister, Shashank and Apurva Rahane.^[5] At the age of seven, Madhukar Rahane took Ajinkya to a small coaching camp with a matting wicket in Dombivli,^{[4][6]} as they could not afford proper coaching.^[4] From the age of 17, he took coaching from former India batsman Pravin Amre.^[7] Rahane cleared his Secondary School Certificate from SV Joshi High School, Dombivli.

Domestic career

Rahane had performed well when India U-19 toured New Zealand in early 2007, with two centuries. The tour boasted future international stars such as Virat Kohli, Kane Williamson, Ishant Sharma, Tim Southee, Trent Boult and Ravindra Jadeja. The scores in New Zealand impressed the selectors and they picked him for the Mohammad Nissar Trophy in Pakistan. He had no first-class experience prior to this match in Karachi.^[8]

First-class career

Rahane made his first-class debut, at the age of 19, for Mumbai against Karachi Urban in the Mohammad Nissar Trophy in September 2007, at Karachi, when most of the first-choice Mumbai players were unavailable for various reasons. Opening the innings with Sahil Kukreja, he scored a century on debut 143 (207), with Kukreja scoring 110 for a total of 247.^[9] Rahane was subsequently picked for the Irani Trophy match against Rest of India.^[8]

He made his Ranji Trophy debut for his first-class side Mumbai in the 2007–08 season, following an impressive showing for West Zone in the 2007–08 Duleep Trophy, where he scored 172 against England Lions.

Rahane, with 1089 runs in his second Ranji season (2008–09), was a crucial factor in Mumbai's 38th title win. He continued to impress in domestic cricket, scoring three centuries in each of the 2009–10 and 2010–11 seasons of the Ranji Trophy.^[10] His first-class top score of 265 not-out (batting at no. 3 for Mumbai) came against Hyderabad at Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium,

	Indies			
T20I shirt no.	27			
Domestic team information				
Years	Team			
2007–present	Mumbai			
2008–2010	Mumbai Indians			
2011–2015; 2018–2019	Rajasthan Royals <i>(squad no. 3)</i>			
2016–2017	Rising Pune Supergiant <i>(squad no. 3)</i>			
2019	Hampshire <i>(squad no. 6)</i>			
Career statistics				
Competition	Test	ODI	T20I	FC
Matches	63	90	20	142
Runs scored	4,112	2,962	375	10,689
Batting average	43.74	35.26	20.83	49.25
100s/50s	11/22	3/24	0/1	32/49
Top score	188	111	61	265*
Balls bowled	–	–	–	108
Wickets	–	–	–	0
Bowling average	–	–	–	–
5 wickets in innings	–	–	–	–
10 wickets in match	–	–	–	–
Best bowling	–	–	–	–
Catches/stumpings	80/–	48/–	16/–	147/–
Source: ESPNcricinfo (http://www.espncriinfo.com/ci/content/player/277916.html), 29 February 2020				

Uppal in the 2009–10 season.^[11] Rahane surpassed 1000 runs in three separate seasons, and scoring 152 in the 2011 Irani Trophy match against Rajasthan helped him get selected for India's Test squad.^[8]

In April 2019, Rahane joined Hampshire as their overseas player for two months of the season.^[12]

List A career

Rahane made his List A debut for Mumbai against Delhi for the Ranji One-day Trophy in March 2007.^[13] He contributed 61 runs to a 171-run partnership with former Indian opener Wasim Jaffer. Two great centuries back to back in the Emerging Players Tournament in Australia brought him a place in the India ODI (One Day International) squad for the tour of England in 2011.^[14]

Rahane progressed through the Mumbai ranks and had also been a part of the Indian U-19 team and the India A. Ajinkya Rahane had also turned out for India Blue and India Green in the NKP Salve Challenger Trophy.

In September 2018, Rahane was named as the captain of Mumbai for the 2018–19 Vijay Hazare Trophy tournament.^[15] In October 2018, he was named as the captain of India C's squad for the 2018–19 Deodhar Trophy.^[16] He led the team to the Final and played a crucial knock of 144* to win the title.

