Click to verify



By continuing to use this site, you consent to the terms of our cookie policy, which can be found in our Privacy Notice. × Lionel Messi is a football player from Argentina who plays for Inter Miami. He has won the Ballon D'Or, the annual award given to the best player in the world, 8 times, 2022 FIFA World Cup winner and an Olympic gold medal winner in 2008. He was born in 1987 in Rosario, Argentina's third-biggest city. He showed an enormous aptitude for football and was in the youth teams for Newell's Old Boys, his local team. Faced with mounting medical expenses to treat a growth hormone condition, Messi's family accepted an offer to move the 13-year-old prodigy to FC Barcelona, who would pay for his treatment. Messi has gone on to become one of the most decorated players in football history and has broken countless records for his club and his country.You have no recently viewed pages Kids encyclopedia facts Use the search form above to search for facts in the Kiddle encyclopedia (Kpedia). Below is a list of some articles and categories to help you research different topics for school homework help, homeschooling and general education. All content from Kiddle encyclopedia articles (including the article images and facts) can be freely used for personal and educational purposes under Attribution-ShareAlike license, unless stated otherwise. Science Astronomy Geology Biology Biological processes Metabolism Digestion Photosynthesis Breathing Evolution Organisms A selection of diverse animal species Anatomy Health and medicine Chemistry Earth science Physics Various examples of physical phenomena Measurement and units Measurement Kilogram Litre Metre International System of Units Second Timekeeping Calendar Clock Day Time zone Year Foodstuffs Beverages Beer Coffee Juice Milk Tea Water Wine Mathematics Technology Model of Leonardo's robot with inner workings. Possibly constructed by Leonardo da Vinci around the year 1495. Communication Electronics Computers and Internet Energy and fuels Materials Transportation Transport Aircraft Automobile Bicycle Submarine Ship Train Arts and recreation Architecture and civil engineering St. Peter's Basilica seen from Castel Sant' Angelo Film, radio and television Film Radio Television Music Recreation History and geography History Prehistory and ancient world Middle Ages and Early Modern Modern Geography This section is for geographical concepts and for specific places. Continents and major regions Countries Cities Bodies of water Mountains and deserts Alps Andes Himalayas Mount Kilimanjaro Rocky Mountains Sahara Biography Actors Charlie Chaplin shows off some of his merchandise, c. 1918. Artists Authors, playwrights and poets Composers and musicians Explorers and travelers Film directors and screenwriters Walt Disney Alfred Hitchcock Steven Spielberg Inventors, scientists and mathematicians Philosophers and social scientists Political leaders Religious figures and theologians Philosophy and psychology Philosophy Psychology Behavior Emotion Love Psychology Thought Religion World view and religion Social sciences Society Civilization Education Family and relationships Family Child Man Marriage Woman Politics Business and economics Law War and military Civil war Military Peace War Language and literature See also In Spanish: Enciclopedia Kiddle para niños Main Page Facts for Kids. Kiddle Encyclopedia. David Ramos/Getty Images (born 1987). Argentine-born soccer (association football) player Lionel Messi was named Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) world player of the year eight times (2009–12, 2015, 2019, 2021, and 2023). In 2022 he helped lead Argentina to the World Cup title. Lionel Andrés Messi was born on June 24, 1987, in Rosario, Argentina. He started playing soccer as a boy. In 1995 he joined the youth team of Newell’s Old Boys (a Rosario-based top-division soccer club). Messi’s skills attracted the attention of leading clubs on both sides of the Atlantic. At age 13 Messi and his family relocated to Barcelona, Spain. He joined FC Barcelona’s under-14 team. He quickly graduated through the higher-level teams until at age 16 he was given his informal debut with FC Barcelona in a friendly match (nontournament game).In the 2004–05 season Messi, then 17 years old, became the youngest official player and goal scorer in the Spanish La Liga (the country’s highest soccer division). Though only 5 feet 7 inches (1.7 meters) tall and weighing 148 pounds (67 kilograms), he was strong, well-balanced, and versatile on the field. He became known for his keen passing and precise ball control. In 2005 he was granted Spanish citizenship. The next year Messi and FC Barcelona won the Champions League (the European club championship) title.By 2008 Messi was one of the most dominant players in the world. He finished second to Manchester United’s Cristiano Ronaldo in the voting for the 2008 FIFA World Player of the Year. In early 2009 Messi capped off a spectacular 2008–09 season by helping Barcelona capture the club’s first “treble” (winning three major European club titles in one season). The team won the La Liga championship, the Copa del Rey (Spain’s major domestic cup), and the Champions League title. He scored 38 goals in 51 matches during that season. He bested Ronaldo in the balloting for FIFA World Player of the Year honors by a record margin as well.During the 2009–10 season Messi scored 34 goals in domestic games as Barcelona repeated as La Liga champions. He earned the Golden Shoe award as Europe’s leading scorer. He was also named the 2010 world player of the year (the award was renamed the FIFA Ballon d’Or that year).© MaxiSports/Dreamstime.com Messi led Barcelona to La Liga and Champions League titles the following season, which helped him capture an unprecedented third consecutive world player of the year award. In March 2012 he netted his 233rd goal for Barcelona. It made him the club’s all-time leading scorer in La Liga play. In 2011–12 he guided the team to another Copa del Rey win. He scored 73 goals in all competitions. With that feat he broke Gerd Müller’s 39-year-old record for single-season goals in a major European soccer league. Messi’s landmark season led to his being named the 2012 world player of the year. He was the first player to win the honor four times.Messi helped Barcelona capture another treble during the 2014–15 season. He led the team with 43 goals scored over the course of the campaign, which resulted in his fifth world player of the year honor. He scored 41 goals across all competitions for Barcelona in 2015–16. The club won the La Liga title and the Copa del Rey during that season.Messi scored 53 goals for Barcelona in 2016–17, leading the team to another Copa del Rey title. In 2017–18 he scored 45 goals, and Barcelona won the La Liga–Copa del Rey double once again. Messi scored 51 goals across all domestic competitions in 2018–19 as Barcelona won another La Liga championship. In December 2019 he won his sixth career world player of the year honor. In the 2020–21 season Barcelona claimed the Copa del Rey title.Messi became a free agent in 2021. He left Barcelona having become the leading goal scorer in La Liga’s history, with 474 goals. Later that year he signed with Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) of Ligue 1, the French top-division league. At the end of the year Messi received the world player of the year award for the seventh time. Messi teamed with fellow stars Neymar and Kylian Mbappé to guide PSG to Ligue 1 titles in 2021–22 and 2022–23. In June 2023 Messi announced that he was leaving PSG to relocate to the United States to play for Inter Miami CF of Major League Soccer.© Alexandre Durao/Dreamstime.com Despite his professional success in Spain and France, Messi’s ties with his homeland remained strong. He was a key member of various Argentine national teams from 2005. He played on Argentina’s victorious 2005 FIFA World Youth Championship squad and represented the country in the 2006 World Cup. He scored two goals in five matches as Argentina swept to the gold medal at the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, China. Messi helped Argentina reach the 2010 World Cup quarterfinals, where the team was eliminated by Germany for the second consecutive time in World Cup play.At the 2014 World Cup, Messi put on a dazzling display. He scored four goals as Argentina advanced to the World Cup final for the first time in 24 years. Argentina lost that contest 1–0 to Germany,. Messi nevertheless won the Golden Ball award as the tournament’s best player.During the 2016 Copa América Centenario tournament, Messi netted his 55th international goal. In doing so, he broke Gabriel Batistuta’s Argentine scoring record. After Argentina was defeated in the Copa final, Messi announced that he was quitting the national team. Less than two months later, however, he reversed his decision and rejoined the team. At the 2018 World Cup, Messi made only one goal and two assists as Argentina managed to reach the knockout stage. The team was then eliminated by France. Argentina finished third at the 2019 Copa América, but Messi led the team to victory in the tournament two years later.PA Images/Alamy Ahead of the 2022 World Cup Messi announced that this World Cup—his fifth—would be his last. Messi scored 7 goals in the tournament, pushing his number of career World Cup goals to 13. That made him Argentina’s all-time leading World Cup goal scorer. Argentina shockingly lost its opening match of the tournament to Saudi Arabia, but the team recovered and went undefeated thereafter.Argentina met France, the defending World Cup champions, in the final. The match became an instant classic. France twice came back to tie the game before Argentina won on penalty kicks. Messi scored two goals in the final to lead Argentine scorers. He was the first player in history to have netted a goal in the group stage, round of 16, quarterfinals, semifinals, and final of a single World Cup. Messi was awarded the Golden Ball for a second time, becoming the first two-time winner of the prize. Messi’s outstanding play in the tournament helped earn him his eighth career world player of the year award in 2023.In 2024 Messi helped lead the Argentine national team to its second consecutive Copa América title. Argentina defeated Colombia 1–0 in the Copa final. 1987-presentApple TV+ is giving soccer fans more behind-the-scenes access to soccer star Lionel Messi and Argentina’s memorable 2022 World Cup championship in a new docuseries. Messi’s World Cup: The Rise of a Legend debuts on the streaming service February 21. The four-part series promises the most personal interviews to date with Messi and “an intimate and unprecedented look at his quest for a legacy-defining World Cup victory.”View full post on YoutubeMessi, now playing for Inter Miami CF of the MLS, helped his home country win soccer’s biggest event for the first time since 1986, scoring two goals in the final and leading Argentina to a 4-2 win over Kylian Mbappé and France on penalties. Argentina’s captain was also named the tournament MVP.The new series follows up Messi Meets America, Apple’s 2023 look at the star striker’s arrival and first season in the MLS. Inter Miami begins the 2024 regular season also on February 21 with a match against Real Salt Lake. Jump to:Lionel Messi is an Argentinian soccer player who has played for FC Barcelona, Paris Saint-Germain, and currently, the MLS club Inter Miami CF as well as the Argentina national team. As a teenager, Messi moved from Argentina to Spain after FC Barcelona agreed to pay for medical treatments related to his growth hormone disorder. At the club, he earned renown as one of the greatest players in history, helping FC Barcelona win more than two dozen league titles and tournaments. In 2012, he set a record for most goals in a calendar year and, a decade later, helped the Argentina national team win its third FIFA World Cup. The eight-time Ballon d’Or winner moved to Paris Saint-Germain in 2021, and in July 2023, he joined Inter Miami.FULL NAME: Luis Lionel Andres MessiBORN: June 24, 1987BIRTHPLACE: Rosario, ArgentinaSPOUSE: Antonella Roccuzzo (2017-present)CHILDREN: Thiago, Mateo, and CiroASTROLOGICAL SIGN: CancerLuis Lionel Andres “Leo” Messi was born on June 24, 1987, in Rosario, Argentina. As a young boy, Messi tagged along when his two older brothers played soccer with their friends, unintimidated by the bigger boys. At the age of 8, he was recruited to join the youth system of Newell’s Old Boys, a Rosario-based club. Recognizably smaller than most of the kids in his age group, Messi was eventually diagnosed by doctors as suffering from a hormone deficiency that restricted his growth. Messi’s parents, Jorge and Ceclia, decided on a regimen of nightly growth-hormone injections for their son, though it soon proved impossible to pay several hundred dollars per month for the medication. So, at the age of 13, when Messi was offered the chance to train at soccer powerhouse FC Barcelona’s youth academy, La Masia, and have his medical bills covered by the team, Messi’s family picked up and moved across the Atlantic to make a new home in Spain. Although he was often homesick in his new country, Messi moved quickly through the junior system ranks.Ultimately, Messi’s short stature—5 feet, 7 inches—combined with his speed and relentless attacking style, has drawn comparisons to another famous Argentinian footballer, Diego Maradona. Messi played for FC Barcelona for 17 seasons before joining Paris Saint-Germain in 2021 for two seasons. In July 2023, he joined the MLS club Inter Miami.FC BarcelonaGetty ImagesFC Barcelona forward Lionel Messi celebrates after scoring in a January 2006 match. He played for the club for 17 seasons.At age 13, Messi signed with FC Barcelona. His first appearance for the team was when he was 16. On May 1, 2005, Messi put himself in the record books as the youngest player to ever score a goal for the franchise.Messi steered Barcelona to a wealth of success, most notably in 2009, when the left-footer’s team captured the Champions League, La Liga, and Spanish Super Cup titles. That same year, after two consecutive runner-up finishes, he took home his first FIFA World Player of the Year honor, as well as his first Ballon d’Or award, the top European individual honor in football. Messi became the first Argentinian player to win the Ballon d’Or. Even the great Maradona gushed about his fellow countryman. “I see him as very similar to me,” the retired player told the BBC. “He’s a leader and is offering lessons in beautiful football. He has something different than any other player in the world.”Amazingly, the soccer wizard continued to improve, discovering new ways to elude defenders while leading Barcelona to La Liga and Spanish Super Cup championships in 2010 and 2011, as well as the ‘11 Champions League title.Messi embarked on an all-out assault on the record books in 2012. He became the first player to score five goals in a Champions League match in early March, and a few weeks later, he surpassed Cesar Rodriguez’s club-record 232 goals to become Barcelona’s all-time leading scorer. By the end of the year, Messi had accumulated an astounding 91 goals in club and international play, eclipsing the 85 netted in a single calendar year by Gerd Muller in 1972. Fittingly, he broke another record when he was named the Ballon d’Or winner for the fourth consecutive time.In 2013, the soccer great came back to earth somewhat due to the persistence of hamstring injuries, but he regained his record-breaking form by becoming the all-time leading scorer in La Liga and Champions League play in late 2014. After helping Barcelona achieve a historic second treble in 2015, he was honored with his fifth Ballon d’Or trophy. Four years later, following another La Liga title, Messi again established a new standard for excellence by claiming his sixth Ballon d’Or. On August 5, 2021, FC Barcelona announced it couldn’t resign Messi due to the team’s budget constraints and La Liga restrictions. Despite having voiced his desire to leave the club the prior season, Messi bid a teary farewell after 17 seasons: “This is really difficult for me after so many years spent here, being here my entire life. I’m not ready for this.”Paris Saint-GermainGetty ImagesLionel Messi in his final match as a member of Paris Saint-Germain in June 2023Four days after the shocking news from FC Barcelona, Messi signed with Paris Saint-Germain. The 34-year-old inked a two-year contract with the French club. The move saw him reunite with former teammate Neymar as well as the talented Kylian Mbappé.Messi made his debut for the club on August 29, 2021, and scored his first goal that September. PSG won