

## Usain Bolt - A biography

Usain Saint Leo Bolt was born on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August 1986 in Sherwood Content, a small town in Trelawny, Jamaica. He is a World and Olympic champion sprinter and many people believe he is the fastest person ever, which has earned him the nickname 'Lightning Bolt'!

Usain Bolt grew up with his parents, Wellesley and Jennifer Bolt, his brother Sadiki and his sister Sherine. His parents ran the local grocery store. Bolt's family attended the local Catholic church and even today he still makes the sign of the cross before all of his major events. As a boy all of Bolt's free time was spent playing cricket and football in the street with his brother. He was sports mad!

As a child, Bolt attended Waldensia Primary, where he first began to show his sprinting potential, running in the annual, national primary-schools' meeting for his area. By the age of twelve, Bolt had become the school's fastest runner over 100 metres. Usain's father, Wellesley put his speed down to 'Yam Power'! (Yams are an important part of the Jamaican diet.)

Bolt went William Knibb Memorial High School, where he still enjoyed playing team sports, but he was such a fast sprinter his teachers encouraged him to try track and field events. The school had a history of success in athletics with past students, so he was in good hands, winning his first medal, silver, in the high school championships in 2001. Bolt was so good that a former Olympic sprinter, Pablo McNeil decided to train him. (This meant he would become his coach.) Bolt usually trained hard but Pablo was sometimes annoyed by Bolt's practical jokes!

At the age of 15, Bolt took part in the 2002 World Junior Championships in Kingston, Jamaica, where he won the 200-metre race. This made him the youngest world-junior gold medallist ever.

In 2005 Bolt got a new coach, Glenn Mills. This was the year he also reached the world Top 5 rankings. However he was prevented from further success by a recurring hamstring injury.

Then, in 2007 Bolt got his big chance. He broke the Jamaican 200-metre record and earned two silver medals at the World Championship in Osaka, Japan. Bolt decided he really could achieve success as a sprinter and began to take his career more seriously. He qualified for the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, China and went on to win gold in both the 100 and 200 metre events - even breaking a world record in the 100metre final, winning in 9.69 seconds! Bolt achieved a third gold medal in Beijing as part of the Jamaican relay team.

Usain Bolt went on to defend all of his Olympic gold medals during the 2012 Summer Olympic Games in London. This included beating his own record for the 100metres, running it this time, in 9.63 seconds! Bolt is the first man to win both the 100 and 200 metres in consecutive Olympic Games. He is also the first man in history to set three world records in a single Olympic Games competition!

Despite his dedication to running, Bolt still enjoys cricket and football and sometimes talks about taking up one of these sports when he retires from running. He is a big fan of Manchester United. Bolt's other interests include music, especially reggae - once acting as a DJ to a large party in Paris. He also enjoys video games. His particular favourite is Call of Duty which he plays online. Whatever the future holds for Usain Bolt, you can bet it won't be boring. He is, in his own words, 'a living legend' and with him anything could happen!