International career

Test career

Rahane was selected in the Test squad to play against West Indies in November 2011. Rahane was taken in the squad for 16 months and in his presence, he saw seven players make their debuts.^[17] His performance in the limited-overs cricket (ODI and T20I) during that period was not up to the mark, as he averaged around 25 in both ODI and T20 cricket, and struggled for form in the series against Pakistan and England (January 2013).^[18]

Rahane made his debut in Test cricket on 22 March 2013 against Australia in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy at Feroz Shah Kotla Stadium, Delhi. According to the media, Rahane got this chance through "sheer luck". Shikhar Dhawan, who made a dazzling start to his career in the third Test at Mohali, scoring 187 on debut, was the obvious choice for the Delhi Test until he suffered an injury to the knuckles of his left hand. Gautam Gambhir, who was picked as a replacement for Dhawan, was sidelined owing to jaundice. Rahane was handed his India Test cap which brought an end to a lean patch for Mumbai, who had not produced a Test player for India since May 2007.^[17] Two single-digit scores in the game prompted many to question Rahane's ability to handle pressure and replicate his domestic success at international level.^[19]

Despite his failure in the debut match, Rahane was included in the playing eleven for the first match of India's tour of South Africa (2013–14). Batting in the lower-middle order, he made 209 runs at an average of 69.66 in the series (including a 96 off 157 balls at Kingsmead, Durban) against the bowling attack comprising Dale Steyn, Morne Morkel and Vernon Philander. "For a man who had spent many a tour and series warming up the bench, carrying drinks, wondering when his opportunity will come, he has taken his chance with both hands, even though it arrived in

the most difficult of conditions to bat in", cricket pundit Sidharth Monga wrote. Rahane finished as India's third-highest run-getter in the series, but he was in the most precarious position of all before the series began.^[20]

Rahane made his first Test ton at Basin Reserve, Wellington, New Zealand on 15 February 2014 against New Zealand.^[21] India were in a difficult position when Rahane came to the crease at 156 for five and by the time he departed with 118 India were in a match-winning position ruined by Brendon McCullum's famous triple-century.^[22] "He had a mountain of first-class runs backing him, of course, but did he have what goes around by the queer name of X-factor? Did he have that extra edge in his game and personality that separates top-class international players from the rest? Was he merely humble, or was he unable to assert himself, unable to absorb real pressure? After his first two Test tours to South Africa and New Zealand, we can safely conclude it must be the former. Underneath that seemingly soft exterior lurks a solid Test batsman, and he was on display at the Basin Reserve", ESPN Cricinfo wrote in their analysis.^[23]

Rahane played in the Investec Test Series (India tour of England, 2014) in England. His previous overseas performances (in away Tests, Rahane averaged 61.83 having scored 371 in four Tests including a century and two fifties) earned him a place in the playing eleven over Rohit Sharma.^[21] He justified his selection by making his second century at the second Test match at Lord's Cricket Ground. Put in to bat on a green-top wicket by Alastair Cook, India collapsed to 140 for six by tea, only to be rescued by Rahane's century. He was supported by Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who scored a valuable 36, besides putting on 90 runs for the eighth wicket.^[24] In the process, Rahane became the fourth Indian batsman to post a Test century on his first appearance at Lord's, joining Sourav Ganguly, Dilip Vengsarkar and Ajit Agarkar.^{[25][26]}

Rahane played in the 2014–15 Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Australia. In the third Test match at Melbourne, Rahane made his third Test hundred. He made 399 runs in four, including a century and three half-centuries against the opposition attack of Mitchell Johnson and Ryan Harris, the core of a bowling unit that famously won 2013–14 Ashes series 5–0.

In the first Test of 2015 tour of Sri Lanka, Rahane broke the world record for most catches in a Test match with eight.^[27] In the second Test at PSS, Colombo, he scored his fourth Test hundred, scoring 126 in India's second innings, and India went on to win the match. In the process, he reached his career-best ranking of 20th, at the ICC Player Rankings.^[28]

Rahane played in the 2015 Freedom Series. In the 4th test match at New Delhi, Rahane made centuries in both the innings on a pitch where most batsmen found it difficult to score, and with this feat, he became only the fifth Indian to join the elite club of twin centurions in a single test.

On 16 August 2016, Rahane achieved his career best test batsmen's ranking of No. 8.

On 25 March 2017, Rahane became India's 33rd Test Captain when he led the team in the 4th test against Australia in Dharamsala due to an injury to Virat Kohli.^[29] He scored 46 runs in his first innings and quick 37 Runs in 2nd innings as India's Test captain. He scored a century in Sri Lanka in August 2017. In the return series at home, he failed miserably scoring only 17 in 5 innings. Despite an overseas average of 55, he was not included in the playing 11 for the 1st and 2nd Test against South Africa in 2018. After the failures of Rohit Sharma in both tests, the Indian vice-captain was brought back into the playing 11 for the 3 rd test where his innings of 48 in the 2nd innings on a dangerous batting pitch proved very crucial in setting up an Indian victory. He led the Indian Team in the test match against Afghanistan national cricket team in the absence of Virat Kohli in 2018. In the India's tour of England, Rahane scored two half centuries, a match winning

81 in the third test and 51 in the fourth test.^[30] In the following India's tour of Australia, Rahane scored two half centuries; a match-winning 70 in the Adelaide test and a 51 in the Perth test. Overall, he finished the series with 217 runs.^[31]

On 15 November 2019, in the first innings of the first test match against Bangladesh, Rahane hit 86 off 172 deliveries, crossing the boundary 9 times. This became his 21st test fifty in international cricket.

