



# Larry David

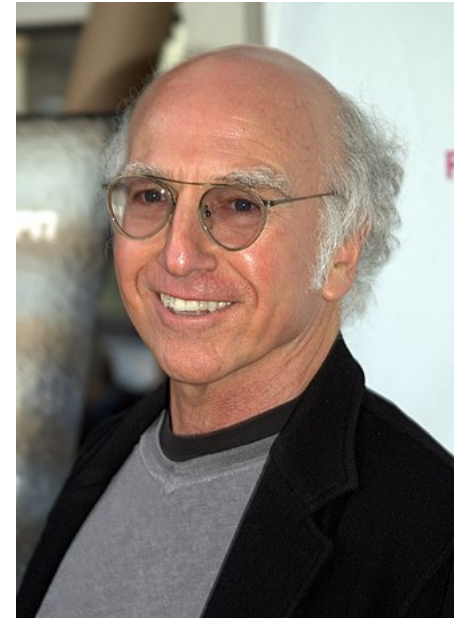
**Lawrence Gene David** (born July 2, 1947) is an American comedian, actor, writer, and television producer.<sup>[1]</sup> He and Jerry Seinfeld created the NBC television sitcom *Seinfeld*, of which David was head writer and executive producer for the first seven seasons. He gained further recognition for creating and writing the HBO series *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, in which he also stars as a fictionalized version of himself.<sup>[2]</sup> David's work on *Seinfeld* won him two Primetime Emmy Awards in 1993, for Outstanding Comedy Series and Outstanding Individual Achievement in Writing in a Comedy Series;<sup>[3]</sup> he was nominated 17 other times.<sup>[4]</sup>

Formerly a stand-up comedian, David went into television comedy, writing and starring in ABC's *Fridays*, and writing briefly for *Saturday Night Live*. He has been nominated for 27 Primetime Emmy Awards and three Golden Globe Awards. Fellow comedians and comedy insiders voted him the 23rd-greatest comedy star ever in a 2004 British poll to select "The Comedian's Comedian",<sup>[5]</sup> and he received the Writers Guild of America's Laurel Award in 2010.<sup>[6]</sup> He made his Broadway debut writing and starring in the comedic play *Fish in the Dark* (2015). Since 2015 he has made recurring guest appearances on *Saturday Night Live*, where he impersonates 2016 and 2020 U.S. presidential candidate Bernie Sanders, who is his sixth cousin once removed.<sup>[7][8][9][10]</sup>

## Early life and education

David was born on July 2, 1947, in the Sheepshead Bay neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York City. His parents are Rose (née Regina Brandes) and Mortimer Julius "Morty" David, a men's clothing manufacturer, and he has an older brother, Ken.<sup>[11]</sup> David's family is Jewish. His American Jewish father's family moved from Germany to the U.S. during the 19th century, while David's mother was born into a Polish-

**Larry David**



David in 2009

<b>Birth name</b>	Lawrence Gene David
<b>Born</b>	July 2, 1947 New York City, U.S.
<b>Medium</b>	Stand-up • television • film
<b>Education</b>	<u>University of Maryland</u> , <u>College Park</u> (BA)
<b>Years active</b>	1977–present

Jewish family in Ternopil, now in Ukraine, and her mother's family name was Superfein.<sup>[12]</sup>

David graduated from Sheepshead Bay High School, now defunct and operating as Frank J. Macchiarola Educational Complex, in 1965. A sign with his photo is displayed in one of the complex's hallways. He then attended the University of Maryland, College Park, where he was a brother in Tau Epsilon Phi.<sup>[13]</sup> He graduated in 1970 with a Bachelor of Arts in history.<sup>[14][15]</sup> At college, he discovered that he could make people laugh simply by being himself.<sup>[12]</sup> After college, David enlisted in the United States Army Reserve and received training as a petroleum storage specialist.<sup>[16]</sup> To avoid the final year of his six-year enlistment, he paid a psychiatrist to write a letter declaring him unfit for duty.<sup>[17]</sup>

