



My Drift

Title: Joe Biden

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Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2020. The most important race is for President of the United States. Current president Donald Trump vs Joe Biden. I wrote an article about Trump before the last election and he has not changed much, so I'm not writing about him for this election. Joe Biden has been around for a long time and most of us know that he was the Vice President for 8 years under the Barack Obama presidency. But, what else do we know about Biden? The purpose of this article is to learn more about him and his ideas.

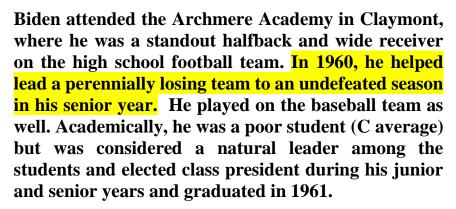


Joe Biden and Kamala Harris

Early life (1942–1965)

Joseph Robinette Biden Jr. was born on November 20, 1942, at St. Mary's Hospital in Scranton, Pennsylvania to Catherine Eugenia "Jean" Biden (1917–2010) and Joseph Robinette Biden Sr. (1915–2002). The first of four siblings in a Catholic family, he had a sister and two brothers. His mother Jean was of Irish descent and his father Joseph Sr. was of English, French, and Irish descent.

Biden's father was initially wealthy but suffered several financial setbacks by the time his son Joe Jr. was born. For several years, the family had to live with Biden's maternal grandparents, the Finnegans. When the Scranton area fell into economic decline during the 1950s, Biden's father could not find sustained work. In 1953, the Bidens moved into an apartment in Claymont, Delaware, where they lived for several years before again moving to a house in Wilmington, Delaware. Joe Biden Sr. later became a successful used car salesman, maintaining the family's middle-class lifestyle.



He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1965 from the University of Delaware in Newark, with a double major in history and political science and a minor in English. He graduated with a "C" average, ranked 506th of 688 in his graduating class. Biden played halfback for the Fightin' Blue Hens freshman football team. However, he never played varsity football at Delaware. While on spring break in the Bahamas in 1964, he met his future wife Neilia Hunter, a student at Syracuse University.



Joe Biden Jr. at age 10



High School Senior - 1961



College Senior - 1965

Biden has a stutter, which was more prominent in his childhood. He says he has helped to reduce it by spending many hours reciting poetry in front of a mirror, but it sometimes resurfaces "on occasions such as when he is very tired or stressed". It has been suggested that this has affected his performance in Democratic debates during his 2020 campaign for the presidency.

First marriage, law school, and early career (1966–1972)

On August 27, 1966, while enrolled as a student at the Syracuse University College of Law, Biden married Neilia Hunter. They overcame her parents' reluctance for her to wed a Roman Catholic, and the ceremony was held in a Catholic church in Skaneateles, New York. They had three children, Joseph R. 'Beau' Biden III in 1969, Robert Hunter in 1970, and Naomi Christina in 1971. He told her he aimed to become a senator by the age of 30 and then president.



Biden with first wife Neilia Hunter

During his first year at Syracuse, Biden was accused of plagiarizing five of fifteen pages of a law review article. He said it was inadvertent, and that he did not know the proper rules of citation. As a result, Biden failed the course and had to retake it; the plagiarism incident resurfaced in 1987 during his first run for president.

Biden received student draft deferments during this period. After he completed his studies, the Selective Service System classified him as unavailable for service due to a history of asthma. FYI - President Donald Trump received military draft deferments five times — once for bad feet and four times for college.

Biden graduated from Syracuse with a law degree in 1968, ranked 76th in a law school class of 85. He later said he found law school "the biggest bore in the world," and was admitted to the Delaware bar in 1969.

In 1968, Biden clerked for six months at a Wilmington law firm headed by prominent local Republican William Prickett and, as he later said, "thought of myself as a Republican". 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. The local Republicans tried to recruit him, but he resisted due to his distaste for Republican presidential candidate Richard Nixon, and he registered as an Independent instead.