two Ligue 1 titles with Messi but twice failed to advance beyond the round of 16 in the Champions League finals.Although his contract allowed for an optional third year at PSG, the team announced it would release Messi as a free agent when the deal expired on June 30, 2023. Earlier in the year, the club suspended and fined Messi after he visited Saudi Arabia on an unauthorized trip. This all but sealed fate on the soccer legend’s widely expected move.Messi’s last game for PSG was June 3, 2023. In total, he started in 72 games, notching 32 goals and 34 assists.Inter Miami CFGetty ImagesLionel Messi, seen here in a September 2023 game, has played for Inter Miami since July. On June 7, 2023, Messi told two Spanish media outlets he planned to play for the MLS club Inter Miami CF, which is partially owned by former soccer player David Beckham. “I have made the decision that I am going to Miami,” Messi said at the time, per ESPN. Messi later told Time he strongly considered joining a Saudi Arabian team before deciding on Inter Miami.A little over a month later, on July 16, the team officially welcomed him on a 2.5-year contract that runs through the 2025 season. The deal was reportedly worth around $150 million, including an annual salary between $50 million and $60 million, a signing bonus, revenue sharing with the league’s media partner, and team equity upon retirement.What Is Lionel Messi’s Net Worth?Inter Miami immediately benefitted on and off the field from their new team captain’s presence. The club went on a 12-match winning streak and captured the Leagues Cup, an annual tournament between teams from the MLS and Liga MX. Messi wound up scoring 11 goals in 14 games overall. However, with Messi injured late in the season, Inter Miami went winless in seven straight and failed to qualify for the playoffs. He was named the club’s 2023 MVP in November.Messi has directly boosted revenue for the team, as well. Attendance at home games spiked 40 percent, the most in the MLS. According to The Athletic, the least expensive Inter Miami season ticket prices rose from $485 to $884 per seat from 2023 to 2024. Even with the price jump, Inter Miami announced 2024 season tickets sold out at the end of November, two months out of the start of the preseason. Not surprisingly, his jersey became the top seller in the MLS. Messi and Inter Miami open the 2024 MLS regular season on February 21.Getty ImagesLionel Messi in June 2005, at the start of his career with Argentina’s national teamIn summer 2005, Messi quickly made a name for himself on his native country’s under-20 squad. He led Argentina to the title in the FIFA U-20 World Cup, scoring on a pair of penalty kicks to propel the team over Nigeria. Less than two months later, he made his pro debut with Argentina in an August friendly match against Hungary but played less than two minutes before receiving a red card and being ejected from the game. For all his success with Barcelona, Messi repeatedly came under fire for his inability to help Argentina’s national team win a major title. In the 2014 World Cup, Argentina lost to Germany in the final, though Messi was named player of the tournament that year. In 2016, following Argentina’s second consecutive loss to Chile in the final of the Copa America tournament, Messi announced he was ending his run with the national team.The soccer great eventually reversed his decision, but his participation in the 2018 World Cup did not bring that elusive title, as hoped. After Messi scored an early goal in a 2-1 win over Nigeria that helped his team advance from the group stage, he was largely kept in check by France, his two assists not enough to stave off a 4-3 defeat that sent Argentina packing.The following year, after Messi heavily criticized the referees in the wake of a 2-0 loss to Brazil in the Copa America semifinals, the Argentine captain was slapped with a three-game ban by the South American Football Confederation. At last, in 2021 and 2022, Argentina and Messi found enough traction to bring home trophies that had long evaded them. First, the team won the Copa America—Argentina’s first major title in 28 years—in August 2021, besting Brazil in the final. Captain Messi tied for top goal scorer, alongside Colombia’s Luis Diaz, and was named player of the tournament. The next year, greater glory awaited at the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. Getty ImagesLionel Messi kisses the trophy after Argentina won the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar.Argentina captured the World Cup trophy on December 18, 2022, after a thrilling game against France that ended in a penalty shootout. Messi was named the Best FIFA Men’s Player for a second time and broke the record for most World Cup appearances with 26 games. Six jerseys that Messi had worn during the victorious championship run later sold for more than $7.8 million at auction.In fall 2023, Messi scored three goals in qualifying games for the 2026 World Cup. However, as he nears the twilight of the his career, the soccer legend has adopted a realistic attitude about his future. “As long as I feel that I am fine and I can continue contributing, I am going to do it. Today, the only thing I think about is getting to the Copa America well and being able to compete in it,” Messi said of the 2024 tournament. “Then time will tell if I am [at the World Cup] or not. I’m going to be at an age (39) that normally doesn’t allow me to play in the World Cup.”Messi won FIFA’s World Player Trophy five times, including four consecutive wins between 2009 and 2012, and has collected its contemporary the Best FIFA Men’s Player three times, in 2019, 2022, and 2023. The soccer legend has won Europe’s Ballon d’Or a record eight times. When he won the Ballon d’Or in October 2023, Messi became the first active MLS player to do so. He’s also won the European Golden Shoe for top scorer six times, two more than his nearest rival, Cristiano Ronaldo. In 2023, Time magazine named Messi its Athlete of the Year, pointing to his remarkable impact on soccer’s growing popularity in the United States.In July 2016, Messi suffered a blow off the soccer field when a Barcelona court found him and his father guilty of three counts of tax fraud. During a four-day trial, Messi and his father denied breaking the law and claimed they were unaware of any tax illegalities they had committed. However, they were both sentenced to 21 months in prison. Under Spanish law, first offenses under two years are suspended so they did not go to jail, but Messi was ordered to pay a fine of 2 million euros. His father was required to pay 1.5 million euros.8 Celebrities Who Evaded TaxesGetty ImagesLionel Messi with his wife, Antonella Roccuzzo, and their three children Ciro, Mateo, and ThiagoOn June 30, 2017, Messi married Antonella Roccuzzo, his longtime girlfriend and the cousin of his best friend and fellow soccer player Lucas Scaglia. Messi met Roccuzzo in their hometown of Rosario when he was 5 years old. Their marriage, a civil ceremony dubbed by Argentina’s Clarín newspaper as the “wedding of the century,” was held at a luxury hotel in Rosario, with a number of fellow star soccer players and Colombian pop star Shakira on the 260-person guest list.Messi and Roccuzzo have three children together: Thiago, born in November 2012; Mateo, born in September 2015; and Ciro, born in March 2018.Although famously private off the field, Messi has quietly helped others in need. In 2007, he formed the Leo Messi Foundation to provide opportunities for disadvantaged youths. In early 2010, UNICEF named him a goodwill ambassador, with a focus on fighting for children’s rights across the globe.Every time I start a year, I start with the objective of trying to achieve everything, without comparing it to how I’ve done in other seasons.Whether it’s a friendly match, or for points, or a final, or any game—I play the same. I’m always trying to be my best, first for my team, for myself, for the fans and to try and win.I am competitive, and I feel bad when we lose. You can see it in me when we’ve lost. I’m in a bad way. I don’t like to talk to anyone.I made sacrifices by leaving Argentina, leaving my family to start a new life. I changed my friends, my people. Everything. But everything I did, I did for football, to achieve my dream.I have fun like a child in the street. When the day comes when I’m not enjoying it, I will leave football.I’ve never stopped being Argentine, and I’ve never wanted to. I feel very proud of being Argentine, even though I left there. I’ve been clear about this since I was very young, and I never wanted to change.Something deep in my character allows me to take the hits and get on with trying to win. I’ve always had this ability to get up and get on with it.I wasn’t teased as a child for my size. In fact, I think I had more affection because I was small.I am lucky, I live by my passion, and there are a lot of people who work, doing what they don't like and are badly paid for that.Fact Check: We strive for accuracy and fairness. If you see something that doesn’t look right, contact us! Biography.com EditorsStaff Editorial Team and ContributorsThe Biography.com staff is a team of people-obsessed and news-hungry editors with decades of collective experience. We have worked as daily newspaper reporters, major national magazine editors, and as editors-in-chief of regional media publications. Among our ranks are book authors and award-winning journalists. Our staff also works with freelance writers, researchers, and other contributors to produce the smart, compelling profiles and articles you see on our site. To meet the team, visit our About Us page: DonicaDeputy EditorAdrienne directs the daily news operation and content production for Biography.com. She joined the staff in October 2022 and most recently worked as an editor for Popular Mechanics, Runner’s World, and Bicycling. Adrienne has served as editor-in-chief of two regional print magazines, and her work has won several awards, including the Best Explanatory Journalism award from the Alliance of Area Business Publishers. Her current working theory is that people are the point of life, and she’s fascinated by everyone who (and every system that) creates our societal norms. When she’s not behind the news desk, find her hiking, working on her latest cocktail project, or eating mint chocolate chip ice cream. Tyler PiccottiNews and Culture Editor, Biography.comTyler Piccotti joined the Biography.com staff as an Associate News Editor and is now the News and Culture Editor. He previously worked as a reporter and copy editor for a daily newspaper recognized by the Associated Press Sports Editors. In his current role, he shares the true stories behind your favorite movies and TV shows and profiles rising musicians, actors, and athletes. When he's not working, you can find him at the nearest amusement park or movie theater and cheering on his favorite teams. Lionel Messi—probably the best player in the world today. He is one of the finest and most exciting footballing talents in the world. He had this never ending comparison with the former Manchester United Winger Cristiano Ronaldo but he kind of shrugged off it by helping his team defeat Manchester United convincingly in the UEFA Champions League finals at Rome 2009.How did he attain this place at the top of the world? At cloud nine?Messi’s performances in the 2005-06 season earned him rave reviews and a place in Argentina’s World Cup squad.A forward or attacking midfielder, Messi is blessed with outstanding ball control and pace and has the potential to become one of the finest players the game has seen.Barcelona is reaping the benefits of his growing maturity on the highest stage and at home in Argentina he has become the latest player to earn the moniker of ‘the new Maradona’. That is a difficult tag to carry, but so far he has borne it well.Yet, Messi’s story could have ended before it begun had Barca not taken him under its wing at an early age. Messi was born in Rosario, Argentina, and showed a great aptitude for football as a child. He played at a club called Grandoli, which was coached by his father, from the age of five and later moved to Newell’s Old Boys.He showed all the signs of having a promising footballing career ahead of him but at the age of 11 he was diagnosed with a growth hormone deficiency that required expensive treatment.His parents could not afford it but after some tentative signs of awareness in Messi’s talent from Barcelona, they decided to move to Spain. Messi tried out for Barca and the club was so impressed it agreed to pay for his medical treatment.Barca is now receiving enormous return on its investment after Messi rose through the youth ranks to the very top. He was in the first team by 17 and a full international the following year.He shone even in a Barcelona team boasting the ilk of Ronaldinho and Samuel Eto’o but missed the successful conclusion to Barca’s UEFA Champions League run having had his season ended prematurely by a thigh injury.He also missed three months of the following season with a broken metatarsal but the second half of the 2006-07 campaign was when he truly came of age. He became the youngest Barca player ever to score a hat trick against its fiercest rival Real Madrid in ‘El Clasisco’ and netted 11 goals in the last 13 games of the season.Barca fell short in its title defence in 2007 and has lost even more ground to Real Madrid in what has been a difficult 2007-08 campaign. Yet, through it all Messi, despite another lengthy spell out injured, has been the star.It was chiefly through his form that the Catalan club reached the Champions League semifinals after a domestic title challenge had long since fizzled out.2007-2008 was "so near yet so far" for Messi and Barca. They missed out of the La Liga title to Real and were defeated by a single goal in the UEFA Champions league semifinals by Manchester UnitedThen came Pep Guardiola. Messi took his game to the next level. He raised the bar. He scored 38 Goals in all competitions helping his team win the Treble- The Spanish Cup, La Liga and the UEFA Champions League. They defeated their Rivals Real Madrid 6-1 in the El Classico at the Bernabeu and took revenge over Manchester United by defeating then in the UEFA Champions league finals. In both the occasions—Messi Scored.Messi is a Spanish citizen but chose to represent Argentina. He overcame injury to feature in the 2006 World Cup and helped his team reach the Copa America final last year.Messi is said to be dating an Argentinian teenager called Maracena Lemos, an aspiring model whom he met during a period of recuperation from injury. It is said she was only 14 when they met.No injury is ever likely to faze Messi after coming through his childhood difficulties, but he does seem to have had some bad ones. He tore a thigh in a Champions League tie against Chelsea in 2006 before breaking his foot the following season. He was sidelined for six weeks again after tearing a thigh muscle this March against Celtic. He left the field in tears.Comparisons with Diego Maradona seemed apt when Messi scored a stunning goal in a Copa del Rey game against Getafe in April 2007. Messi ran more than half the length of the field and beat six players before slotting the ball into the net from a tight angle. It was highly reminiscent of Maradona’s famous goal—as opposed to the infamous one—against England in the 1986 World Cup quarterfinals.Messi endured a miserable debut for Argentina when he was sent off against Hungary in Budapest just two minutes after coming off the bench. He was adjudged to have elbowed Vilmos Vanczak and left the field in tears. Argentine footballer (born 1987) "Messi" redirects here. For other uses, see Messi (disambiguation). Lionel Messi Messi with Argentina at the 2022 FIFA World CupPersonal informationFull name Lionel Andrés Messi[1]Date of birth (1987-06-24) 24 June 1987 (age 37)[1]Place of birth Rosario, Santa Fe, ArgentinaHeight 1.70 m (5 ft 7 in)[1]Position(s) ForwardTeam informationCurrent team Inter MiamiNumber 10Youth career1992–1995 Grandoli1995–2000 Newell's Old Boys2000–2004 BarcelonaSenior career*Years Team Apps (Gls)2003–2004 Barcelona C 10 (5)2004–2005 Barcelona B 22 (6)2004–2021 Barcelona 520 (474)2021–2023 Paris Saint-Germain 58 (22)2023– Inter Miami 38 (31)International career‡2004–2005 Argentina U20 18 (14)2008 Argentina U23 5(α) (2)2005– Argentina 193 (112) Medal record Men's football Representing Argentina FIFA World Cup Winner 2022 Qatar Runner-up 2014 Brazil Copa América Winner 2021 Brazil Winner 2024 United States Runner-up 2007 Venezuela Runner-up 2015 Chile Runner-up 2016 United States 2019 Brazil Finalissima Winner 2022 England Olympics 2008 Beijing Team U20 World Cup Winner 2005 Netherlands South American U20 Championship 2005 Colombia Websitemessi.comSignature *Club domestic league appearances and goals, correct as of 07:56, 1 June 2025 (UTC)‡ National team caps and goals, correct as of 03:37, 11 June 2025 (UTC) This article is part ofa series aboutLionel Messi Argentine professional footballer Career International goals Achievements Rivalry with Cristiano Ronaldo New Maradona Eponyms and public art Cougar Dog Liolaemus messii Sistine Chapel of Football Media Messi (2014) Messi (2017) Messi and Maud (2017) Take the Ball Pass the Ball (2018) Messi's World Cup: The Rise of a Legend (2024) Family Antonela Roccuzzo Maxi Biancucchi Emanuel Biancucchi Related Hong Kong v Inter Miami Más+ Deportivo LSM vte Lionel Andrés "Leo" Messi[note 1] (Spanish pronunciation: [ljo'nel an'dres 'mesi] ; born 24 June 1987) is an Argentine professional footballer who plays as a forward for and captains both Major League Soccer club Inter Miami and the Argentina national team. Widely regarded as one of the greatest players of all time, Messi set numerous records for individual accolades won throughout his professional footballing career such as eight Ballon d'Or awards and eight times being named the world's best player by FIFA.