**BHM 2024 Theme: Culture/Diversity**

**LeBron James:** American professional [basketball](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basketball) player for the [Los Angeles Lakers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Los_Angeles_Lakers) of the [National Basketball Association](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Basketball_Association) (NBA).

**LeBron Raymone James Sr** (born December 30, 1984). Nicknamed "**King James**", he is widely recognized as one of the greatest players in the history of the sport and is often compared to [Michael Jordan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Jordan) in debates over the greatest [basketball](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basketball) player of all time.[[a]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-GOAT_debate-1) He has competed in 10 [NBA Finals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NBA_Finals) (with eight consecutive appearances from 2011 to 2018) winning four [NBA championships](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_NBA_champions).[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-2) He also won the inaugural [NBA Cup](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NBA_Cup) in 2023 with the Lakers, and two [Olympic gold medals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basketball_at_the_Summer_Olympics) as a member of [the U.S. men's national team](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USA_Basketball).

Individually, James is the [all-time leading scorer in NBA history](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_National_Basketball_Association_career_scoring_leaders) and ranks fourth in [career assists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_National_Basketball_Association_career_assists_leaders), has won four [Most Valuable Player (MVP) Awards](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NBA_MVP), four [Finals MVP Awards](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NBA_Finals_MVP), three [All-Star Game MVP Awards](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NBA_All-Star_Game_Kobe_Bryant_Most_Valuable_Player_Award), and was named the inaugural NBA Cup MVP. He has been named an [All-Star](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NBA_All-Star) a record 20 times, selected to the [All-NBA Team](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All-NBA_Team) 19 times (including 13 First Team selections)[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-Quinn_2021-3)[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-Singh_2021-4) and the [All-Defensive Team](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NBA_All-Defensive_First_Team) six times, and was a runner-up for the [NBA Defensive Player of the Year Award](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NBA_Defensive_Player_of_the_Year_Award) twice in his career.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-Reference-5)[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-6) Noted for his longevity, as of January 2024, he is the [oldest player in the NBA](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_oldest_and_youngest_National_Basketball_Association_players).[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-NBAOldestPlayer-7)

James grew up playing basketball for [St. Vincent–St. Mary High School](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Vincent%E2%80%93St._Mary_High_School) in his hometown of [Akron, Ohio](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akron,_Ohio). He was heavily touted by the national media as a future [NBA](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Basketball_Association) superstar for his all-around scoring, passing, athleticism and playmaking abilities.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-8) A [prep-to-pro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prep-to-pro), he was selected by the Cleveland Cavaliers with the [first overall pick](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_first_overall_NBA_draft_picks) of the [2003 NBA draft](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2003_NBA_draft). Named the 2004 [NBA Rookie of the Year](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NBA_Rookie_of_the_Year),[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-Gordon_2021-9) he soon established himself as one of the league's premier players, leading the Cavaliers to their first NBA Finals appearance in [2007](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2007_NBA_Finals) and winning the NBA MVP award in 2009 and 2010.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-Reference-5) After failing to win a championship with Cleveland, James left in 2010 as a [free agent](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_agent_(NBA)) to join the [Miami Heat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miami_Heat);[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-10) this was announced in a nationally televised special titled [*The Decision*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Decision_(TV_program)) and is among the most controversial free agency moves in sports history.[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-11)

James won his first two NBA championships while playing for the Heat in [2012](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2012_NBA_Finals) and [2013](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2013_NBA_Finals); in both of these years, he also earned the league's MVP and Finals MVP awards. After his fourth season with the Heat in 2014, James opted out of his contract and re-signed with the Cavaliers. In [2016](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016_NBA_Finals), he led the Cavaliers to victory over the [Golden State Warriors](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_State_Warriors) in the Finals by [coming back](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comeback_(sports)) from a 3–1 deficit, delivering the team's first championship and ending the [Cleveland sports curse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cleveland_sports_curse).[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-Bontemps_2016-12) In 2018, James exercised his contract option to leave the Cavaliers and signed with the Lakers, where he won the [2020 NBA championship](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2020_NBA_championship) and his fourth Finals MVP.[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-Quinn_2020-13) James is the first player in NBA history to accumulate $1 billion in earnings as an active player.[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LeBron_James#cite_note-14) On February 7, 2023, James surpassed [Kareem Abdul-Jabbar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kareem_Abdul-Jabbar) to become the [leading scorer in league history](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_National_Basketball_Association_career_scoring_leaders). **(read more):**

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