Joe Biden at age 26

In 1969, Biden resumed practicing law in Wilmington, first as a public defender and then at a firm headed by Sid Balick, a locally active Democrat. Balick named him to the Democratic Forum, a group trying to reform and revitalize the state party, and Biden registered as a Democrat. He also started his own firm, Biden and Walsh. Corporate law, however, this did not appeal to him, and criminal law did not pay well. He supplemented his income by managing properties.

Later in 1969, Biden ran to represent the 4th district on the New Castle County Council with a liberal platform that included support for public housing in the suburban area. He won by 2,000 votes in the usually Republican district and a bad year for Democrats in the state. Even before taking his seat, he was already talking about running for the U.S. Senate in a couple of years. He served on the county council from 1970 to 1972 while continuing his private law practice. Among issues he addressed on the council was his opposition to large highway projects that might disrupt Wilmington neighborhoods, including those related to Interstate 95.

1972 U.S. Senate campaign

Biden's candidacy in the 1972 U.S. Senate election in Delaware presented an unusual circumstance—longtime Delaware political figure and Republican incumbent J. Caleb Boggs was considering retirement, which would likely have left U.S. Representative Pete du Pont and Wilmington Mayor Harry G. Haskell Jr. in a divisive primary fight. To avoid that, President Nixon helped convince Boggs to run again with full party support; no other Democrat wanted to run against Boggs. Biden's



Joe Biden in 1972

campaign had almost no money and was given no chance of winning. His sister Valerie Biden Owens managed his campaign (as she would his future campaigns), and other family members staffed it. The campaign relied upon handed-out newsprint position papers and meeting voters face-to-face. The state's smallness and lack of a major media market made that approach feasible. His campaign focused on withdrawal from Vietnam, the environment, civil rights, mass transit, more equitable taxation, health care, the public's dissatisfaction with politics as usual, and "change". During the summer, he trailed by almost thirty percentage points, but his energy level, his attractive young family, and his ability to connect with voters' emotions gave him an advantage over the ready-to-retire Boggs. Biden won the November 7 election by 3,162 votes.

Family deaths

On December 18, 1972, a few weeks after the election, Biden's wife Neilia and their one-year-old daughter Naomi were killed in an automobile accident while Christmas shopping in Hockessin, Delaware. Neilia Biden's station wagon was hit by a tractor-trailer truck carrying corn cobs as she pulled out from an intersection. Biden's sons Beau and Hunter survived the accident and were taken to the hospital in fair condition, Beau with a broken leg and other wounds, and Hunter with a minor skull fracture and other head injuries. Doctors soon said both would make full recoveries. Biden considered resigning to care for them, but Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield persuaded him not to.

United States Senate (1973–2009)

Biden was sworn into office on January 5, 1973, by secretary of the Senate Francis R. Valeo in a small chapel at the Delaware Division of the Wilmington Medical Center. Beau was wheeled in with his leg still in traction; Hunter, who had already been discharged, was also there, as were other members of the extended family. Witnesses and television cameras were also present, and the event received national attention.

At age 30 (the minimum age required to hold the office), Biden became the sixth-youngest senator in U.S. history and one of only 18 who took office before turning 31. The car accident that killed Biden's wife and daughter left him filled with both anger and religious doubt: "I had not known I was capable of such rage ... I felt God had played a horrible trick on me." To be at home every day for his young sons, Biden began commuting every day by Amtrak train 90 minutes (100 miles) each way from his home in the Wilmington suburbs to

Washington, D.C., which he continued to do throughout his Senate career. This lasted over 36 years and earned him the nickname "Amtrak Joe". In the accident's aftermath, he had trouble focusing on work and appeared to just go through the motions of being a senator. In his memoirs, Biden notes that staffers were taking bets on how long he would last. In remembrance of his wife and daughter, Biden does not work on December 18, the anniversary of the accident.