One-Day International career

Two back to back centuries in the Emerging Players Tournament in Australia (201) helped Rahane secure a place in the India limited-overs squad for the tour of England. He made his debut against England at Chester-le-Street as a replacement for opener Virender Sehwag. Although Rahane made 40 runs at strike-rate of 90.90, India's hopes of their first victory of the 2011 summer against England were thwarted by a washout at Chester-le-Street.^[32]

He did well in his maiden international series (2011 NatWest Series), against England in England, and in the return series. He made a 47 ball 54 on his second match of the latter tour.^[8] Rahane failed to impress in his next few limited over matches against West Indies, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and England.

Rahane made his second ODI fifty in 2013-14 Asia Cup, only to be followed by another slump.^{[33][34]} In a short ODI career in the middle order, Rahane has seemed unsure and struggled at times to find the balance between defence and attack. He showed signs of comfort at the top of the order with rapid centuries against England (September 2014) and Sri Lanka (November 2014), but Rohit Sharma's second ODI double-century followed by a big hundred against Australia at the MCG pushed Rahane back to the middle order. T20s^[35] In the ICC Cricket World Cup followed, Rahane only managed to score 208 runs from 8 matches, with an average of 34.66. He was dropped by Mahendra Singh Dhoni in the second ODI against Bangladesh but after the series, he was appointed as captain of India for its tour of Zimbabwe for ODIs and T20Is in 2015 when a second string squad was selected.^[36] India won that ODI series 3–0, although Rahane was not able to leave any big impacts with the bat, he made a total of 112 in three matches with only one half-century in it.^[37]

Rahane had a relatively good home series against South Africa. Batting at number 4 he scored 3 half-centuries including a quickfire 89 in a losing cause where South Africa put on a mammoth total of 438. Jinx had a decent series in Australia scoring two quick 50's in 3 innings at 4. He had an ordinary series against New Zealand scoring just one 50 in 5 innings as an opener.

T20I career

Rahane made his international debut for India in a Twenty20 International against England at Old Trafford Cricket Ground, Manchester in August 2011. He scored a half-century on this match (61 of 49) against an England attack comprising Stuart Broad, Graeme Swann and Tim Bresnan. The match was the only T20I played by former Indian captain Rahul Dravid.

Rahane was part of Indian team make it to the final of 2014 World T20. After sitting on the bench for the first three matches he got a chance to play against Australia where he scored 19 runs. He gave India a good start in the semi-final scoring 32 runs as India went on to win the Match. He also captained India in the two Twenty20 International against Zimbabwe, winning the first and losing the second match. He scored 33 and 4 runs in those matches.^[38]

IPL career

Rahane was widely regarded as not being a Twenty20 player going into 2012 Indian Premier League, but had a superb season for Rajasthan Royals. Previously he was in the Mumbai Indians squads and got limited opportunities.^[8] And then, he caught the eye of Rajasthan Royals' Shane Watson, who had watched him score an 80-ball hundred in a session in the second innings of a three-day game against Australia A in 2010. Having bought him from the Mumbai Indians, Rahul Dravid and Watson got Rahane to open the innings. "Opening the batting with Rahul bhai gave me a chance to express myself and showcase all that I had learned over the years," Rahane explained.^[19]

Rahane has had a successful stint with Rajasthan Royals so far, playing under Rahul Dravid's mentorship.^[39] Rahane rose to prominence in the Premier League world in 2012 season for Rajasthan Royals. He hit a match-winning 98 in his first game of IPL 2012 against Kings XI Punjab^[40] and followed that up with an unbeaten 103 against Royal Challengers Bangalore.^[41] His 84 off 63 balls against Delhi Daredevils was in vain though, as they lost by just one run.^[42] In Premier League 2012, Rahane became the first batsman to hit a century and emerged the leading run-scorer for Rajasthan Royals.^[32] He was retained by the Royals for the 2014 Premier League season.^[43]

Ajinkya Rahane in IPL (2008–15)						
Teams	Matches	Runs	HS	Ave	SR	100
MI, RR and RPS	97	3789	105*	37.73	131.34	2

