

David Bowie Biography

David Bowie was an English singer and songwriter famous for his musical innovation and visual presentation. This biography of David Bowie provides detailed information about his childhood, life, achievements, works & timeline.

Quick Facts	
Nick Name	Ziggy Stardust, Thin White Duke, David Bowie
Also Known As	David Robert Jones
Famous as	Singer
Nationality	British
Religion	Buddhism, Atheism
Born on	08 January 1947 AD
Height	1.78 m
Zodiac Sign	Capricorn
Born in	Brixton
Died on	10 January 2016 AD
Place of death	Manhattan, New York, United States
Father	Haywood Stenton Jones
Mother	Margaret Mary Jones
Siblings	Terry Burns
Spouses	Iman Abdulmajid, Angela Bowie
Children	Duncan Jones, Alexandria Zahra Jones
Education	Ravens Wood School
Founder/Co-Founder	Bewlay Bros.
Awards	2014; 1984 - Brit Award for British Male Solo Artist 1985 - Grammy Award for Best Music Video - Jazzin' for Blue Jean 1999 - Grammy Hall of Fame - The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars 2006 - Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award 1984 - MTV Michael Jackson Video Vanguard Award 1984 - MTV Video Music Award for Best Male Video - China Girl 1996 - Brit Award for Outstanding Contribution to

Quick Facts

Music

1986 - MTV Video Music Award for Best Overall Performance - Dancing in the Street

1976 - Saturn Award for Best Actor - The Man Who Fell to Earth

2003 - Daytime Emmy Award for Outstanding Special Class Special - Hollywood Rocks the Movies: The 1970s

1974; 1973 - NME Award for World Male Singer

1983 - NME Award for Best Dressed Male

1984 - MTV Michael Jackson Video Vanguard Award

1984 - MTV Video Music Award for Best Male Video - China Girl

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1974; 1973 - NME Award for World Male Singer

1983 - NME Award for Best Dressed Male

1974; 1973 - NME Award for British Male Singer

1974 - NME Award for Best Producer

2014 - Porin Award for Best International Album Outside of Classical and Jazz Music - The Next Day

1983; 1981; 1978 - NME Award for Best Male Singer



David Bowie was an English singer and songwriter famous for his musical innovation and visual presentation. A popular musical figure for over five decades, he was well-known for the creativity he infused into his works. He was a versatile personality who was also a talented multi-instrumentalist, arranger, painter and actor. Born and raised in Brixton, south London, he became interested in music at a young age and was especially influenced by Elvis Presley. He soon began performing to Presley's numbers at the local Wolf Cub group and took up playing the ukulele, tea-chest bass, and piano. Soon there was no doubt in his mind that his calling was to become a singer. However, his claim to stardom did not come easy. Despite his talent and determination, he struggled a lot during his initial years as a singer before managing to establish himself. He reached the peak of his success with his Ziggy Stardust stage show—his flamboyant costumes and androgynous appearance became an iconic element of his image. A singing superstar in the late 1970s and early 1980s, he continued performing and experimenting with musical styles, including “industrial” and “jungle” throughout the 1990s and 2000s. He remained actively involved with music until the very end and died of cancer in 2016.

Childhood & Early Life:

- He was born as David Robert Jones on 8 January 1947 in Brixton, London, England, to Margaret Mary "Peggy" and Haywood Stenton "John" Jones. His mother worked as a waitress while his father was a promotions officer for the children's charity Barnardo's.
- He was a creative child who developed an early interest in music. He listened to songs of artists like Frankie Lymon and the Teenagers, the Platters, Fats Domino, Elvis Presley and Little Richard. He was greatly influenced by Elvis Presley.
- After attending Burnt Ash Junior School, he moved on to Bromley Technical High School. As a teenager he started playing multiple instruments like ukulele, tea-chest bass, and piano, and also began performing at the local Wolf Cub group. At school he studied art, music and design, including layout and typesetting.

Career:

- He formed his first band at the age of 15 and performed at local youth gatherings and weddings. He changed his band mates quite frequently over the next few years as he struggled to get a footing in the competitive music industry.
- During the mid-1960s, he changed his name to David Bowie in order to avoid confusion with Davy Jones of the Monkees. He released his eponymous debut album in 1967 which proved to be a flop.
- Later in 1967, he met dancer Lindsay Kemp and enrolled in his dance class at the London Dance Centre. There he also studied dramatic arts under Kemp, from avant-garde theatre and mime to commedia dell'arte.
- David Bowie received his first breakthrough in 1969 when he released the single 'Space Oddity'. The song, which is about the launch of Major Tom, a fictional astronaut, reached the top five in the UK. It became a huge success and gave Bowie some much needed exposure in the music industry. The song was later released in the United States and climbed to No. 15 on the charts.
- In 1972, he released 'The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars' in collaboration with the Spiders from Mars—Ronson, Bolder and Woodmansey. Based on the story of a fictional rock star named Ziggy Stardust, the album peaked at No. 5 in the UK and No. 75 in the United States on the Billboard Music Charts. It became very popular due to its glam rock influences and themes of sexual exploration and social commentary, and catapulted Bowie to superstardom.
- The 1970s marked the most productive period of his career. His innovative songs and stagecraft combined with his larger-than-life stage persona made him one of the most popular musical stars of the decade. Some of his most successful albums for the decade include 'Aladdin Sane' (1973), 'Pin Ups' (1973), 'Diamond Dogs' (1974), 'Young Americans' (1975), 'Station to Station' (1976), and 'Low' (1977).
- He welcomed the 1980s with 'Scary Monsters (And Super Creeps)' released in 1980. The album was considered very significant in artistic terms and earned much critical acclaim. It peaked at No. 1 in the UK. Its most successful single, 'Ashes to Ashes' gave international exposure to the underground New Romantic movement.
- His success as a singer and performer continued throughout the 1980s with hit albums like 'Let's Dance' (1983), 'Tonight' (1984), and 'Never Let Me Down' (1987). During this time he also appeared in some films like 'Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence' (1983), 'The Hunger' (1983), and 'Jazzin' for Blue Jean' (1984).
- Throughout the 1990s and 2000s he continued to experiment with musical styles, including industrial and jungle. No longer as popular as he once was, he still managed to maintain his status as an icon in world music. Some of his most notable albums from this period are 'Outside' (1995), 'Earthling' (1997), 'Hours...' (1999), 'Heathen' (2002), and 'Reality' (2003). He last performed live at a charity event in 2006 and went on a long hiatus, eventually returning

a decade later.

Major Works:

- His best known album was 'The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars' which is loosely based on a story of a fictional rock star named Ziggy Stardust. The album made Bowie a superstar and was eventually certified platinum and gold in the UK and US respectively. It has been consistently considered one of the greatest albums of all time, with 'Rolling Stone' magazine ranking it the 35th greatest ever.

Awards & Achievements:

- His breakthrough song 'Space Oddity' (1969) won him an Ivor Novello Special Award For Originality.
- He is the recipient of two Grammy Awards and three Brit Awards (Including Best British Male Artist twice and the award for Outstanding Contribution to Music).
- Bowie was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame on 17 January 1996.
- David Bowie was made a Commander of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government in 1999.

Personal Life & Legacy:

- Bowie married Mary Angela Barnett in 1970 and had a son, Duncan, who eventually became a film director. The couple divorced in 1980.
- Several years later, he married Somali-American model Iman in a private ceremony in Lausanne in 1992. This marriage produced a daughter.
- He breathed his last on 10 January 2016, two days after his 69th birthday after suffering from cancer for several months.