In 1975, Biden met Jill Tracy Jacobs, who had grown up in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania, and would become a teacher in Delaware. They met on a blind date arranged by Biden's brother, although Biden had already noticed a photograph of her in an advertisement for a park in Wilmington. Biden credits her with renewing his interest in both politics and life. On June 17, 1977, Biden and Jacobs were married by a Catholic priest at the Chapel at the United Nations in New York. Jill Biden has a bachelor's degree from the University of Delaware; two master's degrees, one from West Chester University and the other from Villanova University; and a doctorate in education from the University of Delaware. They have one daughter together, Ashley Blazer (born 1981), who became a social worker and staffer at the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families. Biden and his wife are Roman Catholics and regularly attend Mass at St. Joseph's on the Brandywine in Greenville, Delaware.



Joe and Jill Biden

Biden's older son Beau became Delaware Attorney General and an Army Judge Advocate who served in Iraq. He died at age 46 after a two-year battle with brain cancer on May 30, 2015. His younger son, Hunter, became a Washington attorney and lobbyist.

1988 presidential campaign

Biden ran for the 1988 Democratic presidential nomination, formally declaring his candidacy at the Wilmington train station on June 9, 1987. He was attempting to become the youngest president since John F. Kennedy. When the campaign began, he was considered a potentially strong candidate because of his moderate image, his speaking ability on the stump, his appeal to Baby Boomers, his high-profile position as chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee at the upcoming Robert Bork Supreme Court nomination



Biden in 1987

hearings, and his fundraising appeal. He raised \$1.7 million in the first quarter of 1987, more than any other candidate.

However, by August 1987, Biden's campaign begun to lag behind those of Michael Dukakis and Dick Gephardt. In September 1987, the campaign ran into trouble when he was accused of plagiarizing a speech that had been made earlier that year by British Labor Party leader Neil Kinnock. Biden had in fact cited Kinnock as the source for the formulation on previous occasions, but he made no reference to the original source at the August 23 Democratic debate at the Iowa State Fair. A few days later, Biden's plagiarism incident in law school came to public light and things went downhill from there. Lacking a strong group of supporters to help him survive the crisis, he withdrew from the race on September 23, 1987, saying his candidacy had been overrun by "the exaggerated shadow" of his past mistakes.

Brain surgeries

In 1988, Biden suffered two brain aneurysms, one on the right side and one on the left. Each required surgery with high risk of long-term impact on brain functionality. In February 1988, after suffering from several episodes of increasingly severe neck pain, Biden was taken by long-distance ambulance to Walter Reed Army Medical Center and given lifesaving surgery to correct an intracranial berry aneurysm that had begun leaking. While recuperating, he suffered a pulmonary embolism, a major complication. Another operation to repair a second aneurysm, which had caused no symptoms but was at risk of bursting, was performed in May 1988. The hospitalization and recovery kept Biden from his duties in the Senate for seven months. In retrospect, Biden's family came to believe the early end to his presidential campaign had been a blessing in disguise, for had he still been campaigning in 1988, he might well not have stopped to seek medical attention and the condition might have become not survivable.

Some of Biden's Accomplishment while in the Senate

Senate Judiciary Committee - Biden was a longtime member of the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary. He chaired it from 1987 to 1995 and served as ranking minority member from 1981 to 1987 and from 1995 to 1997. While chairman, Biden presided over two of the most contentious U.S. Supreme Court confirmation hearings in history, Robert Bork's in 1987 and Clarence Thomas's in 1991.



The 1994 Biden Crime Law

Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act - Biden was involved in crafting many federal crime laws. He spearheaded the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, also known as the 1994 Crime Bill, or the Biden Crime Law, which included the Federal Assault Weapons Ban, which expired in 2004 after its ten-year sunset period and was not renewed. It also included the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which contains a broad array of measures to combat domestic violence.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee - Biden was a longtime member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. In 1997, he became the ranking minority member and chaired the committee in January 2001 and from June 2001 to 2003. When Democrats retook control of the Senate after the 2006 elections, Biden again assumed the top spot on the committee. He was generally a liberal internationalist in foreign policy. He collaborated effectively with important Republican senators such as Richard Lugar and Jesse Helms and sometimes went against elements of his own party.