Over the years, Rahul Dravid has been given a lot of credit for way Rahane has matured as a player. With Dravid guiding him, Rahane has transformed from a shy, long-format specialist into a player capable of batting at any position, in any format. Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar told NDTV, "What has been impressive about Rahane's career is the way he has made those little changes that have helped him to get better in every format of the game. This batsman is a thinking batsman, who keeps thinking about how to get better and that is why he is such a vital cog in the Rajasthan Royals team and a vital cog in the Indian cricket team."^[44]

For his performances in 2013, he was named in the Cricinfo CLT20 XI.^[45]

For his performances in 2015, he was named in the Cricinfo IPL XI for the season ^[46]

Rahane had played for Rising Pune Supergiant in 2016 and 2017 season. Rahane was the leading run-scorer for RPS in 2016 season. Rahane had led RPS in a match against Delhi Daredevils in 2017 season when RPS captain Steve Smith missed out due to food poisoning.

In 2018, Rahane was brought back for Rs 4 crore by Rajasthan Royals by using a Right-to-Match card. Steve Smith was appointed as Captain of Rajasthan Royals on 24/02/18. Following the ball tampering scandal against South Africa, Steve Smith (Captain of Australia) stepped down as Royals Captain. Rahane was set to lead Rajasthan Royals for the 2018 Season.

But things have been fizzled up for the Mumbaikar from past years. In 2012, Rahane came in limelight when he scored a magnificent century in IPL. The following years were fantastic for him and it even helped him join the international matches. The world was under his feet by then. But suddenly something was missing in him. Around 2017, that old confident Rahane was actually missing. IPL became worse for him in 2018, as compared to 2017. His strike rate came into talk and soon he became another Rahane. He is no more included in limited formats for international

matches, and also not that test player he used to be. IPL 2019 has been fantastic for this young man as he played some useful innings for team also smashed a century against Delhi capitals in SMS stadium this season and became the highest run scorer for Rajasthan Royals (105*), this was his second century in IPL .

Playing style

Rahane plays in the middle-order for the national team in Test and as an opener in all forms of ODI and T20 cricket. He batted in the top three for Mumbai – starting as an opener and later playing at No. 3.^[47] Rahane is widely praised by Dhoni for his batting technique, temperament, commitment and discipline to the game, often being compared with Rahul Dravid, VVS Laxman and Sachin Tendulkar.^[48] He is often regarded as the best test batsman and a very athletic fielder. He has been described on a number of occasions as "one of the rising stars of Indian cricket".^{[22][49][50][51]} Former Australian captains Steve Waugh compared Rahane to the batting maestro Sachin Tendulkar due to his compact technique, range of shots and temperament.^{[52][53]}

Rahane showed what a versatile player he could be, adapting to the pitch and weather conditions with ease. His trademark shots are the back-foot square-punch towards the off-side, the cover drive, the flick shot towards square leg and the straight drive against the seamers. He is also a good hooker, puller and sweeper of the ball.^[54] Against spinners, his most-productive shots are the slog sweep-over mid-wicket, the back-foot punch towards the cover, the cover drive and the inside-out aerial shot over cover. He occasionally uses his feet and comes down the pitch to loft the ball over the bowler's head for a boundary or the maximum and whenever he uses it covers the distance. He is extremely quick between the wickets, and an excellent timer of the ball; the gift of timing combined with significant power is what makes Rahane successful in all formats, according to skipper Virat Kohli.^[55]

Rahane is also a very good fielder, who has good reflexes and anticipation along with his calm and composed attitude, making him the 'complete package' as a field, according to Indian fielding coach R Sridhar.^[56] On 15 August 2015, he broke the record of most catches in a test match when he took 8 catches in the first test against Sri Lanka at Galle.^[57]

Records and Achievements

Test Matches

- 5th Indian Batsman to score centuries in each innings of a Test^[58]
- Highest number of catches by a non wicketkeeper in a single Test match (8)^[57]
- 9th Indian player to win the first test match as a captain.
- 3rd Indian batsman to score a century on County Debut after Piyush Chawla and Murali Vijay.
- 1st Indian 'Player of the Match' of the World Test Championship.
- 1st Indian to score century in World Test Championship.
- Rahane became the fourth Indian batsman to post a Test century on his first appearance at Lord's

T20 Matches

- first batsman to hit six fours in an over in IPL (against S Arvind, RCB)
- joint-record with 5 other players for the highest number of catches in a T20 match

- highest individual score for Rajasthan Royals in IPL (105*)

Awards

- CEAT Indian Cricketer of the Year: 2014–15^[59]
- M A Chidambaram Trophy for best Under-19 cricketer: 2006–07^[60]

In May 2016, the BCCI recommended him for the Arjuna award.^[61]

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