[note 2] He is the most decorated player in the history of professional football having won 45 team trophies,[note 3] including twelve Big Five league titles, four UEFA Champions Leagues, two Copa Américas, and one FIFA World Cup. Messi holds the records for most European Golden Shoes (6), most goals in a calendar year (91), most goals for a single club (672, with Barcelona), most goals (474), hat-tricks (36) and assists (192) in La Liga, most assists (18) and goal contributions (32) in the Copa América, most goal contributions (21) in the World Cup, most international appearances (193) and international goals (112) by a South American male, and the second-most in the latter category outright. A prolific goalscorer and creative playmaker, Messi has scored over 850 senior career goals and has provided over 380 assists for club and country.[21] Born in Rosario, Argentina, Messi relocated to Spain to join Barcelona at age 13, and made his competitive debut at age 17 in October 2004. He gradually established himself as an integral player for the club, and during his first uninterrupted season at age 22 in 2008–09 he helped Barcelona achieve the first treble in Spanish football. This resulted in Messi winning the first of four consecutive Ballons d'Or, and by the 2011–12 season he would set La Liga and European records for most goals in a season and establish himself as Barcelona's all-time top scorer. The following two seasons, he finished second for the Ballon d'Or behind Cristiano Ronaldo, his perceived career rival. However, he regained his best form during the 2014–15 campaign, where he became the all-time top scorer in La Liga, led Barcelona to a historic second treble, and won a fifth Ballon d'Or in 2015. He assumed Barcelona's captaincy in 2018 and won a record sixth Ballon d'Or in 2019. During his overall tenure at Barcelona, Messi won a club-record 34 trophies, including ten La Liga titles and four Champions Leagues, among others. Financial difficulties at Barcelona led to Messi signing with French club Paris Saint-Germain in August 2021, where he would win the Ligue 1 title during both of his seasons there. He joined Major League Soccer club Inter Miami in July 2023. An Argentine international, Messi is the national team's all-time leading goalscorer and most-capped player. His style of play as a diminutive, left-footed dribbler, drew career-long comparisons with compatriot Diego Maradona, who described Messi as his successor. At the youth level, he won the 2005 FIFA World Youth Championship and gold medal in the 2008 Summer Olympics. After his senior debut in 2005, Messi became the youngest Argentine to play and score in a World Cup in 2006. Assuming captaincy in 2011, he then led Argentina to three consecutive finals in the 2014 FIFA World Cup, the 2015 Copa América and the Copa América Centenario, all of which they would lose. After initially announcing his international retirement in 2016, he returned to help his country narrowly qualify for the 2018 FIFA World Cup, which they would exit early. Messi and the national team finally broke Argentina's 28-year trophy drought by winning the 2021 Copa América, which helped him secure his seventh Ballon d'Or that year. He then led Argentina to win the 2022 Finalissima, as well as the 2022 FIFA World Cup, his country's third overall world championship and first in 36 years. This followed with a record-extending eighth Ballon d'Or in 2023, and a victory in the 2024 Copa América. Messi has endorsed sportswear company Adidas since 2006. According to France Football, he was the world's highest-paid footballer for five years out of six between 2009 and 2014, and was ranked the world's highest-paid athlete by Forbes in 2019 and 2022. Messi was among Time's 100 most influential people in the world in 2011, 2012, and 2023. In 2020 and 2023, he was named the Laureus World Sportsman of the Year, the first team-sport athlete to win it. In 2020, Messi was named to the Ballon d'Or Dream Team and became the second footballer and second team-sport athlete to surpass $1 billion in career earnings. Following his arrival and impact on football in the US, Messi was named Time's Athlete of the Year in 2023, and was bestowed with the Presidential Medal of Freedom by US president Joe Biden in 2025. Messi's childhood home in Rosario, Santa Fe. Messi was born on 24 June 1987 in Rosario, Santa Fe Province.[22] He was the third of four children of Jorge Messi, a steel factory manager, and his wife Celia Cuccittini, who worked in a magnet manufacturing workshop. On his father's side, he is of Italian and Spanish descent, the great-grandson of immigrants from the north-central Adriatic Marche region of Italy, and on his mother's side, he has primarily Italian ancestry.[3] Growing up in a tight-knit, football-loving family, "Leo" developed a passion for the sport from an early age, playing constantly with his older brothers, Rodrigo and Matías, and his cousins, Maximiliano and Emanuel Biancucchi, both of whom became professional footballers.[23] At the age of four he joined local club Grandoli, where he was coached by his father. Another early influence came from his maternal grandmother, Celia, who accompanied him to training and matches.[24] He was greatly affected by her death, shortly before his eleventh birthday. Since then, as a devout Catholic, he has celebrated his goals by looking up and pointing to the sky in tribute to his grandmother.[25][26] "When you saw him you would think: this kid can't play ball. He's a dwarf, he's too fragile, too small. But immediately you'd realise that he was born different, that he was a phenomenon and that he was going to be something impressive." – Newell's Old Boys youth coach Adrián Coria shares his first impression of the 12-year-old Messi.[27] Messi is a lifelong supporter of Newell's Old Boys, based in Rosario. When he was seven years old, he first started playing for Newell's. During the six years he played for them, he scored almost 500 goals, and was a member of "The Machine of '87", a nearly unbeatable youth side named for the year of their birth. Messi would regularly entertain crowds by performing ball tricks during half-time, when the first team played home games.[28][29][30] His goalscoring idol growing up was Brazilian striker Ronaldo, who Messi called "the best forward I've ever seen".[31] His future as a professional player was threatened when, aged 10, he was diagnosed with a growth hormone deficiency. He began growth hormone therapy at age 11,[32] however his father's health insurance covered only two years of the therapy, which cost at least 1,000 pesos per month. Newell's agreed to contribute, but later reneged on their promise.[33] He was scouted by Buenos Aires club River Plate, whose playmaker Pablo Aimar he idolised.[34][35] It was speculated for a time that he failed to sign with River Plate due to his ill health; however, in a 2019 interview, Messi revealed that River Plate had wanted to sign him after he scored four goals at a trial, and even offered to pay for his medical treatment, however Newell's refused to release his player card, preventing the transfer.[36] Messi enrolled at Barcelona's youth academy, La Masia, aged 13. As the Messi family had relatives in Catalonia, they sought to arrange a trial with Barcelona in September 2000. First-team director Charly Rexach immediately wanted to sign him, but the board of directors hesitated; at the time it was highly unusual for European clubs to sign foreign players of such a young age. On 14 December, an ultimatum was issued for Barcelona to prove their commitment, and Rexach, with no other paper at hand, offered a contract on a paper napkin.[34][37] In February 2001, the family relocated to Barcelona, where they moved into an apartment near the club's stadium, Camp Nou. During his first year in Spain, Messi rarely played with the Infantiles due to a transfer conflict with Newell's; as a foreigner, he could only be fielded in friendlies and the Catalan league. Without football, he struggled to integrate into the team. He was reserved by nature, and was so quiet that some of his teammates initially believed he was mute. At home, he suffered from homesickness after his mother moved back to Rosario with his brothers and younger sister, María Sol, while he stayed in Barcelona with his father.[28][37][38] After a year at Barcelona's youth academy, La Masia, Messi was finally enrolled in the Royal Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) in February 2002. Now he could play in all competitions, and quickly befriended his teammates, among whom were Cesc Fàbregas and Gerard Piqué.[39] After completing his growth hormone therapy at 14,[40] Messi became an integral part of the "Baby Dream Team", Barcelona's greatest-ever youth side. During his first full season (2002–03), he was top scorer with 36 goals in 30 games for the Cadetes A, who won an unprecedented treble of the league, the Spanish cup, and the Copa Catalunya.[39][41] In the Copa Catalunya final, their 4–1 victory over Espanyol became referred to in club lore as the partido de la máscara, the final of the mask. A week after suffering a broken cheekbone during a league match, Messi was allowed to start the game on the condition that he wear a plastic protector; soon hindered by the mask, he took it off and scored two goals in 10 minutes before his substitution.[42] At the close of the season, he received an offer to join Arsenal, his first from a foreign club. Although Fàbregas and Piqué soon left for England with their own offers, Messi chose to remain in Barcelona.[37][43][44] Messi continued to progress through his club's ranks at a rapid pace, debuting for four youth teams during the 2003–04 season.[45] After being named player of the tournament in four separate international pre-season competitions with the Juvenil B, he played only one official match with the team before being promoted to the Juvenil A. In the Juvenil A he scored 18 goals in 11 league games.[46][47] Messi was then one of several youth players called up to strengthen a depleted first team during the international break. French winger Ludovic Giuly explained that Messi caught everyone's attention in a training session with Frank Rijkaard's first team: "He destroyed us all... They were kicking him all over the place to avoid being ridiculed by this kid, he just got up and kept on playing. He would dribble past four players and score a goal. Even the team's starting centre-backs were nervous. He was an alien."[48] "It seemed as if he had been playing with us all his life." – Barcelona's then assistant coach Henk ten Cate on Messi's first-team debut.[49] At 16 years, four months, and 23 days old, Messi made his first-team debut when he came on in the 75th minute during a friendly against José Mourinho's Porto on

record seventh Ballon d'Or.[164] He finished his debut season with PSG with 11 goals and 14 assists across all competitions, helping the club win their 10th Ligue 1 title.[165] Beginning the 2022–23 season, Messi would win his second trophy with PSG in the Trophée des Champions.[166] A goal against Nice resulted in him surpassing Cristiano Ronaldo as the all-time highest goalscorer in European club football with 702 goals; during the match, he also achieved 1,000 career direct goal contributions at club level.[167][168] By the end of the season, he had 21 goals across all competitors and the highest number of assists in the league with 16, which helped PSG clinch their 11th Ligue 1 title and his second in a row.[169][170][171] Following the last game of the season, manager Christophe Galtier confirmed that it would be Messi's last for PSG, with the club confirming his departure two days later.[172] Messi with Inter Miami in the 2023 U.S. Open Cup. Major League Soccer (MLS) club Inter Miami CF announced the signing of Messi on a two-and-a-half-year contract on 15 July 2023.[173][174] Messi made his 2023 debut for the club in a Leagues Cup match against Cruz Azul, scoring with a free-kick in stoppage time for a victory.[175] DeAndre Yedlin, the previous captain of Inter Miami, gave his armband to Messi, who took over as team captain.[176] Messi's arrival in the US was praised as a revelation, on and off the pitch, and his presence was credited for helping to raise the profile of MLS within the US and abroad. According to Goal, "Every game that he graces sparks a scramble for tickets, with plenty of A-list guests eager to watch him in action".[177] The frenzy over his arrival was dubbed "Messimania", and Inter Miami's No. 10 Messi jersey became the best-selling jersey in the league, and nearly the world.[178] After scoring nine goals in his first six games for Miami, Messi led the team to the club's first-ever trophy, as it won the Leagues Cup against Nashville SC.[179] Messi made his MLS debut against the New York Red Bulls.[180] Miami would miss the playoffs, finishing 14th in the Eastern Conference, having gone winless in their last seven games.[181] On 30 October 2023, following his World Cup win with Argentina and Ligue 1 trophy with PSG, Messi was awarded a record-extending eighth Ballon d'Or.[182] He was also named Time Athlete of the Year, the first footballer ever to win the award.[183] During the 2024 season, Messi broke the record for the most assists in a single MLS game with five assists, and broke the record for the most goal contributions in an MLS game with six, in a 6–2 win over the New York Red Bulls.[184] On 2 October, Messi scored a brace in a 3–2 win over Columbus Crew, clinching the Supporters' Shield, his 46th trophy.[185] In the final game of the regular season on 19 October against the New England Revolution, Messi scored his first hat-trick for the club in a 6–2 victory. Inter Miami's victory over the Revolution also allowed the club to finish with 74 points throughout the regular season, a league record for MLS. He would finish the regular season with 20 goals and 16 assists in 19 matches.[186] In doing so, he became Inter Miami's all-time leading goalscorer.[187] Miami made its first postseason appearance in the 2024 MLS Cup playoffs but were eliminated in the first round after losing two games against Atlanta United FC. Messi would have his first postseason goal in the third game, a 3–2 loss.[188] He would be named the MLS Most Valuable Player following the conclusion of the regular season.[189] During the 2025 season, Messi became the fastest person to reach 40 goals in league history.[190] He was featured in a Superbowl ad by Apple TV for their exclusive MLS coverage. In April he was reported to be negotiating a one-year contract extension to the end of the 2026 season, after the opening of the new Miami stadium.[190] Main article: Career of Lionel Messi § International career As a dual Argentine-Spanish national, Messi was eligible to play for the national team of both countries.[191] He debuted for Argentina in 2004 for Argentina's U20 team against Paraguay, and was subsequently included in the squad for the 2005 South American U-20 Championship, where they would finish third.[192] Messi would then lead the team to victory in the 2005 FIFA World Youth Championship, his first success with Argentina. Finishing the tournament with six goals and two assists, he would also win the Golden Ball.[193][194][195] Messi evades Brazil's Marcelo in the semi-final of the 2008 Summer Olympics. Messi would make his debut with the senior national team in 2005, at age 18, coming off the bench in a friendly against Hungary.