## Career

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### 1980–1987: Stand-up and *SNL*

While a stand-up comedian, David also worked as a store clerk, limousine driver, and historian. He lived in Manhattan Plaza, a federally subsidized housing complex in Manhattan's Hell's Kitchen neighborhood, across the hall from Kenny Kramer, the inspiration for the Cosmo Kramer character in *Seinfeld*.<sup>[18]</sup> From 1980 to 1982, David became a writer and cast member for ABC's *Fridays*, where he worked with Michael Richards, who later played Kramer on *Seinfeld*.<sup>[19]</sup>

From 1984 to 1985, David was a writer for NBC's *Saturday Night Live* (*SNL*) and met Julia Louis-Dreyfus, who also worked on the show in this period.<sup>[20][19][21]</sup> During his time at *SNL*, he was able to get only one sketch on the air, which aired at 12:50 am, the show's last time slot.<sup>[20][22]</sup> David quit his job at *SNL* in the first season, angrily disparaging the quality of the show to producer Dick Ebersol, only to show up to work two days later acting as though nothing had happened.<sup>[23]</sup> That event inspired the second-season *Seinfeld* episode "The Revenge".<sup>[24][25]</sup> He can be heard heckling Michael McKean when McKean hosted *SNL* in 1984, and can be seen in the sketch "The Run, Throw, and Catch Like a Girl Olympics" when Howard Cosell hosted the season finale in 1985.<sup>[26][27]</sup> In 1987, David was a writer and performer for *Way Off Broadway*, a variety talk show on Lifetime hosted by Joy Behar.<sup>[28][29]</sup>

<b>Genres</b>	<u>Observational</u> · <u>improvisational</u> · <u>black comedy</u> · <u>blue comedy</u> · <u>insult comedy</u> · <u>deadpan</u> · <u>cringe</u> · <u>satire</u>
<b>Subject(s)</b>	<u>Jewish culture</u> · <u>everyday life</u> · <u>human behavior</u> · <u>social awkwardness</u> · <u>pop culture</u> · <u>current events</u>
<b>Spouse</b>	<u>Laurie Lennard</u> (m. 1993; div. 2007) <u>Ashley Underwood</u> (m. 2020)
<b>Children</b>	2, including <u>Cazzie</u>
<b>Relative(s)</b>	<u>Julie Claire</u> (niece)
	<b>Military career</b>
<b>Allegiance</b>	<u>United States</u>
<b>Service / branch</b>	<u>United States Army Reserve</u>
<b>Years of service</b>	1970–1975

## 1989-1998: Breakthrough with *Seinfeld*

In 1989, David teamed up with comedian Jerry Seinfeld to create a pilot for NBC called *The Seinfeld Chronicles*, which became the basis for *Seinfeld*, one of the most successful shows in history,<sup>[30]</sup> reaching the top of *TV Guide's* list of the 50 greatest TV shows of all time. *Entertainment Weekly* ranked it the third-best TV show of all time. David made occasional uncredited appearances on the show, playing such roles as Frank Costanza's cape-wearing lawyer and the voice of George Steinbrenner. He was also the primary inspiration for the show's character George Costanza.<sup>[31]</sup> David left *Seinfeld* on friendly terms after the show's seventh season and returned two years later to write the series finale in 1998.<sup>[32]</sup> He also continued to voice Steinbrenner.<sup>[33]</sup>

David wrote 62 *Seinfeld* episodes, including 1992's "The Contest", for which he won a Primetime Emmy Award and which *TV Guide* ranked as episode No. 1 on its list of "TV's Top 100 Episodes of All Time".<sup>[34]</sup> He has also been involved in other films and television series. David wrote and directed the 1998 film *Sour Grapes*, about two cousins who feud over a casino jackpot. It was neither a commercial nor a critical success.<sup>[35][36]</sup> He has also appeared in bit roles in Woody Allen's *Radio Days* (1987) and *New York Stories* (1989).<sup>[37]</sup>

