

## MUHAMMAD ALI FACTS

- 1. **Born Cassius Clay:** Muhammad Ali was born Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr. on January 17, 1942, in Louisville, Kentucky. He later changed his name after converting to Islam in 1964, when he was influenced by the Nation of Islam.
- 2. **Gold Medal at the 1960 Olympics:** Ali won a gold medal in boxing at the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome, defeating Polish boxer Zbigniew Pietrzykowski in the final. This victory helped launch his professional career.
- 3. **World Heavyweight Champion:** Ali became the world heavyweight champion three times during his career, making him one of the most celebrated boxers in history. He first won the title in 1964 when he defeated Sonny Liston in a major upset.
- 4. Famous for "Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee": Ali was known for his fast footwork, incredible agility, and his ability to "float like a butterfly, sting like a bee." This was part of his persona as a confident, trash-talking boxer.
- 5. **Refused Military Service:** In 1967, Ali refused to be drafted into the U.S. military during the Vietnam War, citing his religious beliefs and opposition to the war. As a result, he was stripped of his boxing titles and banned from the sport for several years.
- 6. **Famous Fights:** Some of the most iconic bouts in boxing history involved Ali, including "The Fight of the Century" against Joe Frazier in 1971, the "Rumble in the Jungle" against George Foreman in 1974, and the "Thriller in Manila" against Joe Frazier in 1975.
- 7. "Rumble in the Jungle": In 1974, Ali famously defeated George Foreman in Kinshasa, Zaire, using a strategy he called the "rope-a-dope," where he leaned against the ropes and let Foreman tire himself out before striking back.
- 8. **Social Justice Advocate:** Beyond boxing, Ali was an outspoken advocate for civil rights and social justice. He was a key figure in the African American civil rights movement and was involved in various causes, including racial equality, religious freedom, and humanitarian efforts.
- 9. **Parkinson's Disease:** After retiring from boxing, Ali was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 1984, likely due to the repeated head trauma from his boxing career. He became an advocate for research into the disease and remained active in charitable causes until his death.
- 10. **Global Icon:** Ali's influence transcended boxing. He became a global icon, known for his charisma, self-confidence, and bold personality. He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2016, just months before his death.

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