[196] Messi would have his first start in 2006 against Peru, and would score his first international goal in a friendly against Croatia.[197][198] His World Cup debut came in the 2006 FIFA World Cup as a substitute in the 74th minute against Serbia and Montenegro, assisting one goal and scoring the final one in their victory. This made him the youngest player to represent and score for Argentina in the World Cup.[199] He would represent Argentina again for the 2007 Copa América, where they would ultimately lose in the final. Messi was named the best young player of the tournament, having scored two goals and provided one assist.[200] The 2008 Summer Olympics would mark another major achievement with his country, as he led Argentina's U23 team to claim the Olympic gold medal over Nigeria. Messi registered two goals and three assists throughout, and was singled out by FIFA as the stand-out player from the tournament's best team.[201] Messi in his number 10 shirt captaining Argentina in 2012. With the international retirement of Juan Román Riquelme, Messi was given Argentina's number 10 shirt.[202] During a 2010 FIFA World Cup group stage match against Greece, where a majority of the starters rested due to a secured place in the knockout rounds, Messi would wear the captain's armband for the first time.[203] Argentina were ultimately eliminated in the quarterfinals against Germany, but Messi was identified as one of the tournament's 10 best players due to his pace and creativity, despite failing to register a single goal and only having one assist.[204] Ahead of the 2011 Copa América, Argentina began building their team around Messi.[205] However, Messi would again be goalless during the tournament but had three assists. The team would ultimately lose to Uruguay in penalties during the quarter-finals.[206] Messi against Germany in the 2014 FIFA World Cup final. Following their unsuccessful performance, a 24-year-old Messi would be awarded the captaincy of the squad.[207] The next several years saw many frustrations for Messi due to his inability to lead Argentina to win an international trophy. During the 2014 FIFA World Cup, Messi and Argentina lost to Germany in the final, though Messi was awarded the Golden Ball as the best player of the tournament regardless due to his overall performance with four goals and an assist.[208][209] Argentina would lose to Chile on penalties in the 2015 Copa América final the next year. At the close of the tournament, Messi was reportedly selected to receive the Golden Ball award, having scored one goal and provided three assists, but he rejected the honour.[210] In the 2016 Copa América Centenario semi-final against the United States, a goal from Messi would put him ahead of Gabriel Batistuta as Argentina's all-time leading goalscorer in international matches.[211] However, Argentina would again fall to Chile on penalties in the final.[212] Messi would have five goals and four assists throughout the tournament.[213] Losing three consecutive finals in three consecutive years caused Messi to retire from international football, but a nationwide campaign in Argentina helped convince him to reverse his decision.[212][214] He would return to the national team to lead them to the 2018 FIFA World Cup. Argentina were in jeopardy of missing the tournament on the last game of the qualifiers against Ecuador, but a hat-trick from Messi dramatically secured their entry.[215] They would go on to lose to France in the Round of 16 during the World Cup, with Messi having one goal and two assists in the tournament.[216] The next year, Messi would again represent Argentina in the 2019 Copa América, where he registered only a single goal and assist. They would lose to hosts Brazil in the semi-final but ended with a third-place finish after defeating Chile.[217] Despite not winning the tournament, this victory would mark the beginning of a 36-game unbeaten streak for Argentina that would last for over three years.[218] Messi facing off against Érick Gutiérrez of Mexico in the 2022 FIFA World Cup group stage. Messi would finally end Argentina's 28-year trophy drought in the 2021 Copa América, as they had not won an international tournament since 1993.[219] During a group stage match against Bolivia, he surpassed Javier Mascherano to become Argentina's most-capped player.[220] Argentina defeated Brazil in the final, and Messi was named the player of the tournament having been directly involved in nine out of the 12 goals scored by Argentina, scoring four of them and assisting five.[219] He captained Argentina to win another international trophy in the 2022 Finalissima against UEFA Euro 2020 winners Italy, where he was named player of the match after providing two assists.[221] At the 2022 FIFA World Cup, Messi led Argentina to its first World Cup victory in 36 years, scoring twice in the final to defeat France.[222] Having scored seven goals and assisting three during the tournament, Messi would again win the Golden Ball, becoming the first player to win it twice.[223] His appearance in the final also set new records for the most appearances (26) and direct goal contributions (21 – 13 goals and 8 assists) at the World Cup.[224] A hat-trick in a 2023 friendly against Curaçao saw Messi reach 100 international goals, the third player and the first South American in history to achieve this milestone.[225] Later that year, a goal against Peru resulted in Messi becoming the all-time top goalscorer in CONMEBOL World Cup qualifiers.[226] During the 2024 Copa América semi-final against Canada, Messi scored his first and only goal of the tournament which also made him the second-highest international goalscorer of all time.[227] Argentina eventually won the final against Colombia for their second consecutive Copa América title, with Messi contributing one goal and assist overall while also setting a new record for most appearances (39) at Copa América.[228] Messi prepares to shoot with his dominant left foot in the 2014 FIFA World Cup final. Due to his short stature, Messi has a lower centre of gravity than taller players, which gives him greater agility, allowing him to change direction more quickly and evade opposing tackles;[229][230] this has led the Spanish media to dub him La Pulga Atómica ("The Atomic Flea").[231][232][233] Despite being physically unimposing, he possesses significant upper-body strength, which, combined with his low centre of gravity and resulting balance, aids him in withstanding physical challenges from opponents; he has consequently been noted for his lack of diving in a sport rife with playacting.[28][230][234] His short, strong legs allow him to excel in short bursts of acceleration while his quick feet enable him to retain control of the ball when dribbling at speed.[235] His former Barcelona manager Pep Guardiola once stated, "Messi is the only player that runs faster with the ball than he does without it."[236] Although he has improved his ability with his weaker foot since his mid-20s, Messi is predominantly a left-footed player; with the outside of his left foot, he usually begins dribbling runs, while he uses the inside of his foot to finish and provide passes and assists.[237][238] A prolific goalscorer, Messi is known for his finishing, positioning, quick reactions, and ability to make attacking runs to beat the defensive line. He also functions in a playmaking role, courtesy of his vision and range of passing.[239] He has often been described as a magician; a conjurer, creating goals and opportunities where seemingly none exist.[240][241][242] Moreover, he is an accurate free kick and penalty kick taker.[230][243] As of May 2025, Messi ranks third all time in goals scored from direct free kicks with 67,[244] the most among active players.[245] He also has a penchant for scoring from chips.[246] Messi's dribbling abilities allow him to weave past several defenders and orchestrate attacking plays. Messi's pace and technical ability enable him to undertake individual dribbling runs towards goal, in particular during counterattacks, usually starting from the halfway line or the right side of the pitch.[234][243][247] He is widely considered to be one of the greatest dribblers of all time.[248][249] With regard to this ability, his former Argentina manager Diego Maradona has said of him, "The ball stays glued to his foot; I've seen great players in my career, but I've never seen anyone with Messi's ball control."[238] Beyond his individual qualities, he is also a well-rounded, hard-working team player, known for his creative combinations, in particular with former Barcelona midfielders Xavi and Andrés Iniesta.[229][230] As his career advanced, and his athleticism and tendency to dribble diminished slightly with age, Messi began to dictate play in deeper areas of the pitch and developed into one of the best passers and playmakers in football history.[250][251][252] His work-rate off the ball and defensive responsibilities also decreased as his career progressed; by covering less ground on the pitch, and instead conserving his energy for short bursts of speed, he was able to improve his efficiency, movement, and positional play, and was also able to avoid muscular injuries, despite often playing a large number of matches throughout a particular season on a consistent basis. Indeed, while he was injury-prone in his early career, he was later able to improve his injury record by running less off the ball, and by adopting a stricter diet, training regime, and sleep schedule.[253] A versatile forward, Messi often plays as a classic number 10. Tactically, Messi plays in a free attacking role; a versatile player, he is capable of attacking on either wing or through the centre of the pitch. His favoured position in childhood was the playmaker behind two strikers, known as the enganche in Argentine football, but he began his career in Spain as a left-winger or left-sided forward.[254] Upon his first-team debut, he was moved onto the right wing by manager Frank Rijkaard; from this position, he could more easily cut through the defence into the middle of the pitch and curl shots on goal with his left foot, rather than predominantly cross balls for teammates.[236] Under Guardiola and subsequent managers, he most often played in a false nine role; positioned as a centre-forward or lone striker, he would roam the centre, often moving deep into midfield and drawing defenders with him, in order to create and exploit spaces for passes, other teammates' attacking runs off the ball, Messi's own dribbling runs, or combinations with Xavi and Iniesta.[38] Under the stewardship of Luis Enrique, Messi initially returned to playing in the right-sided position that characterised much of his early career in the manager's 4–3–3 formation,[255][256] while he was increasingly deployed in a deeper, free playmaking role in later seasons.[257][258] Under manager Ernesto Valverde, Messi played in a variety of roles. While he occasionally continued to be deployed in a deeper role, from which he could make runs from behind into the box,[259] or even on the right wing[260] or as a false nine,[261][262] he was also used in a more offensive, central role in a 4–2–3–1,[258] or as a second striker in a 4–4–2 formation, where he was once again given the licence to drop deep, link-up with midfielders, orchestrate his team's attacking plays, and create chances for his attacking partner Luis Suárez.[263][264] With the Argentina national team, Messi has similarly played anywhere along the frontline. Under various managers, he has been employed on the right wing, as a false nine, as an out-and-out striker, in a supporting role alongside another forward, or in a deeper, free creative role as a classic number 10 playmaker or attacking midfielder behind the strikers.[265][266] Messi is widely regarded as one of the two best players of his generation, alongside Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo.[267] He is also considered one of the greatest footballers in the history of the sport.[268] A prodigious talent as a teenager, Messi established himself among the world's best players before age 20.[269] Shortly after teammate Ronaldinho won the 2005 Ballon d'Or, he commented, "I'm not even the best at Barça" in reference to his 18-year-old protégé.[270] Four years later, after Messi won his first Ballon d'Or by a record margin,[81] the public debate regarding his qualities as a player moved beyond his status in contemporary football to the possibility that he was one of the greatest players in history.[24][234][271] An early proponent was his then-Barcelona manager Pep Guardiola, who, as early as August 2009, declared Messi to be the best player he had ever seen.[272] In the following years, this opinion gained greater acceptance among pundits, managers, former and current players.[92][273] By the end of Barça's second treble-winning season, the view of Messi as one of the greatest footballers of all time had become the apparent view among many fans and pundits in continental Europe.[274][275] Messi would receive dismissals by critics throughout his career based on the fact that he had not won an international tournament at senior level with Argentina.[276][277][278] However, his subsequent victories in the 2021 Copa América and the 2022 FIFA World Cup resulted in him finally winning every top tier trophy at both the club and country levels, an achievement that many pundits felt cemented Messi's legacy.[268] Main article: Messi–Ronaldo rivalry Messi has been compared with Cristiano Ronaldo (left) throughout much of their careers. Among his contemporary peers, Messi is most often compared and contrasted with Cristiano Ronaldo, who many consider his career rival.[267] Both achieved numerous individual accolades, won dozens of trophies for both club and country, and are the two leading goal scorers in history. Although Messi has at times denied any rivalry,[279][280] they are widely believed to push one another in their aim to be the best player in the world.[281] Pundits have compared the ongoing rivalry to past sports rivalries like the Muhammad Ali–Joe Frazier rivalry in boxing, the Prost–Senna rivalry in motorsport, and the tennis rivalries between Federer–Nadal and Borg–McEnroe.[282] Fans and pundits alike regularly argue the individual merits of both players.[281][283] Messi is lauded for his combination of dribbling, playmaking, passing and goalscoring, while Ronaldo has received praise for his exceptional speed and athleticism, goalscoring skills, and performance under pressure.[284][285] Beyond their playing styles, the debate also revolves around their differing physiques – Ronaldo is 1.87 m (6 ft 1+1⁄2 in) with a muscular build, compared to Messi's smaller size – and contrasting public personalities with Ronaldo's self-confidence and theatrics a foil to Messi's humility.[286] Regarding individual achievements, Messi has won eight Ballons d'Or to Ronaldo's five,[287] eight FIFA World's Best Player awards to Ronaldo's five, and six European Golden Shoes to Ronaldo's four.[288] Off the pitch, Ronaldo is his direct competitor in terms of salary, sponsorships, and social media fanbase.[289] Messi's head-to-head record against teams that feature Ronaldo consists of 15 wins, 9 draws, and 10 losses in competitive club matches, one win and loss each in international friendlies, and one win in a club friendly. The first competitive matchup between the two occurred in 2008, when Ronaldo's Manchester United were drawn to play Messi's Barcelona in the 2007–08 UEFA Champions League semi-finals, where Ronaldo and Manchester United would eventually advance 1–0 on aggregate, and go on to win the final.[290] The two players and their teams would meet again in the next year's Champions League, this time in the final, with Messi and Barcelona emerging as the victors after a 2–0 result.[291] After this, Ronaldo would transfer to Real Madrid, the main rivals of Barcelona, and from 2009–10 to 2017–18, Messi faced Ronaldo at least twice every season in El Clásico, which ranks among the world's most viewed annual sports events.[292][289] Ronaldo's would then transfer to Juventus in the summer of 2018; their final matchup in a competitive match would occur during a 2020–21 UEFA Champions League group stage match, where Ronaldo's two goals from the penalty spot helped Juventus to a 3–0 victory against Messi's Barcelona.[293] After Ronaldo left Real Madrid for Juventus, Messi stated: "I miss Cristiano. Although it was a bit difficult to see him win trophies, he gave La Liga prestige."[294] Following Messi leading Argentina to victory in the 2022 World Cup, a number of football critics, commentators, and players have opined that Messi settled the debate between the two players.