## 1999-2024: *Curb Your Enthusiasm* and acclaim

The HBO cable television channel aired David's one-hour special, *Larry David: Curb Your Enthusiasm*, on October 17, 1999.<sup>[38]</sup> This was followed by *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, an HBO television series whose first episode aired on October 15, 2000.<sup>[39]</sup> The show revisits many of the themes of *Seinfeld*<sup>[40]</sup> and is improvised from a story outline only several pages long written by David (and, from the fifth season onward, additional writers).<sup>[41]</sup>

The actors improvise their dialogue based on the outline, direction, and their creativity. David has said that his character in the show, a fictionalized version of himself, is what he would be like in real life if he lacked social awareness and sensitivity.<sup>[42]</sup> The character's numerous and frequent social faux pas, misunderstandings, and ironic coincidences are the basis of much of the show's comedy and have led to the entry into the American pop culture lexicon of the expression "Larry David moment", meaning an inadvertently created socially awkward situation. *Curb Your Enthusiasm* has been described as depicting "the things nobody wants to say, but wish they could".<sup>[43]</sup>

The show is based on David's life following the fortune he earned from *Seinfeld*; semi-retired, he strives to live a fulfilled life.<sup>[44]</sup> Alongside David is his wife Cheryl (Cheryl Hines), his manager and best friend Jeff (Jeff Garlin), and Jeff's wife Susie (Susie Essman). Celebrities, including comedians Richard Lewis, Wanda Sykes, and Bob Einstein, appeared on the show regularly. Actors



David in December 2009

Ted Danson and Mary Steenburgen have had recurring roles as themselves.<sup>[44]</sup>

The show is critically acclaimed and has been nominated for 30 Primetime Emmy Awards, with one win, as well as a Golden Globe win. In the first six seasons, Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Jason Alexander appear in several episodes, and Jerry Seinfeld has a cameo. In season 7, the cast of *Seinfeld*, including Michael Richards, return in a story arc involving David's attempt to organize a *Seinfeld* reunion special. On June 2, 2010, the series premiered on the TV Guide Network, its network television debut. TV Guide Network also produced a series of related discussions with high-profile guest stars, media pundits, and prominent social figures called "Curb: The Discussion" debating the moral implications of each episode. David is quoted as saying "Finally, thanks to the TV Guide Network, I'll get a chance to watch actual, intelligent people discuss and debate the issues addressed on 'Curb'. Now if only someone could tell me where this alleged 'Network' is, I might even watch it."<sup>[45]</sup> The show's 12th and final season premiered in January 2024.<sup>[46]</sup>

David played the leading role in Woody Allen's 2009 comedy film *Whatever Works* alongside Evan Rachel Wood.<sup>[47]</sup> He had a cameo appearance on the HBO series *Entourage* as a client of Ari Gold, and because his daughters were *Hannah Montana* fans, David and his daughters guest-starred as themselves in the episode "My Best Friend's Boyfriend", in which they wait for a table at a fancy restaurant.<sup>[48]</sup> David appeared as a panelist on the NBC series *The Marriage Ref* and also played Sister Mary-Mengele in the 2012 reboot of *The Three Stooges*.<sup>[49]</sup> He co-wrote and starred in the 2013 HBO television film *Clear History*. David wrote and starred in the Broadway play *Fish in the Dark*. Also appearing were Rita Wilson, Jayne Houdyshell, and Rosie Perez. The play centers on the death of a family patriarch. It opened on March 5, 2015. Jason Alexander took over David's role in July. The play closed in August.<sup>[50][51]</sup> As of February 1, 2015, its advance sale of \$13.5 million had broken records for a Broadway show.<sup>[51]</sup>

## **Bernie Sanders**

Since 2015, David has made multiple guest appearances portraying 2016 and 2020 United States presidential election candidate Bernie Sanders on *Saturday Night Live*; he also hosted the show on February 6, 2016, with musical guest The 1975 and a cameo by Sanders himself, and on November 4, 2017, with musical guest Miley Cyrus.