2008 presidential campaign

Biden considered running for president again multiple times since his failed 1988 bid. He declared his candidacy for president on January 31, 2007, after

having discussed running for months. Biden made a formal announcement to Tim Russert on Meet the Press, saying he would "be the best Biden I can be". In January 2006, Delaware newspaper columnist Harry F. Themal wrote that Biden "occupies the sensible center of the Democratic Party". Themal concluded that that was the position Biden desired, and that in a campaign "he plans to stress the dangers to the security of the average American, not just from the terrorist threat, but from the lack of health assistance, crime, and energy dependence on unstable parts of the world."

During his campaign, Biden focused on the war in Iraq and his support for implementing the Biden-Gelb plan to achieve political success. He touted his record in the Senate as the head of major congressional committees and his experience in foreign policy.

However, Biden had difficulty raising funds, struggled to draw people to his rallies, and failed to gain traction against the high-profile candidacies of Obama and Senator Hillary Clinton. He never rose above single digits in national polls of the Democratic candidates. In the first contest on January 3, 2008, Biden placed fifth in the Iowa caucuses, garnering slightly less than one percent of the state delegates. He withdrew from the race that evening, saying, "There is nothing sad about tonight. ... I feel no regret."

Biden's Reputation in the Senate

Following his first election in 1972, Biden was reelected to six more Senate terms, in 1978, 1984, 1990, 1996, 2002, and 2008, usually getting about 60% of the vote. He never faced strong opposition. Biden spent 28 years as a junior senator due to the two-year seniority of his Republican colleague William Roth. After Tom Carper defeated Roth in 2000, Biden became Delaware's senior senator. He then became the longest-serving senator in Delaware history, and the 18th-longest-serving senator in U.S. history. In May 1999, Biden became the youngest senator to cast 10,000 votes.

With a net worth of about \$366,000, and almost no outside income or investment income, Biden was consistently ranked one of the least wealthy members of the Senate. Biden was listed as the second-poorest member in Congress and was not proud of the distinction but attributed it to having been elected early in his career. He has said he realized early in his senatorial career how vulnerable poorer public officials are to offers of financial contributions in exchange for policy support, and he pushed campaign finance reform measures during his first term. Finally, Biden became a millionaire in 2017 thanks to speaking engagements and a deal to write a set of books.

The political writer Howard Fineman has said, "Biden is not an academic, he's not a theoretical thinker, he's a great street pol. He comes from a long line of working people in Scranton—auto salesmen, car dealers, people who know how to make a sale. He has that great Irish gift." Political columnist David S. Broder has viewed Biden as having grown since he came to Washington and since his failed 1988 presidential bid: "He responds to real people—that's been consistent throughout. And his ability to understand himself and deal with other politicians has gotten much better." Traub concludes that



2005 Official Senate Picture

"Biden is the kind of fundamentally happy person who can be as generous toward others as he is to himself."

FYI – If you don't know what "he's a great street pol" means like me, I looked it up. It means the person is hilarious, loving, and cheeky, a Pol will make you laugh until your eyes bleed. They are always extremely talented even though they don't know it.

Presidents Joe Biden served under during his 36+ years in the U.S. Senate



Richard Nixon (1969-1974)



Gerald Ford (1974-1977)



Jimmy Carter (1977-1981)



Ronald Reagan (1981-1989)



George H.W. Bush (1989-1993)



Bill Clinton (1993-2001)



George W. Bush (2001-2009)

2008 vice-presidential campaign

Shortly following Biden's withdrawal from the presidential race, Obama privately told him he was interested in finding an important place for Biden in his administration. Biden declined Obama's first request to vet him for the vice-presidential slot, fearing the vice presidency would represent a loss in status and voice from his Senate position, but he later changed his mind. In a June 22, 2008, interview on NBC's Meet the Press, Biden confirmed that, although he was not actively seeking a spot on the ticket, he would accept the offer if it came. In early August, Obama and Biden met in secret to discuss the possibility and developed a strong personal rapport. On August 22, 2008, Obama announced that Biden would be his running mate.

On November 4, 2008, Obama was elected president and Biden was elected vice president. The Obama–Biden ticket won 365 electoral votes to McCain–Palin's 173, and won 53% of the popular vote.