[295][296] Ronaldo himself declared a year later that his rivalry with Messi was over and "gone", after 36 official fixtures and 15 years of "sharing the stage".[297] Main article: New Maradona "I have seen the player who will inherit my place in Argentinian football and his name is Messi." – Diego Maradona hailing the 18-year-old Messi as his successor in February 2006.[298] Throughout his career, Messi has been compared with his compatriot Diego Maradona, who was also considered the best player of his generation and one of greatest in the history of the sport.[299][300] This was due to their short statures, their similar playing styles as diminutive, left-footed playmakers, and the fact that they both came from Argentina.[301] Initially, Messi was merely one of many young Argentine players to receive the "New Maradona" moniker, but as his career progressed, Messi proved his similarity beyond all previous contenders, establishing himself as the best player Argentina had produced since Maradona.[35][302] Even when Messi was 18 years old, Maradona called him the best player in the world and hailed him as his successor.[298] Messi and Maradona would work together as player and manager for Argentina's national side from 2008 through the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the latter thoroughly impressed with the former's skills.[303] It was during this period that Messi was given Argentina's number 10 shirt that Maradona famously wore. Maradona gave Messi his blessing, telling him: "the No 10 is yours. There's nobody better than you to wear it."[202] Due to their similar size and style of play, Messi was constantly compared with his compatriot Diego Maradona by pundits and his countrymen. During the early and middle parts of his career, Messi was generally held in lesser esteem than Maradona in Argentine society. Part of this had to do with Messi's lack of tournament success and perceived uneven output with the national team during this period – Maradona had famously led Argentina to victory in the 1986 FIFA World Cup with a dominant overall performance, which set expectations for Messi to do the same.[276][299][304] Also unlike Maradona, Messi never played in the Argentine Primera División, therefore depriving his countrymen a chance to watch him develop and prove himself, and through no fault of his own would do this overseas in La Liga instead.[28][304] Argentines also identified more with the fiery, extroverted and controversial Maradona who came from the slums, character traits that they felt aligned with their national values, as opposed to the reserved, introverted and unassuming Messi who had a comparably unremarkable upbringing in Rosario.[278][304][305] Several pundits, footballing figures, and Maradona himself would point to this temperament to question Messi's leadership capabilities for the national team.[276][306][307] Furthermore, Messi's lack of outward passion for the Albiceleste shirt, early tendency not to sing the national anthem, and disinclination to emotional displays have in the past led to the false perception that he felt more Catalan rather than truly Argentine.[206][308] However, despite having lived in Barcelona since age 13, Messi rejected the option of representing Spain internationally, saying: "Argentina is my country, my family, my way of expressing myself. I would change all my records to make the people in my country happy."[309] A mural featuring both Maradona and Messi following Argentina's World Cup win in 2022. Football journalist Tim Vickery stated the perception of Messi among Argentines changed in 2019, with Messi making a conscious effort to become "more one of the group, more Argentine".[308] Other pundits noted that Messi had grown more assertive as a leader during the 2019 Copa América by becoming more vocal with his teammates both on and off the pitch, finally singing the national anthem with the team before matches, and speaking with journalists at length after matches, the latter of which he rarely did for Barcelona.[310] Following the 2022 World Cup win for Messi and Argentina, Vickery felt that Messi would now be held in the same esteem by his compatriots as Maradona.[308] Former footballer turned journalist Jorge Valdano said he saw a "Maradonian" edge to Messi's performances during the tournament, while compatriot Osvaldo Ardiles mentioned that Messi's provoking actions against the Netherlands side during the quarter-final were "more of a Maradona reaction," further endearing Messi to his countrymen.[311][312] Messi himself later remarked that the World Cup victory "won over all the people of Argentina. Today 95% or 100% of Argentines love me and that's a beautiful feeling."[313] Messi's success on the pitch earned him several lucrative endorsement deals along with widespread recognition and popularity. Messi was among the Time 100, an annual list of the world's most influential people, in 2011, 2012 and 2023.[314][315][316] According to a 2014 survey in 15 international markets, Messi was familiar to 87% of respondents around the world, of whom 78% perceived him favourably, making him the second-most recognised player globally, behind Cristiano Ronaldo, and the most likable of all contemporary players.[317][318] World Press Photo selected "The Final Game", a photo of Messi facing the World Cup trophy after Argentina's final defeat to Germany, as the best sports image of 2014.[319] On his economic impact on the city in which he plays, Terry Gibson called him a "tourist attraction".[320] His fanbase on Facebook is among the largest of public figures: within seven hours of its launch in April 2011, Messi's Facebook page had nearly seven million followers, and by July 2023 he had over 114 million followers, the second highest for a sportsperson after Ronaldo.[321][322] He has over 500 million Instagram followers, the second highest for an individual and sportsperson after Ronaldo.[323] His World Cup celebration post from 18 December 2022 is the most liked post on Instagram with over 75 million likes.[324] On 20 March 2023, during a return to Buenos Aires following his World Cup victory, Messi was mobbed by hundreds of adoring fans when he and his family were out to dinner. When news spread where Messi and his family were, the restaurant was soon surrounded by locals hoping to get a glimpse of their World Cup-winning captain. Police assistance would be needed to get Messi back to his car in the early hours of the morning.[325] In April 2023, Messi was featured in the 200 year old Thrissur Pooram festival in Kerala, India.[326] During the festival, umbrellas carrying the illuminated cut outs of Messi holding the World Cup trophy were displayed on the top of caparisoned elephants during the Kudamattam ceremony.[327] In December 2023, a set of shirts Messi had worn during the 2022 World Cup was sold at auction for $7.8 million.[328] During an exhibition match on 4 February 2024 in which Inter Miami faced off against the Hong Kong League players at Hong Kong Stadium, Messi remained on the bench the entire game, causing massive backlash in Hong Kong and China as a result.[329] A Messi commercial was taken off air in those regions,[330] while others remained despite pressure from Chinese social-media users.[331][332][333] Furthermore, the Chinese Football Association temporarily halted its partnership with the Argentine Football Association over the incident on 8 February.[334] Messi was the world's highest-paid footballer for five years out of six between 2009 and 2014; he was the first player to exceed the €40 million benchmark, with earnings of €41 million in 2013, and the €50–€60 million points, with income of €65 million in 2014.[335][336] Messi was second on Forbes list of the world's highest-paid athletes, after Cristiano Ronaldo, with income of $81 million from salary and endorsements in 2015–16.[337] In 2018, he was the first player to exceed the €100 million benchmark for a calendar year, with earnings of €126 million ($154 million) in combined income from salaries, bonuses and endorsements.[338] Forbes ranked him the world's highest-paid athlete in 2019.[339] From 2008, he was Barcelona's highest-paid player, receiving a salary that increased incrementally from €7.8 million to €13 million over the next five years.[340][341][109] Signing a new contract in 2017, he earned $667,000 per week in wages, and Barcelona paid him $60 million as a signing on bonus.[342] His buyout clause was set at $835 million (€700 million).[342] In 2020, Messi became the second footballer, as well as the second athlete in a team sport, after Ronaldo, to surpass $1 billion in earnings during their careers.[343] Messi's Argentina jersey, supplied by Adidas, was sold out worldwide during the 2022 World Cup.[344] In addition to salary and bonuses, much of Messi's income derives from endorsements; SportsPro has consequently cited him as one of the world's most marketable athletes every year since their research began in 2010.[345] His main sponsor since 2006 is Adidas. As Barcelona's leading youth prospect, he was signed with Nike since age 14, but transferred to Adidas after they successfully challenged their rival's claim to his image rights in court.[346] Messi established himself as their leading brand endorser;[289] from 2008, he had a long-running signature collection of Adidas F50 boots, and in 2015, became the first footballer to receive his own sub-brand of Adidas boots, the Adidas Messi.[347][348] Since 2017, he has worn the latest version of the Adidas Nemeziz.[349] In 2015, a Barcelona jersey with Messi's name and number was the best-selling replica jersey worldwide.[350] At the 2022 World Cup, Adidas sold out Messi's No. 10 Argentina jersey worldwide.[344] After blessing himself, Messi often celebrates a goal by pointing a finger on each hand towards the sky in dedication to his late grandmother.[351] His goal celebration features in the FIFA video game series. As a commercial entity, Messi's brand has been based exclusively on his talents and achievements as a player, in contrast to arguably more glamorous players like Ronaldo and David Beckham. At the start of his career, he thus mainly held sponsorship contracts with companies that employ sports-oriented marketing, such as Adidas, Pepsi, and Konami.[352][353] From 2010, concurrently with increased achievements as a player, his marketing appeal widened, leading to long-term endorsement deals with luxury brands Dolce & Gabbana and Audemars Piguet.[352][354] Messi is a global brand ambassador for Gillette, Turkish Airlines, Ooredoo, and Tata Motors, among other companies.[355][356][357][358] Messi was the face of Konami's video game series Pro Evolution Soccer, appearing on the covers of PES 2009, PES 2010, PES 2011 and PES 2020. He subsequently signed with rival company EA Sports to become the face of their series FIFA and appeared on consecutive covers from FIFA 13 to FIFA 16.[359][360] In 2013, a Turkish Airlines advertisement starring Messi, in which he engages in a selfie competition with Kobe Bryant, was the most-watched ad on YouTube in 2013, receiving 137 million views, and was voted the best advertisement of the 2005–15 decade to commemorate YouTube's founding.[361][362] In June 2021, Messi signed a five-year deal to become an ambassador for the Hard Rock Cafe brand. He stated, "sports and music are an integral part of my life. It is an honor to be the first athlete to partner with a brand who has a history of teaming with music legends."[363] In May 2022, Messi was unveiled as Saudi Arabia's tourism ambassador. Due to Saudi Arabia's poor human rights record, Messi was condemned for the role which was viewed as an attempt of Saudi sportswashing.[364][365] Throughout his career, Messi has been involved in charitable efforts aimed at vulnerable children, a commitment that stems in part from the medical difficulties he faced in his own childhood. Since 2004, he has contributed his time and finances to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), an organisation with which Barcelona also have a strong association.[366][367] Messi has served as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador since his appointment in March 2010, completing his first field mission for the organisation four months later as he travelled to Haiti to bring public awareness to the plight of the country's children in the wake of the 2010 Haiti earthquake. He has since participated in UNICEF campaigns targeting HIV prevention, education, and the social inclusion of disabled children.[368] To celebrate his son's first birthday, in November 2013, Messi and Thiago were part of a publicity campaign to raise awareness of mortality rates among disadvantaged children.[369] Messi (pictured in 2007) has worked with UNICEF since 2004 and has served as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador since 2010. In addition to his work with UNICEF, Messi founded his own charitable organisation, the Leo Messi Foundation, which supports access to health care, education, and sport for children.[370] It was established in 2007 following a visit Messi paid to a hospital for terminally ill children in Boston, an experience that resonated with him to the point that he decided to reinvest part of his earnings into society.[371] Through his foundation, Messi has awarded research grants, financed medical training, and invested in the development of medical centres and projects in Argentina, Spain, and elsewhere in the world.[371][372] In addition to his own fundraising activities, such as his global "Messi and Friends" football matches, his foundation receives financial support from various companies to which he has assigned his name in endorsement agreements, with Adidas as their main sponsor.[373][374] A gold replica of his left foot, weighing 25 kg (55 lb) and valued at $5.3 million, went on sale in Japan in 2013 to raise funds for victims of the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami.[375] Messi has also invested in youth football in Argentina: he financially supports Sarmiento, a football club based in the Rosario neighbourhood where he was born, committing in 2013 to the refurbishment of their facilities and the installation of all-weather pitches, and funds the management of several youth players at Newell's Old Boys and rival club Rosario Central, as well as at River Plate and Boca Juniors in Buenos Aires.[371] At Newell's Old Boys, his boyhood club, he funded the 2012 construction of a new gymnasium and a dormitory inside the club's stadium for their youth academy. His former youth coach at Newell's, Ernesto Vecchio, is employed by the Leo Messi Foundation as a talent scout for young players.[28] On 7 June 2016, Messi won a libel case against La Razón newspaper and was awarded €65,000 in damages, which he donated to the charity Médecins Sans Frontières.[376] Messi made a donation worth €1 million ($1.1 million) to fight the spread of coronavirus.[377] This was split between Clinic Barcelona in Barcelona and his native Argentina.[378] In addition to this, Messi along with his fellow FC Barcelona teammates announced he would be taking a 70% cut in salaries during the 2020 coronavirus emergency, and contribute further to the club to provide fully to salaries of all the clubs employees.[379] In November 2016, with the Argentine Football Association being run by a FIFA committee for emergency due to an economic crisis, it was reported that three of the national team's security staff told Messi that they had not received their salaries for six months. He stepped in and paid the salaries of the three members.[380][381] In February 2021, Messi donated to the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya his Adidas shoes which he wore when he scored his 644th goal for Barcelona and broke Pelé's record for most goals scored for a single club; the shoes were later auctioned off in April by the museum for charity to help children with cancer and were sold for £125,000.[382] In advance of the 2021 Copa América, Messi donated three signed shirts to the Chinese pharmaceutical firm Sinovac Biotech – whose directors spoke of their admiration for Messi – in order to secure 50,000 doses of Sinovac's COVID-19 vaccine, CoronaVac, in the hope of vaccinating all of South America's football players.[383] A deal brokered by Uruguay's president Luis Lacalle Pou, the plan to prioritise football players caused some controversy given widespread vaccine scarcity in the region, with the Mayor of Canelones Yamandú Orsi remarking that "Just as the president manifested cooperation with CONMEBOL to vaccinate for the Copa América, he could just as well have the same consideration for Canelones".