In 2017, PBS's *Finding Your Roots* discovered through genealogical research that David and Sanders are distantly related. Sanders told David the news. "I was very happy about that," David said, according to Variety. "I thought there must have been some connection." The comedian explained that Sanders is "a third cousin or something".<sup>[52][10]</sup> He is in fact David's sixth cousin once removed.<sup>[10][53][54][55]</sup>

On January 8, 2020, David joked on *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, "I would say, I would beg him [Bernie] to drop out so I don't have to keep flying in from Los Angeles to do *SNL*. I thought when he had the heart attack that would be it, I wouldn't have to fly in from Los Angeles. But, you know, he's indestructible. Nothing stops this man!" He later added, "If he wins, do you know what

that's going to do to my life? Do you have any idea? I mean, it will be great for the country—great for the country, terrible for me."<sup>[56]</sup>

## Influences

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David has named Woody Allen, Mel Brooks, Phil Silvers, Abbott and Costello, Jackie Mason, Alan King, Don Rickles, and Mad magazine as influences.<sup>[57][58][59]</sup>

## Personal life

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David lives in the Pacific Palisades neighborhood of Los Angeles, California. He was married to Laurie Lennard from 1993 to 2007.<sup>[60][61]</sup> They have two daughters, Cazzie David and Romy David.<sup>[60]</sup> Larry and Laurie became contributing bloggers at The Huffington Post in 2005.<sup>[62][63]</sup> In 2017, David was introduced to producer Ashley Underwood at a birthday party for Sacha Baron Cohen. They married in 2020.<sup>[64]</sup> David's niece is actress Julie Claire, who appears in Seinfeld and Curb Your Enthusiasm.<sup>[65]</sup>

David is an atheist<sup>[66]</sup> and an avid sports fan. A native New Yorker, he supports the New York Jets, Yankees, Knicks, and Rangers.<sup>[67]</sup> David is also a supporter of the Democratic Party.<sup>[68]</sup> In 2010, he wrote an article for The New York Times criticizing the extension of the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy. He ended the article with a sarcastic thank-you to then-President Barack Obama for approving the extension.<sup>[69]</sup>

## Wealth

In 2013, Charlie Rose estimated David's net worth at around \$500 million.<sup>[70]</sup> Two years later, two other estimates put the number between \$400 million<sup>[71]</sup> and \$900 million.<sup>[72]</sup> In 2020, National Review offered an estimate of about \$400 million.<sup>[73]</sup>

Most of David's wealth originates from syndication deals of Seinfeld and Curb Your Enthusiasm, the former having netted \$3.1 billion in rerun fees as of 2013.<sup>[72]</sup> The syndication of Seinfeld earned David an estimated \$250 million in 1998 alone.<sup>[74]</sup> In 2008, David was reported to have grossed \$55 million, mostly from Seinfeld syndication and work on Curb Your Enthusiasm.<sup>[74][75]</sup>

David's net worth was parodied in a 2001 episode of Curb Your Enthusiasm, "The Shrimp Incident", in which HBO executive Allan Wasserman yells at David: "If you want shrimp, take your \$475 million, go buy a shrimp boat."<sup>[76]</sup>

In a 2015 interview with CBS, David confirmed that half of his wealth was eroded by his 2007 divorce in the community property

state of California.<sup>[70]</sup> "I have a lot of money", he said, adding that the "figures out there are crazy".<sup>[70]</sup>

## **Legal issue**

David was among several celebrities who appeared in a commercial for cryptocurrency exchange FTX that aired during Super Bowl LVI.<sup>[77]</sup><sup>[78]</sup> In November 2022, FTX filed for bankruptcy, and David, alongside other spokespeople, was sued in a class-action lawsuit.<sup>[79]</sup> In February 2022, the U.S. 11th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in a lawsuit against Bitconnect that the Securities Act of 1933 extends to targeted solicitation using social media.<sup>[80]</sup>