Vice President (2009–2017)

Soon after the 2008 election, Biden was appointed chairman of president-elect Obama's transition team. Biden chose veteran Democratic lawyer and aide Ron Klain as his chief of staff and Time Washington bureau chief Jay Carney as his director of communications. He said he intended to eliminate some of the explicit roles assumed by his predecessor and would not emulate any previous vice presidency.



Biden was sworn in as Vice President



Biden visited the troops many times

At noon on January 20, 2009, Biden became the 47th vice president of the United States. In the early months of the Obama administration, Obama compared Biden's efforts to a basketball player "who does a bunch of things that don't show up in the stat sheet". Biden lost an internal debate to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton regarding his opposition to sending 21,000 new troops to the war in Afghanistan, but his skepticism was still considered valuable in

the administration. Biden visited Iraq about every two months and had made eight trips there. Biden was also in charge of the oversight role for infrastructure spending from the Obama stimulus package intended to help counteract the ongoing recession.



Biden, Obama, and the national security team gathered in the White House Situation Room to monitor the progress of the May 2011 mission to kill Osama bin Laden.

In late April 2009, Biden's off-message response to a question during the beginning of the swine flu outbreak (that he would advise family members against traveling on airplanes or subways) led to a swift retraction by the White House. The remark revived Biden's reputation for gaffes. On March 23, 2010, Biden told the president that his signing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act was "a big f**king deal". Despite their different personalities, Obama and Biden formed a friendship.

Members of the Obama administration said Biden's role in the White House was to be a contrarian and force others to defend their positions. Obama said, "The best thing about Joe is that when we get everybody together, he really forces people to think and defend their positions, to look at things from every angle, and that is very valuable for me."



Obama and Biden in 2012



President Obama presents Biden with the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction, January 12, 2017.

Post-vice presidency (2017–present)

In 2017, Biden was named the Benjamin Franklin Presidential Practice professor at the University of Pennsylvania, where he intended to focus on foreign policy, diplomacy, and national security while leading the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement. He also wanted to pursue his "cancer moonshot" agenda, calling the fight against cancer "the only bipartisan thing left in America" in March 2017.

Biden had been close friends with Senator John McCain for over 30 years. In 2018, McCain died at the age of 81 of the same kind of cancer Beau Biden died of. Biden gave the eulogy at McCain's funeral service in Phoenix, Arizona. He opened with "My name's Joe Biden. I'm a Democrat. And I loved John McCain." He also called him a "brother". Biden also served as a pallbearer at McCain's memorial service at the Washington National Cathedral alongside Warren Beatty and Michael Bloomberg.

Comments on President Trump

While attending the launch of the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement on March 30, 2017, a student asked Biden what "piece of advice" he would give Trump. Biden responded that Trump should grow up and cease his tweeting so he could focus on the office.

Climate change

During an appearance at the Brainstorm Health Conference in San Diego, California, on May 2, 2017, Biden said the public "has moved ahead of the

administration [on science]". On May 31, Biden stated that climate change was an "existential threat to our future" and remaining in the Paris Agreement was the "best way to protect our children and global leadership". The next day, Trump announced U.S. withdrawal from the agreement.

Healthcare

On March 22, 2017, during his first appearance on Capitol Hill since Trump's inauguration, Biden called the Republican healthcare bill a "tax bill" meant to transfer nearly \$1 trillion used for health benefits for those struggling to wealthy Americans. On May 4, after the House of Representatives narrowly voted for the American Health Care Act, Biden tweeted that it was a "Day of shame for Congress", lamenting the loss of preexisting condition protections. On June 24, in response to Senate Republicans' revealing an American Health Care Act draft the previous day, Biden tweeted that the bill "isn't about health care at all—it's a wealth transfer: slashes care to fund tax cuts for the wealthy & corporations." On July 28, in response to the Republican Senate healthcare bill failing, Biden tweeted, "Thank you to everyone who tirelessly worked to protect the healthcare of millions."

Immigration

On September 5, 2017, after Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced that the Trump administration would rescind Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, Biden tweeted, "Brought by parents, these children had no choice in coming here. Now they'll be sent to countries they've never known. Cruel. Not American.