[383] In January 2025, Messi was presented with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award of the United States, by President Joe Biden for his contributions in supporting healthcare and education programs for children around the world.[384] He would be unable to attend the ceremony due to scheduling conflicts, but sent a letter expressing his appreciation for the honor and his hopes of meeting President Biden at a later date.[385] One of many street art displays depicting Messi. Street art and public murals depicting Messi are regularly painted around the world.[386][387] One prominent artwork that went viral is the Sistine Chapel of Football, a parody of Michelangelo's The Creation of Adam that features both Messi and Diego Maradona, along with several other prominent Argentine footballers. The work is exhibited at the Sportivo Pereyra club from Barracas in Buenos Aires.[388] Several public sculptures with Messi's likeness have been erected. Madame Tussauds unveiled their first wax sculpture of Messi at Wembley Stadium in 2012.[389] After the announcement of his first retirement from the international team in June 2016, a bronze statue of Messi was erected in Buenos Aires days later in an attempt to convince him to return.[390] A life-sized statue of Messi holding the World Cup trophy was unveiled outside the CONMEBOL headquarters in Luque, Paraguay in March 2023, a few months after Argentina's World Cup win. The statue would stand alongside those of Pelé and Maradona.[391] Messi, a documentary by filmmaker Álex de la Iglesia, premiered at the 71st Venice International Film Festival in August 2014.[392] Messi's World Cup: The Rise of a Legend, a biographical docuseries focusing on Messi's career, his highs and lows with the Argentina national football team, and their eventual success at the 2022 FIFA World Cup, aired on Apple TV+ on 21 February 2024.[393] On 4 June 2024, Messi announced the release of Más+, an American brand of sports and energy drinks.[394] Messi created the drink because he couldn't find a flavorful and healthy hydration option that suited his needs.[395] The drink was teased to debut in Miami, Florida, on 13 June 2024. It was released in Publix and Walmart stores and made available for delivery on Gopuff in South Florida the following day.[394] Más+ is affiliated with White Claw Hard Seltzer founder Mark Anthony.[396] Later that year, on 19 September 2024, Messi announced that he would be launching a production company called 525 Rosario, named after his hometown. Headquartered in Miami and Los Angeles, the company was created to produce film, sporting events and branded commercials for athletes worldwide. It would be a joint venture with Smuggler Entertainment, who co-produced Messi's World Cup: The Rise of a Legend earlier in 2024.[397] In March 2025, Messi was invited by his Uruguayan colleague and friend Luis Suárez to take part in a new soccer project, Deportivo LSM.[398] The new team will focus on football training.[399] Since 2008, Messi has been in a relationship with Antonela Roccuzzo, who he eventually married on 30 June 2017 in their hometown of Rosario.[400][401] He has known Roccuzzo since he was five years old, as she is the cousin of his childhood best friend, Lucas Scaglia, who is also a football player.[402] After keeping their relationship private for a year, Messi first confirmed their romance in an interview in January 2009, before going public a month later during a carnival in Sitges after the Barcelona–Espanyol derby.[403] Messi and Roccuzzo have three sons. To celebrate his partner's first pregnancy, Messi placed the ball under his shirt after scoring in Argentina's 4–0 win against Ecuador on 2 June 2012, before confirming the pregnancy in an interview two weeks later.[404] Thiago was born in Barcelona on 2 November 2012.[405] In April 2015, Messi confirmed that they were expecting another child.[406] In October 2017, his wife announced they were expecting their third child.[407] Messi and his family are Catholic.[408] Messi enjoys a close relationship with his immediate family members, particularly his mother, Celia, whose face he has tattooed on his left shoulder. His professional affairs are largely run as a family business: his father, Jorge, has been his agent since he was 14, and his oldest brother, Rodrigo, handles his daily schedule and publicity. His mother and other brother, Matías, manage his charitable organization, the Leo Messi Foundation, and take care of personal and professional matters in Rosario.[409] Since leaving for Spain aged 13, Messi has maintained close ties to his hometown of Rosario, even preserving his distinct Rosarino accent. He has kept ownership of his family's old house, although it has long stood empty; he maintains a penthouse apartment in an exclusive residential building for his mother, as well as a family compound just outside the city. Once when he was in training with the national team in Buenos Aires, he made a three-hour trip by car to Rosario immediately after practice to have dinner with his family, spent the night with them, and returned to Buenos Aires the next day in time for practice. Messi keeps in daily contact via phone and text with a small group of confidants in Rosario, most of whom were fellow members of "The Machine of '87" at Newell's Old Boys. He was on bad terms with the club after his transfer to Barcelona, but by 2012 their public feud had ended, with Newell's embracing their ties with Messi, even issuing a club membership card to his newborn son.[28][371][410] Messi has long planned to return to Rosario to end his playing career at Newell's.[411] Messi holds triple citizenship, as he is a citizen of Argentina, Italy, and Spain.[412] Messi's financial affairs came under investigation in 2013 for suspected tax evasion. Offshore companies in tax havens Uruguay and Belize were used to evade €4.1 million in taxes related to sponsorship earnings between 2007 and 2009. An unrelated shell company in Panama set up in 2012 was subsequently identified as belonging to the Messis in the Panama Papers data leak. Messi, who pleaded ignorance of the alleged scheme, voluntarily paid arrears of €5.1 million in August 2013. On 6 July 2016, Messi and his father were both found guilty of tax fraud and were handed suspended 21-month prison sentences and respectively ordered to pay €1.7 million and €1.4 million in fines.[413] Facing the judge, he said, "I just played football. I signed the contracts because I trusted my dad and the lawyers and we had decided that they would take charge of those things."[414] As of match played 14 June 2025 Appearances and goals by club, season and competition Club Season League National cup[a] Continental[b] Other Total Division Apps Goals Apps Goals Apps Goals Apps Goals Apps Goals Barcelona C 2003–04[415] Tercera División 10 5 — — — 10 5 Barcelona B 2003–04[416] Segunda División B 5 0 — — — 5 0 2004–05[417] Segunda División B 17 6 — — — 17 6 Total 22 6 — — — 22 6 Barcelona 2004–05[417] La Liga 7 1 1 0 1 0 — 9 1 2005–06[418] La Liga 17 6 2 1 6 1 0 0 25 8 2006–07[419] La Liga 26 14 2 2 5 1 3[c] 0 36 17 2007–08[420] La Liga 28 10 3 0 9 6 — 40 16 2008–09[421] La Liga 31 23 8 6 12 9 — 51 38 2009–10[422] La Liga 35 34 3 1 11 8 4[d] 4 53 47 2010–11[423] La Liga 33 31 7 7 13 12 2[e] 3 55 53 2011–12[424] La Liga 37 50 7 3 11 14 5[f] 6 60 73 2012–13[425] La Liga 32 46 5 4 11 8 2[e] 2 50 60 2013–14[426] La Liga 31 28 6 5 7 8 2[e] 0 46 41 2014–15[427] La Liga 38 43 6 5 13 10 — 57 58 2015–16[428] La Liga 33 26 5 5 7 6 4[g] 4 49 41 2016–17[429] La Liga 34 37 7 5 9 11 2[e] 1 52 54 2017–18[430] La Liga 36 34 6 4 10 6 2[e] 1 54 45 2018–19[431] La Liga 34 36 5 3 10 12 1[e] 0 50 51 2019–20[432] La Liga 33 25 2 2 8 3 1[e] 1 44 31 2020–21[433] La Liga 35 30 5 3 6 5 1[e] 0 47 38 Total 520 474 80 56 149 120 29 22 778 672 Paris Saint-Germain 2021–22[434] Ligue 1 26 6 1 0 7 5 — 34 11 2022–23[435]

from the original on 28 August 2024. Retrieved 28 August 2024. ^ "Lionel Messi signs new deal through 2020/21 season". FC Barcelona. 25 November 2017. Retrieved 25 November 2017. ^ "Sevilla 0–5 Barcelona". BBC Sport. 21 April 2018. Retrieved 21 April 2018. ^ "Messi Wins Fifth Golden Shoe After Winning Pichichi Trophy". Goal. 20 May 2018. Retrieved 20 May 2018. ^ "Lionel Messi will be Barcelona's next captain". Sport. 25 April 2018. Archived from the original on 31 March 2019. Retrieved 9 August 2018. ^ Wilson, Joseph (27 April 2019). "Messi helps Barcelona clinch Spanish league title". The Washington Post. Archived from the original on 27 April 2019. Retrieved 27 April 2019. ^ "The best individual season of all time? – A look at Lionel Messi's 2018/19 season". Overlyzer. Retrieved 19 March 2022. ^ Wilson, Joseph (19 May 2019). "Messi hits 50 goals for Barca, Madrid ends season to forget". Associated Press. Archived from the original on 6 February 2023. Retrieved 22 May 2019. ^ a b "Messi wins his sixth Golden Shoe award". FC Barcelona. 24 May 2019. Retrieved 25 May 2019. ^ Magee, Will (2 December 2019). "Ballon d'Or: live updates from the ceremony as Lionel Messi and Virgil van Dijk compete for top award". The Telegraph. ISSN 0307-1235. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 2 December 2019. ^ "Messi tells Barca he wants to leave, signaling end of era". AP NEWS. 25 August 2020. Retrieved 26 August 2020. ^ "Messi breaks silence on Barcelona exit saga: 'The president did not keep his word'". Goal. Retrieved 4 September 2020. ^ "Leo Messi surpasses Xavi Hernández record". FC Barcelona. 21 March 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi sets an utterly ridiculous record as he leads Barcelona to Copa Del Rey glory". Caught Offside. 17 April 2021. Retrieved 18 April 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi nets two, Barcelona beats Athletic Bilbao to win Copa del Rey". TSN. 17 April 2021. Retrieved 17 April 2021. ^ Nesci, Gianluca (19 July 2020). "Messi stands alone after winning Pichichi award for 7th time". The Score. Retrieved 21 July 2020. ^ "Messi: The Pichichi of Pichichis". Marca. Retrieved 31 December 2022. ^ Uría, Rubén (1 July 2021). "Messi officially becomes a free agent as superstar's Barcelona contract expires". Goal. Retrieved 1 July 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi: Barcelona forward agrees contract extension with 50 per cent pay cut". Sky Sports. United Kingdom. 14 July 2021. Archived from the original on 14 July 2021. Retrieved 14 July 2021. ^ "Leo Messi not staying at FC Barcelona". FC Barcelona. Retrieved 13 July 2022. ^ Thomas, Lyall; Solhekol, Kaveh (8 August 2021). "Lionel Messi 'shocked' and 'surprised' at Barcelona contract collapse". Sky Sports. Archived from the original on 6 August 2021. Retrieved 6 August 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi Says Goodbye To FC Barelona At Tearful Press Conference". Forbes. Retrieved 4 December 2022. ^ "Lionel Messi signs two-year Paris St-Germain deal after leaving Barcelona". BBC. Retrieved 10 August 2021. ^ "Leo Messi signs for Paris Saint-Germain". PSG. 10 August 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi shirt number revealed by PSG". The Independent. Archived from the original on 14 June 2022. Retrieved 11 August 2021. ^ "Messi's PSG debut breaks Spain viewing records". ESPN. 30 August 2021. Retrieved 30 August 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi Makes First PSG Start But Club Brugge Hold On For A Draw". NDTVSports.com. Retrieved 19 September 2021. ^ "Icardi strikes late to give PSG win over Lyon on Messi's home debut". Reuters. 19 September 2021. Retrieved 19 September 2021. ^ Morse, Ben (29 September 2021). "Lionel Messi scores first PSG goal in Champions League win over Manchester City". CNN. Retrieved 30 September 2021. ^ "Ballon d'Or: Lionel Messi wins award as best player in world football for seventh time". BBC. Retrieved 29 November 2021. ^ "Worst season in Lionel Messi's career! How did the Argentine perform in the 2021–22 season for PSG?". Goal.com. Retrieved 12 June 2022. ^ "A final, lots of goals and a trophy: a great start to the season!". Paris Saint-Germain FC. 31 July 2022. Retrieved 31 July 2022. ^ Hayward, Ben (9 April 2023). "Lionel Messi overtakes Cristiano Ronaldo for goals scored in Europe with latest PSG strike". FourFourTwo. Retrieved 15 April 2023. ^ "Lionel Messi edges Cristiano Ronaldo once again, Argentinian is now the all-time club goal leader in Europe". Marca. 8 April 2023. Retrieved 15 April 2023. ^ "Ligue 1 Uber Eats Team of the Season". Ligue1 COM. Retrieved 4 June 2023. ^ Summerscales, Robert (3 June 2023). "Lionel Messi Ends Ligue 1 Season With More Assists Than Any Other Player". Futbol on FanNation. Retrieved 4 June 2023. ^ Ronald, Issy (28 May 2023). "Lionel Messi breaks Cristiano Ronaldo record as PSG wins historic Ligue 1 title". CNN. Retrieved 4 June 2023. ^ "Lionel Messi: PSG manager Christophe Galtier confirms forward's departure". BBC Sport. 1 June 2023. Retrieved 1 June 2023. ^ "Inter Miami CF Signs Seven-Time Ballon d'Or Winner, World Cup Champion, Lionel Messi | Inter Miami CF". Inter Miami CF. 15 July 2023. Retrieved 16 July 2023. ^ Sigal, Jonathan (15 July 2023). "Official! Lionel Messi signs with Inter Miami". Major League Soccer. Retrieved 15 July 2023. ^ Dominski, Michael (21 July 2023). "Lionel Messi's Inter Miami vs Cruz Azul live updates: Messi free-kick goal wins Leagues Cup match". The Athletic. Retrieved 21 July 2023. ^ mlssoccer. "Classy! Messi gives Yedlin armband for Leagues Cup celebrations | MLSSoccer.com". mlssoccer. Retrieved 6 May 2025. ^ "'He has changed everything' - Inter Miami chief hails Lionel Messi's impact on MLS as he compares eight-time Ballon d'Or winner to NBA legend Michael Jordan". Goal.com. 15 October 2024. Retrieved 12 March 2025. ^ Rodríguez, Eduardo Burgos; Brennan, Joe (23 October 2024). "Here's just how much of an impact Messi has had on MLS and Inter Miami". AS USA. Retrieved 12 March 2025. ^ Deen, Safid. "Inter Miami vs. Nashville live updates: Messi wins Leagues Cup after penalty shootout". usatoday.com. Retrieved 20 August 2023. ^ Blum, Ronald (26 August 2023). "Messi scores dazzling goal in MLS debut, leads Miami over New York Red Bulls". Associated Press. Retrieved 26 August 2023. ^ Lewis, Aimee (22 October 2023). "Lionel Messi's final game of the season for Inter Miami ends in defeat". CNN. Retrieved 8 November 2023. ^ "Men's Ballon d'Or: Lionel Messi wins eighth award, beating Erling Haaland to trophy". BBC Sport. BBC. 30 October 2023. Retrieved 30 October 2023. ^ Summerscales, Robert (5 December 2023). "Lionel Messi Becomes First Men's Soccer Player To Be Named TIME Athlete Of The Year". Sport Illustrated. Retrieved 25 December 2023. ^ "SIX goal contributions! Lionel Messi sets two more MLS records vs. RBNY". Major League Soccer. 4 May 2024. Archived from the original on 5 May 2024. Retrieved 4 May 2024. ^ "Lionel Messi, Inter Miami win MLS Supporters Shield with 3-2 win at Crew. It's Messi's 46th trophy". Associated Press. 2 October 2024. Archived from the original on 10 October 2024. Retrieved 20 October 2024. ^ Reynolds, Tim (19 October 2024). "Messi and Inter Miami finish with best record in MLS history, roll past New England 6-2". Associated Press. Retrieved 19 October 2024. ^ Becherano, Lizzy (19 October 2024). "Lionel Messi hat trick helps Inter Miami break MLS points record". ESPN. Retrieved 19 October 2024. ^ Deen, Safid (9 November 2024). "Messi, Inter Miami see record-setting season end in stunning playoff collapse: Highlights". USA TODAY. Archived from the original on 10 November 2024. Retrieved 9 November 2024. ^ a b "Inter Miami star Lionel Messi wins MLS MVP". The Globe and Mail. 6 December 2024. Retrieved 6 December 2024. ^ a b Gordillo, George (12 April 2025). "Lionel Messi eyes Inter Miami extension as he refuses to leave before christening their new stadium". MARCA. Retrieved 6 May 2025. ^ Himmelman, Jeff (5 June 2014). "The Burden of Being Messi". The New York Times. Retrieved 11 August 2015. ^ a b Balagué 2013, pp. 209–219. ^ "Messi passes Ali Daei". The Athletic. 10 July 2024. Archived from the original on 10 July 2024. Retrieved 10 July 2024. ^ Saaid, Hamdan (12 September 2008). "Games of the XXIX. Olympiad". Rec.Sport.Soccer Statistics Foundation. Archived from the original on 6 August 2024. Retrieved 6 August 2024. ^ "Magic Messi Sparks High Drama in the Lowlands". FIFA. July 2005. Archived from the original on 6 September 2015. Retrieved 12 August 2015. ^ Vickery, Tim (22 August 2005). "Messi Handles 'New Maradona' Tag". BBC Sport. Retrieved 12 August 2015. ^ "Messi Is a Jewel Says Argentina Coach". ESPN FC. 10 October 2005. Retrieved 12 August 2015. ^ Mamrud, Roberto. "Lionel Andrés Messi – Century of International Appearances". Rec.Sport.Soccer Statistics Foundation. Archived from the original on 23 January 2023. Retrieved 23 January 2023. ^ "Argentina 6–0 Serbia & Montenegro". BBC Sport. 