## **Filmography**

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### **Film**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Role</b>
1977	<i><u>It Happened at Lakewood Manor</u></i>	Extra in crowd near hotel
1983	<i><u>Can She Bake a Cherry Pie?</u></i>	Mort's Friend
	<i><u>Second Thoughts</u></i>	Monroe Clark
1987	<i><u>Radio Days</u></i>	Communist Neighbor
1989	<i><u>New York Stories</u></i>	Theater Manager
1998	<i><u>Sour Grapes</u></i>	Studio Executive/Annoying Doctor/Singing Bum
2009	<i><u>Whatever Works</u></i>	Boris Yelnikoff
2012	<i><u>The Three Stooges</u></i>	Sister Mary-Mengele
2013	<i><u>Clear History</u></i>	Nathan Flomm
2015	<i><u>Misery Loves Comedy</u></i>	Himself
2016	<i><u>The First Monday in May</u></i>	
	<i><u>All the Rage</u></i>	
2017	<i><u>Where Have You Gone, Lou diMaggio?</u></i>	
	<i><u>Miracle on 42nd Street</u></i>	
	<i><u>Long Shot</u></i>	
2021	<i><u>The Super Bob Einstein Movie</u></i>	
2023	<i><u>Albert Brooks: Defending My Life</u></i>	

## Television

Year	Title	Role	Notes
1980–1982	<i>Fridays</i>	Various	54 episodes; also writer
1984–1985	<i>Saturday Night Live</i>		7 episodes; also writer
1987	<i>It's Garry Shandling's Show</i>		Wrote episode: "Sarah" Credited as Mac Brandes
1987	<i>Way Off Broadway</i>	Various	Also writer
1989–1998	<i>Seinfeld</i>	George Steinbrenner (voice), Newman (voice), <sup>[a]</sup> various roles	180 episodes; co-creator, writer and producer
1993	<i>Love &amp; War</i>	Himself	Episode: "Let's Not Call It Love"
1999	<i>Larry David: Curb Your Enthusiasm</i>		One-hour special; also creator, writer and executive producer
2000–2024	<i>Curb Your Enthusiasm</i>		Also creator, writer and executive producer
2004	<i>Entourage</i>		Episode: "New York"
2007	<i>Hannah Montana</i>		Episode: "My Best Friend's Boyfriend"
2011	<i>The Paul Reiser Show</i>		Episode: "The Father's Occupation"
2012	<i>Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee</i>	Himself (guest)	Episode: Larry Eats a Pancake
2013	<i>Clear History</i>	Nathan Flomm	Television film; also writer and producer
2014	<i>TripTank</i>	Himself (voice)	Episode: "Roy & Ben's Day Off"
2015	<i>The League</i>	Future Ruxin	Episode: "The Great Night of Shiva"
2015–2020	<i>Saturday Night Live</i>	Himself (host) / Bernie Sanders	15 episodes
2016	<i>Maya &amp; Marty</i>	Himself	Episode: "Jimmy Fallon & Miley Cyrus"
2022	<i>Toast of Tinseltown</i>	Sola Mirronek	Episodes: "Anger Man" and "The Scorecard"



## Theater

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Year	Title	Role	Theatre	Notes	Ref.
2015	<i>Fish in the Dark</i>	Norman Drexel	<u>Cort Theatre</u> , Broadway	Also writer	[81]

## Written works

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## Awards and nominations

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David has received numerous awards, including two Emmy Awards, three Producers Guild of America Awards, and three Writers Guild of America Awards. He has been nominated for three Golden Globe Awards and six Screen Actors Guild Awards. Fellow comedians and comedy insiders voted David the 23rd-greatest comedy star ever in a poll to select *The Comedian's Comedian*.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Notes

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- a. David voices an offscreen Newman in "The Revenge". After that, Newman was played by Wayne Knight.

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## Further reading

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- *Pretty, Pretty, Pretty Good: Larry David and the Making of Seinfeld and Curb Your Enthusiasm* by Josh Levine (ECW Press, 2010)

## External links

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- [Larry David \(https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0202970/\)](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0202970/) at [IMDb](#)
  - [Larry David \(https://www.rottentomatoes.com/celebrity/larry\\_david\)](https://www.rottentomatoes.com/celebrity/larry_david) at [Rotten Tomatoes](#)
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