LGBTQ rights

On April 14, 2017, Biden released a statement denouncing Chechen authorities for rounding up, torturing, and murdering "individuals who are believed to be gay", and stating his hope that the Trump administration would honor a prior pledge to advance human rights by confronting Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov and Russian leaders over "these egregious violations of human rights". On June 21, during a speech at a Democratic National Committee LGBT gala in New York City, Biden said, "Hold President Trump accountable for his pledge to be your friend."

2020 presidential campaign

Biden said he would decide whether to run or not by January 2019 but made no announcement at that time. Friends said he was "very close to saying yes" but was concerned about the effect another presidential run could have on his family and reputation, as well as fundraising struggles and perceptions about his age and relative centrism. On the other hand, he was prompted to run by his "sense of duty", offense at the Trump presidency, the lack of foreign policy experience among other Democratic hopefuls, and his desire to foster "bridge-building progressivism" in the party. He launched his campaign on April 25, 2019. He chose Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as his campaign headquarters.



Biden at his presidential kickoff rally in Philadelphia, May 2019

Allegations of inappropriate physical contact

Biden has been accused of inappropriate contact with women at public events, such as embracing, kissing, gripping, or placing a hand on their shoulder. He has described himself as a "tactile politician" and admitted this behavior has caused trouble for him in the past.

Biden apologized for not understanding how people would react to his actions, but said his intentions were honorable. He went on to say he was not sorry for anything he had ever done, which led critics to accuse him of sending a mixed message

Political positions

Biden has been characterized as a moderate Democrat. He supported the fiscal stimulus in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009; the increased infrastructure spending proposed by the Obama administration; mass transit, including Amtrak, bus, and subway subsidies; reproductive rights; same-sex marriage; and the reduced military spending in the Obama administration's fiscal year 2014 budget. Biden supports the Roe v. Wade decision and since 2019 has been in favor of repealing the Hyde Amendment.

Liberal – Conservative Ratings

Some political scientists gauge ideology by comparing the annual ratings by the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) with the ratings by the American Conservative Union (ACU). Biden has a lifetime liberal 72% score from the ADA and a lifetime conservative rating of 13%. I guess this means that Biden has a moderate rating of 15%.

My opinion of Joe Biden after researching and writing this article Well, I like Joe Biden better now than I did a week ago.



Working during his 3 hours on the Amtrak train every workday for 36+ years



When you ride the train as much as "Amtrak Joe", you get to sit in the Engineer's seat

Anybody that takes the train to work (90 minutes and 100 miles each way) is okay in my book. If you are a regular reader of my articles, you know I worked on the Rio Grande Railroad for a couple of years and I like trains.

Joe Biden never took money from special interest groups or lobbyists or anybody else for that matter. That's why he was not a millionaire like most all of the other Senators and House of Representatives members. He was in the Senate for 36+ years and was the second poorest senator.

Biden is not that smart (he was a C student in high school and college), but he knows how to get along with people and how to lead.

Biden has become more liberal in his old age. Joe was considered a moderate in the early part of his career. But then he spent 8 years with Barack Hussein Obama and that would make anybody more liberal.

Joe doesn't drink -- most famously seen when he met in the Rose Garden Beer Summit with Obama, Professor Gates and Officer Crowley -- and Joe alone drank near-beer.

Some people say Biden has lived off his tax paid government jobs for over 47 years and has not accomplished that much. Well, I'm not going to say anything bad about that since I retired from my government job with 49 years.

Joe Biden is 77 years old and will be 78 on November 20th. If he is elected, he would be the oldest person ever to be elected President by a lot of years. Guess who holds the record now? The oldest person to assume the presidency was Donald Trump, at the age of 70 years, 220 days, on Inauguration Day. Next was Ronald Reagan at 69 years, 349 days of age at the time of his first inauguration.

If something bad happens to Biden, then the super liberal Vice President Kamala Harris would become the President and many of her ideas worry mostly conservative people like me.

Oh well, don't worry – be happy. Our country will be okay no matter who wins the election. I hope! Don't forget to VOTE.



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