16 June 2006. Archived from the original on 22 September 2015. Retrieved 12 August 2015. ^ "Missing Some Stars, Brazil Wins Copa América". The New York Times. 16 July 2007. Retrieved 12 August 2015. ^ "Report and Statistics: Men's and Women's Olympic Football Tournaments Beijing 2008" (PDF). FIFA. p. 21. Archived from the original (PDF) on 6 December 2008. Retrieved 12 August 2015. ^ a b Chadband, Ian (28 April 2009). "Lionel Messi Can Achieve More at Barcelona than Diego Maradona". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 13 August 2015. ^ Smith, Rory (22 June 2010). "Greece 0 Argentina 2: Match Report". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 13 August 2015. ^ "Adidas Golden Ball Nominees Announced". FIFA. 9 July 2010. Archived from the original on 11 April 2015. Retrieved 13 August 2015. ^ Cox, Michael (13 November 2014). "Lionel Messi Showing Some Promising Signs in a New Argentina Role". ESPN FC. Retrieved 13 August 2015. ^ a b Balagué 2013, pp. 414–420. ^ Hughes, Rob (10 July 2014). "If Messi Is Argentina's Star, Then Mascherano Is the Glue". The New York Times. Retrieved 13 August 2015. ^ Murray, Scott (13 July 2014). "World Cup Final 2014: Germany v Argentina – as It Happened". The Guardian. Retrieved 14 August 2015. ^ Bate, Adam (16 July 2014). "World Cup Final: Was Lionel Messi Really a Disappointment in Brazil or Have We Just Become Numb to His Genius?". Sky Sports. Retrieved 14 August 2015. ^ Garcia, Adriana (7 July 2015). "Argentina's Lionel Messi Grateful for Support after Copa América Defeat". ESPN FC. Retrieved 14 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi equals Argentina's all-time goal-scoring record". ESPN FC. 22 June 2016. Retrieved 22 June 2016. ^ a b "Lionel Messi retires from Argentina after Copa America final loss to Chile". ESPN FC. 27 June 2016. ^ "HTML Center". estadisticas.conmebol.com. Archived from the original on 10 June 2020. Retrieved 8 April 2020. ^ "Messi 'God's gift' to Argentina – president". AS. 28 June 2016. Archived from the original on 23 September 2020. Retrieved 28 June 2016. ^ "Lionel Messi hat-trick secures Argentina's passage to World Cup". The Guardian. 11 October 2017. ^ Begley, Emlyn (30 June 2018). "France 4–3 Argentina". BBC Sport. Retrieved 30 June 2018. ^ Vickery, Tim (6 July 2019). "Messi's red card overshadows Argentina's encouraging win and Chile's end of an era". ESPN. Retrieved 7 July 2019. ^ Bonn, Kyle; Savage, Will (16 November 2022). "Lionel Messi and Argentina 36-game unbeaten run ends at World Cup: How Saudi Arabia denied Albiceleste's world record bid". Sporting News. Retrieved 3 February 2025. ^ a b Das, Andrew (11 July 2021). "Messi and Argentina Beat Brazil to Win the Copa América". The New York Times. ISSN 0362-4331. Retrieved 11 July 2021. ^ Marsden, Sam (28 June 2021). "Messi sets Argentina appearances mark in Copa America match vs. Bolivia". ESPN. Retrieved 29 June 2021. ^ UEFA.com (1 June 2022). "Argentina's Lionel Messi named official Finalissima Player of the Match". UEFA. Retrieved 2 June 2022. ^ Nemer, Roy (19 December 2022). "Lionel Messi scores record 18 goals in 2022 with the Argentina national team". Mundo Albiceleste. Retrieved 19 June 2024. ^ "World Cup final: Lionel Messi named best player as Kylian Mbappe wins Golden Boot". BBC Sport. 18 December 2022. Retrieved 18 December 2022. ^ Anand, Anish (19 December 2022). "2022 World Cup stats: Messi joins Maradona, overtakes Ronaldo; Mbappe's record 4". ESPN. Retrieved 22 December 2022. ^ "Lionel Messi makes history with 100th goal for Argentina". FOX Sports. 28 March 2023. Retrieved 30 March 2023. ^ "Lionel Messi becomes Conmebol WC qualifiers all-time leading scorer". MARCA. 18 October 2023. Archived from the original on 1 October 2024. Retrieved 13 July 2024. ^ "Messi passes Ali Daei". The Athletic. 10 July 2024. Archived from the original on 10 July 2024. Retrieved 10 July 2024. ^ Thames, Alanis (14 July 2024). "Argentina wins record 16th Copa America title, beats Colombia 1-0 after Messi gets hurt". Associated Press. Retrieved 10 September 2024. ^ a b Schnibben, Cordt (6 June 2012). "The Golden Yell: Ronaldo and Messi Battle to Define a Football Era". Der Spiegel. Archived from the original on 8 June 2012. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ a b c d Ritter, Karl (12 July 2014). "Five Reasons Why Messi Stands out in Soccer World". Boston Globe. Archived from the original on 25 September 2015. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Messi, goals for 2010". Mundo Deportivo (Spanish). 7 December 2009. Archived from the original on 6 February 2020. Retrieved 26 February 2016. ^ "Lionel Messi becomes the 'Atomic Flea'". Goal. 20 September 2012. Archived from the original on 14 September 2020. Retrieved 26 February 2016. ^ "Messi, The Atomic Flea who became the best in the world". AS (Spanish). 28 January 2016. Archived from the original on 3 March 2016. Retrieved 26 February 2016. ^ a b c Garside, Kevin (29 March 2010). "Arsenal v Barcelona: Lionel Messi Making Case for World's Greatest Ever Player". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ Brown, Lucas (30 September 2005). "Lionel Messi – the New Maradona?". UEFA. Archived from the original on 1 October 2017. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ a b Reng, Ronald (27 May 2011). "Lionel Messi". FT Magazine. Archived from the original on 30 June 2015. Retrieved 19 July 2015. ^ Balagué 2013, p. 553. ^ a b Monti, Fabio (8 April 2010). "Controllo, Corsa, Tocco di Palla: Perché nel Calcio Piccolo è Bello" [Control, Stroke and Touch on the Ball: Because in Football Small Is Beautiful]. Corriere della Sera (in Italian). Archived from the original on 21 February 2011. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Top 25 Greatest Playmakers Ever". The Sportster. 4 July 2015. Archived from the original on 29 November 2020. Retrieved 22 September 2020. ^ "Cristiano Ronaldo, Lionel Messi, goals, records, highlights, Juventus, hat trick, statistics, best stats, age, break down". Fox Sports. 7 January 2020. Archived from the original on 26 March 2021. Retrieved 10 August 2020. ^ "As Lionel Messi turns 32, a fan ruminates on the ambivalent legacy of the football wizard". Telegraph India. Archived from the original on 6 July 2021. Retrieved 10 August 2020. ^ "Lionel Messi steals the show for Barcelona at Dundee United". The Daily Telegraph. 27 July 2008. ISSN 0307-1235. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 10 August 2020. ^ a b Tomas, Francesc (25 June 2015). "Six Reasons Why Lionel Messi Is the World's Best". ESPN FC. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Most goals via free-kicks in football history". Sports Adda. 7 August 2023. Archived from the original on 3 August 2023. Retrieved 25 August 2023. ^ Copeland, Robbie (4 July 2021). "Lionel Messi becomes top free-kick scorer among active players". 90min.com. Archived from the original on 3 August 2021. Retrieved 3 August 2021. ^ del Río, Joel (22 February 2017). "The art of the chip: Falcao matches Totti, Messi and Raul". Marca. Archived from the original on 2 November 2022. Retrieved 11 April 2017. ^ Cohen, Roger (21 June 2010). "The Loose Vuvuzela". The New York Times. Archived from the original on 12 April 2020. Retrieved 12 August 2020. ^ Davis, Scott (6 June 2015). "Here's what makes Lionel Messi so impossible to defend". Business Insider. Archived from the original on 24 October 2015. Retrieved 8 November 2015. ^ Ronay, Barney (7 May 2015). "Lionel Messi: the genius who operates to a different set of physical rules". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 11 December 2015. Retrieved 8 November 2015. ^ "Top 25 Greatest Playmakers Ever". the Sportster. 4 July 2015. Archived from the original on 2 November 2022. Retrieved 22 September 2020. ^ Haugstad, Thore (28 July 2017). "FourFourTwo's 100 Greatest Footballers EVER: No.2, Lionel Messi". FourFourTwo. Archived from the original on 9 November 2020. Retrieved 30 April 2019. ^ Rangarajan, Aditya (6 December 2018). "Lionel Messi misses out on World's best Playmaker 2018 title, finishes second to Real Madrid star". Fox Sports Asia. Archived from the original on 8 December 2018. Retrieved 30 April 2019. ^ Hayward, Ben (23 October 2012). "How Messi went from injury-prone teenager to bionic man". Goal. Footballco. Archived from the original on 7 July 2019. Retrieved 7 July 2019. ^ Balagué 2013, pp. 155–156, 405–406. ^ West, Andy (19 March 2015). "Motivated Lionel Messi Transforms Barcelona's Hopes for Trophy Treble". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 19 September 2015. Retrieved 11 August 2015. ^ Tweedale, Alistair (21 May 2016). "How Luis Suarez moved Lionel Messi onto Barcelona's wing and became the best centre-forward on the planet". The Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 30 June 2018. ^ Martin, Richard (19 April 2015). "In focus: Messi's changing role". UEFA. Archived from the original on 18 April 2016. Retrieved 8 November 2016. ^ a b Balagué, Guillem; Wright, Nick; Smith, Adam (30 October 2017). "Barcelona's improvement under Ernesto Valverde examined". Sky Sports. Archived from the original on 30 June 2018. Retrieved 30 June 2018. ^ Siregar, Cady (7 March 2018). "Barcelona top-scorer Lionel Messi explains how has role has developed under Valverde". Squawka. Archived from the original on 15 July 2018. Retrieved 13 August 2018. ^ Butt, Muhammad (12 August 2018). "Dembele is going nowhere: Five things learned from Barcelona's Super Cup win v Sevilla". Squawka. Archived from the original on 13 August 2018. Retrieved 13 August 2018. ^ "Valverde returns Messi to the False 9 role". Marca. 21 August 2017. Archived from the original on 14 August 2018. Retrieved 13 August 2018. ^ Sanz, Sergi (11 November 2017). "Valverde recycles Messi". Marca. Archived from the original on 13 August 2018. Retrieved 13 August 2018. ^ Chandler, Michael J. (6 January 2018). "3 ways Barcelona could line up with Coutinho". The Score. Archived from the original on 6 July 2021. Retrieved 30 June 2018. ^ Clarke, Tom (19 February 2018). "Dissected: How the new Barcelona play – and why there's hope for Chelsea". The Times. Archived from the original on 30 June 2018. Retrieved 30 June 2018. ^ Cox, Michael (13 November 2014). "Lionel Messi Showing Some Promising Signs in a New Argentina Role". ESPN FC. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 13 August 2015. ^ Mazur, Martin (18 June 2016). "Argentina's great tactical dilemma: where should Lionel Messi play?". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 4 July 2018. Retrieved 4 July 2018. ^ a b Various sources: Macdonald, Paul. "A future without Messi and Ronaldo". Goal. Archived from the original on 29 October 2020. Retrieved 8 June 2018. Staunton, Peter. "Messi and Ronaldo: Changing the face of football". Goal. Archived from the original on 4 August 2019. Retrieved 8 June 2018. Haugstad, Thore (11 January 2016). "Whoever wins the Ballon d'Or, the Messi-Ronaldo duopoly is coming to an end". Eurosport. Archived from the original on 20 January 2021. Retrieved 8 June 2018. ^ a b Various sources: "Why Lionel Messi is the best male athlete of all time". BBC Sport. 13 December 2022. Archived from the original on 2 September 2024. Retrieved 26 February 2025. Lane, Barnaby (18 December 2022). "Lionel Messi cements status as soccer GOAT as Argentina wins thrilling World Cup final". Business Insider. Archived from the original on 24 February 2024. Retrieved 20 December 2022. McIntyre, Doug (18 December 2022). "Lionel Messi Cements His Goat Status With A Little Help From His Friends". Fox Sports. Archived from the original on 4 April 2023. Retrieved 20 January 2023. O'Hanlon, Ryan (16 December 2022). "Why Lionel Messi is the best male athlete of all time". ESPN. Archived from the original on 18 December 2022. Retrieved 26 February 2025. Robinson, Joshua; Clegg, Jonathan (19 December 2022). "Messi's Argentina Beats France to Win the World Cup". The Wall Street Journal. Archived from the original on 9 October 2024. Retrieved 26 February 2025. Robson, James (18 December 2022). "Messi wins World Cup to push claim to be soccer's GOAT". Associated Press. Archived from the original on 3 July 2024. Retrieved 7 October 2024. Smith, Rory (18 December 2022). "For Messi, and Argentina, the (Extra) Wait Is Worth It". The New York Times. Archived from the original on 22 November 2024. Retrieved 26 February 2025. ^ "Messi: I'm Not the Best". FIFA. 31 May 2007. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 21 July 2015. ^ Ball, Phil (23 February 2006). "Britain v Spain (Sort Of)". ESPN FC. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ Minshull, Phil (30 March 2010). "Is Messi the Greatest Ever?". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 9 November 2020. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Messi Es el Mejor Jugador que Veré Jamás" [Messi Is the Best Player I Have Ever Seen]. El Mundo (in Spanish). 29 August 2009. Archived from the original on 22 March 2019. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi: Is the Barcelona and Argentina Star the Greatest Player Ever?". The Daily Telegraph. 29 May 2011. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Magical Messi Grabs Hat-trick in Copa America as Argentina Romp into Quarters". The Daily Telegraph. Agence France-Presse. 11 June 2016. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 29 June 2016. ^ Jenson, Pete (30 May 2015). "Lionel Messi: Is the Barcelona Forward the Greatest of Them All?". The Independent. Archived from the original on 14 June 2022. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ a b c Tilghman, John (4 November 2010). "Maradona vs. Messi: A Laughable Comparison". Bleacher Report. Archived from the original on 1 May 2019. Retrieved 1 May 2019. ^ Cairns, Dan (8 January 2013). "How Does Lionel Messi Stack up against Football Legends?". BBC Newsbeat. Archived from the original on 11 November 2020. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ a b Lea, Greg (22 June 2016). "Why the Messi vs Maradona debate is flawed (And always will be)". Archived from the original on 1 October 2024. Retrieved 1 October 2024. ^ "Barcelona's Lionel Messi Blames Media for Inventing Rivalry with Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo". The Daily Telegraph. 15 August 2012. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ Snowball, Ben (11 June 2015). "Lionel Messi: Cristiano Ronaldo Is Not My Rival". Eurosport. TNT Sports International. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ a b West, Andy (22 March 2014). "Real Madrid v Barcelona: Has Ronaldo Overtaken Messi?". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 24 August 2015. Retrieved 10 August 2015. ^ Various sources: Hunter, Graham (28 November 2010). "The game's best rivalry". ESPN. Archived from the original on 6 October 2014. Retrieved 30 September 2014. "Messi v Ronaldo". Sky Sports. Sky Group. 17 October 2011. Archived from the original on 6 October 2014. "The Special Two". The Times. 21 December 2012. Archived from the original on 26 June 2015. Retrieved 13 October 2014. ^ Mendes, Chris (24 June 2014). "World Cup 2014: Cristiano Ronaldo's Personal Duel with Lionel Messi Is Affecting His Performances for Portugal". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ Smith, Ben (20 April 2012). "Barcelona's Messi v Real Madrid's Ronaldo". BBC Sport. BBC. Archived from the original on 5 September 2012. Retrieved 13 October 2014. ^ Rice, Simon (10 April 2013). "Lionel Messi v Cristiano Ronaldo – world's greatest players locked in new battle". The Independent. Archived from the original on 28 October 2014. Retrieved 13 October 2014. ^ Various sources: Hughes, Rob (13 September 2011). "Ronaldo May Look Like the Best, but There Is Someone Better". The New York Times. Archived from the original on 1 October 2017. Retrieved 17 August 2015. Pinto, Pedro; Montague, James (29 May 2012). "Cristiano Ronaldo: I'm Better than Messi". CNN. Archived from the original on 6 October 2014. Retrieved 17 August 2015. Lewis, Tim (24 November 2013). "Cristiano Ronaldo: He's Got a God-Given Talent – and He Knows It". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 6 October 2014. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Ballons d'Or winners list". The Telegraph. 2 April 2017. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. ^ Arotaritei, Sorin; Di Maggio, Roberto; Stokkermans, Karel. "Golden Boot (Soulier d'Or) Awards". RSSSF. Archived from the original on 1 June 2023. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ a b c Badenhausen, Kurt (16 May 2014). "Lionel Messi Reaches $50 Million-A-Year Deal With Barcelona". Forbes. Archived from the original on 6 October 2014. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ Rutledge, Lewis (29 April 2008). "Scholes seals final spot". Sky Sports. Archived from the original on 6 October 2014. Retrieved 30 September 2014. ^ Lowe, Sid (17 January 2023). "Messi and Ronaldo's most memorable clashes: From the Champions League to El Clasico". ESPN. Archived from the original on 28 October 2023. Retrieved 9 June 2023. ^ Taylor, Daniel; Jackson, Jamie (11 June 2009). "Manchester United accept £80m Cristiano Ronaldo bid from Real Madrid". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 23 November 2018. Retrieved 30 September 2014. ^ "Ronaldo brace, McKennie volley power Juventus past Messi's Barcelona". ESPN. 8 December 2020. Archived from the original on 2 March 2023. Retrieved 2 March 2023. ^ "Messi: I miss having Ronaldo in La Liga". The Sporting News. Sporting News Holdings. 29 March 2019. Archived from the original on 25 June 2024. Retrieved 25 June 2024. ^ Sharland, Pete (18 December 2022). "World Cup 2022 Final: Win Or Lose, Argentina Star Lionel Messi Has Settled The Goat Debate Forever". Eurosport. Archived from the original on 22 December 2022. Retrieved 19 January 2023. ^ Usry, Rob (18 December 2022). "Lionel Messi puts the GOAT debate to rest with storybook World Cup win". SBNation.com. Archived from the original on 21 December 2022. Retrieved 20 December 2022. ^ "Cristiano Ronaldo: Lionel Messi rivalry now 'gone' says Portuguese great". BBC Sport. 7 September 2023. Archived from the original on 13 September 2023. Retrieved 11 September 2023. ^ a b "Maradona Hails Messi as Successor". BBC Sport. 24 February 2006. Archived from the original on 1 October 2018. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ a b Longman, Jeré (12 July 2014). "Adept? Yes. Adored? Not Yet". The New York Times. Archived from the original on 15 July 2014. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ Murray, Andrew (26 September 2017). "FourFourTwo's 100 Greatest Footballers EVER: No.1, Diego Maradona". FourFourTwo. Archived from the original on 29 September 2017. Retrieved 29 September 2017. ^ "Maradona proclaims Messi as his successor". China Daily. Reuters. 25 February 2006. Archived from the original on 7 April 2019. Retrieved 28 December 2012. "I have seen the player who will inherit my place in Argentine football and his name is Messi," Argentina's 1986 World Cup-winning captain was quoted as saying on Friday. ^ Lisi 2011, pp. 533–539. ^ "Goal hero Messi spares a thought for Maradona". ESPN. Reuters. 19 April 2007. Archived from the original on 24 January 2013. Retrieved 28 December 2012. Barcelona-based daily Sport said 'Messi Superstar' on its front page while the Marca led with 'Messidona.' ^ a b c Himmelman, Jeff (5 June 2014). "The Burden of Being Messi". The New York Times. Archived from the original on 3 April 2015. Retrieved 11 August 2015. ^ Mora y Araujo, Marcela (23 December 2009). "Lionel Messi Is Not the New Maradona – He Can Be Better than That". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 19 January 2021. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ West, Andy (22 November 2018). "Lionel Messi: Is Barcelona forward really cut out for captaincy?". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 26 May 2019. Retrieved 1 May 2019. ^ "Diego Maradona: Lionel Messi lacks the leadership needed to carry a team". ESPN FC. 9 June 2016. Archived from the original on 1 May 2019. Retrieved 1 May 2019. ^ a b c "Tim Vickery: Lionel Messi can now be recognised alongside Diego Maradona by Argentinians". Sky Sports. Archived from the original on 19 December 2022. Retrieved 20 December 2022. ^ "Lionel Messi Vomits Because of Nerves, Says Argentina's Alejandro Sabella". The Guardian. 10 June 2014. Archived from the original on 25 January 2021. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ Various sources: "Messi concludes his most influential year for Argentina". Marca. 19 November 2019. Archived from the original on 1 October 2024. Retrieved 28 September 2024. Vickery, Tim (3 July 2019). "Argentina exit the Copa America early but they've won something better: Messi is fired up again". ESPN. Archived from the original on 1 October 2024. Retrieved 28 September 2024. "The New Messi: A protester and a leader". LA Times. 7 July 2019. Archived from the original on 1 October 2024. Retrieved 1 October 2024. ^ Horncastle, James (19 July 2023). "Messi vs Argentina: How the 'Catalan Argentine' escaped the shadow of Maradona". The New York Times. Archived from the original on 19 June 2024. Retrieved 7 October 2024. ^ Morse, Ben (18 December 2022). "Lionel Messi cements his legacy as the greatest with World Cup win". CNN. Archived from the original on 1 October 2024. Retrieved 28 September 2024. ^ "Messi on World Cup win: After struggles in Argentina, fans love me". ESPN. 1 December 2023. Archived from the original on 18 July 2024. Retrieved 7 October 2024. ^ Henry, Thierry (21 April 2011). "The 2011 Time 100: Lionel Messi, God of the Field". Time. Archived from the original on 17 April 2019. Retrieved 22 August 2015. ^ Hamm, Mia (18 April 2012). "The World's 100 Most Influential People 2012: Lionel Messi". Time. Archived from the original on 2 February 2021. Retrieved 22 August 2015. ^ Federer, Roger (13 April 2023). "The 100 Most Influential People of 2023: Lionel Messi". Time. Archived from the original on 22 April 2023. Retrieved 22 April 2023. ^ Borg, Chris (2 December 2014). "Ballon D'Or: Lionel Messi vs. Cristiano Ronaldo – Battle of the Brands". CNN. Archived from the original on 29 January 2016. Retrieved 22 August 2015. ^ "Top 10 Most Marketable Footballers in the World" (PDF) (Press release). Repucom. 28 May 2014. Archived (PDF) from the original on 30 June 2014. Retrieved 22 August 2015. ^ "World Cup final photo of Lionel Messi eyeing trophy wins prize". ESPN. 12 February 2015. Archived from the original on 11 August 2021. Retrieved 11 August 2021. ^ "Gibson: Messi is a tourist attraction". Sky Sports. Archived from the original on 10 August 2021. Retrieved 10 August 2021. ^ "Messi Joins Facebook, Nets 7 m Followers". ESPN. 6 April 2011. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 22 August 2015. ^ Giuliano, Karissa (9 June 2015). "The 10 Most Popular Celebrities on Facebook". CNBC. Archived from the original on 3 August 2020. Retrieved 22 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi Sets Instagram Record With World Cup Victory Post". Yahoo Sports. Archived from the original on 20 December 2022. Retrieved 20 December 2022. ^ Madhok, Diksha (21 December 2022). "Lionel Messi's World Cup photos are most-liked Instagram post ever". CNN. Archived from the original on 15 July 2024. Retrieved 23 December 2022. ^ Garcia, Adriana (21 March 2023). "Lionel Messi mobbed after adoring Argentina fans lay siege outside Buenos Aires restaurant". ESPN. Retrieved 15 October 2024. ^ PTI (1 May 2023). "Kerala's iconic Thrissur Pooram held in full grandeur featuring Lionel Messi during 'Kudamattam". The Hindu. ISSN 0971-751X. Archived from the original on 3 May 2023. Retrieved 3 May 2023. ^ "Lionel Messi steals the show at Kerala's Iconic Thrissur Pooram". TimesNow. 2 May 2023. Archived from the original on 3 May 2023. Retrieved 3 May 2023. ^ Roush, Ty (14 December 2023). "Lionel Messi's World Cup Jerseys Sell For $7.8 Million At Auction – Falling Short Of Two Most Valuable Jerseys Of All Time". Forbes. Retrieved 16 December 2023. ^ 鄺惟仁 (5 February 2024). "梅西香港友誼賽全程坐板凳 球迷噓聲高喊退票". 公視新聞網. Archived from the original on 5 February 2024. Retrieved 5 February 2024. ^ "美斯遭央視連環封殺 《天下足球》片頭及天氣預報廣告畫面被刪" [CCTV's sports programme removes Messi's scenes]. HK01 (in Chinese (Hong Kong)). 15 February 2024. Archived from the original on 15 February 2024. Retrieved 15 February 2024. ^ 許祺安 (10 February 2024). "美斯得罪了中國？2023年訪華旋風到今官媒狠批 14億市場凍過水？" [Messi no longer welcomed in China?]. HK01 (in Chinese (Hong Kong)). Archived from the original on 14 February 2024. Retrieved 14 February 2024. ^ "美斯風波｜內地掀抵制潮 官媒籲冷靜弄清楚合同細節" [Boycott Messi on Chinese trend; state-run media urge for calm]. Sing Tao Daily (in Chinese (Hong Kong)). 9 February 2024. Archived from the original on 14 February 2024. Retrieved 14 February 2024. ^ "當初高調找梅西代言…大陸這家快遞公司慘掉颱風尾 遭陸網遭怒抵制" [Chinese company boycotted over Messi ad]. UDN (in Chinese (Taiwan)). Archived from the original on 14 February 2024. Retrieved 14 February 2024. ^ "中国足协停止与阿根廷足协合作，梅西3月中国行面临泡汤". 羊城晚报. Archived from the original on 5 March 2024. Retrieved 14 November 2024. ^ Notarianni, Roberto (25 March 2015). "Messi, la (Très) Bonne Paie" [Messi, the (Very) Good Payroll]. France Football. Archived from the original on 25 October 2020. Retrieved 10 August 2015. ^ Rainbow, Jamie (18 March 2014). "Stat of the Day: Top 20 Best Paid Players and Coaches". World Soccer. Archived from the original on 2 February 2021. Retrieved 22 August 2015. ^ Reynolds, Ben (16 June 2016). "Cristiano Ronaldo first footballer to top Forbes rich list of highest-earning athletes". Sky Sports. Archived from the original on 10 June 2016. Retrieved 9 June 2016. ^ ""Lionel Messi devance largement Cristiano Ronaldo au classement des joueurs les mieux payés au monde"". Archived from the original on 20 November 2020. Retrieved 3 June 2018. ^

2009–10 season, Barcelona would also win the Supercopa de España, UEFA Super Cup and FIFA Club World Cup, resulting in becoming the first club to achieve the sextuple.[78][79] Messi finished as the Champions League top scorer, the youngest in the tournament's history.[80] For his efforts in 2009, Messi won the Ballon d'Or and the FIFA World Player of the Year award.[81] Messi scored a total of 47 goals in all competitions, equaling Ronaldo's club record from the 1996–97 campaign.[82][83] He finished the season as top scorer in the Champions League,[84] and La Liga, winning his second consecutive league trophy and earned his first European Golden Shoe.[83][85] After the team won the Champions League, he signed a new 7-year contract through 2016.[61] In the 2010–11 campaign, Messi won the Supercopa de España,[86] Champions League,[87] and a third consecutive La Liga title. His club performances in 2010 earned him his second consecutive Ballon d'Or.[88] Messi was the top scorer in the Champions League, for the third consecutive year,[89] and the league's top scorer and assist provider.[90][91] He became Barcelona's all-time single-season top scorer with 53 goals.[90][92] "I feel sorry for those who want to compete for Messi's throne – it's impossible, this kid is unique." – Pep Guardiola after Messi became Barcelona's all-time top scorer at the age of 24 in March 2012[93] Messi began the 2011–12 season winning both the Spanish and European Super Cups trophies.[94][95] At the close of the year, he won the FIFA Club World Cup and earned the Golden Ball for a second time.[96] For his efforts in 2011, he received the FIFA Ballon d'Or, becoming only the fourth player in history to win the Ballon d'Or three times,[97] and the inaugural UEFA Best Player in Europe Award.[98] During the year 2012, Messi became the second player to be top scorer in four Champions League campaigns.[99][100] Messi became the top goalscorer in Barcelona's history at 24 years old, overtaking the 57-year record of César Rodríguez's 232 goals with a hat-trick against Granada.[101] He finished the season as league top scorer in Spain and Europe for a second time, with 50 goals, a La Liga record, while his 73 goals in all competitions made him the single-season top scorer in the history of European club football excluding regional and local competitions.[102][103] The team would also win the Copa del Rey that season, their 14th trophy under Guardiola, who resigned following the season after a four-year cycle of success.[104] Messi scored a record-breaking 91 goals with Argentina (above) and Barcelona (below) in 2012. For the start of the 2012–13 season, Barcelona had virtually secured their La Liga title by the start of 2013.[105] A double scored against Real Betis saw Messi becoming Barcelona's all-time top scorer in La Liga, and surpassed Gerd Müller's record of most goals scored in a calendar year; Messi would score a record 91 goals in all competitions for Barcelona and Argentina throughout 2012.[106][107] Messi again won the FIFA Ballon d'Or, becoming the first player in history to win the Ballon d'Or four times.[107][108] He signed a new contract committing himself to the club through 2018, and wore the captain's armband for the first time in a league match against Rayo Vallecano.[109][110][111] The team would win La Liga again that year, Messi's sixth, equalling Real Madrid's 100-point record of the previous season. With 60 goals in all competitions, including 46 goals in La Liga, he finished the campaign as league top scorer in Spain and Europe for the second consecutive year, becoming the first player in history to win the European Golden Shoe three times.[112] Messi's overall input into the team's attack had increased significantly. Whereas he contributed to 24% of the team's goals in their treble-winning campaign in 2008–09, this number rose to more than 40% by the end of the 2012–13 season.[113] These statistics, as well as lopsided losses in the Champions League where Messi was unfit, gave credence to the notion of Messidependencia, Barcelona's perceived tactical and psychological dependence on their star player.[114] To offset the load on Messi, Barcelona would sign Brazilian forward Neymar from Santos before the 2013–14 season.[115] The team would win the Supercopa de España at the beginning of the season.[116] Messi finished the campaign with his worst output in five seasons, though he still managed to score 41 goals in all competitions.[117] For the first time in five years, Barcelona ended the season without a major trophy.[118] Messi dribbling past Patrice Evra of Juventus during the 2015 UEFA Champions League final. Barcelona hired coach Luis Enrique before the 2014–15 season, and would continue to aid Messi in the attack by signing Uruguayan forward Luis Suárez, who had won the European Golden Shoe the year before at Liverpool.[119][120] Luis Enrique's system would feature quick transitions from defense to attack, led by the front three of Messi, Suárez and Neymar. The attacking trio, which colloquially became known as 'MSN', would break goalscoring records.[121] A hat-trick scored against Sevilla earlier in the season would also make him the all-time top scorer in La Liga, as he surpassed the 59-year record of 251 league goals held by Telmo Zarra.[122] After securing the La Liga title, the Copa del Rey, and the Champions League that year, Messi helped Barcelona become the first club to win the continental treble twice.[123][124] He would record 58 goals, but combined with Neymar and Suárez, the attacking trio scored a total of 122 goals in all competitions that season, a record in Spanish football.[125] Messi opened the 2015–16 season by helping Barcelona's win over Sevilla in the UEFA Super Cup.[126] Messi capped off the year by winning the 2015 FIFA Club World Cup final over River Plate in Yokohama, collecting his fifth club trophy of the calendar year.[127] On 11 January 2016, Messi won the FIFA Ballon d'Or for a record fifth time in his career.[128] He would end the season by winning La Liga as well as the Copa del Rey again.[129] In total, Messi scored 41 goals, and Barcelona's attacking trio of him, Neymar and Suárez managed a Spanish record of 131 combined goals throughout the season, breaking the record they had set the previous season.[130] The 2016–17 season would end with Messi winning the Supercopa de España and the Copa del Rey.[131][132] He would finish the season with 54 goals, while his 37 goals in La Liga saw him claim both the Pichichi and European Golden Boot Awards for the fourth time in his career.[133] Messi, Neymar and Suárez would combine for 110 goals by season's end. Neymar would depart for Paris Saint Germain the next year, leaving the attacking trio with a combined total of 363 goals over the course of three seasons.[134] Luis Enrique would also leave Barcelona at the end of the season after managing the club to a total of nine trophies during his three-year tenure.[135] Messi, wearing the captain's armband, against Real Valladolid in 2018. Messi would sign a new deal with Barcelona on 25 November 2017, his ninth contract with the club, keeping him with the club through 2021.[136] The 2017–18 season saw Messi achieving the domestic double, winning La Liga and the Copa del Rey once again.[137] He once again finished the season as the top scorer in La Liga, with 34 goals, which also saw him win his fifth European Golden Shoe award.[138] With the departure of former captain Andrés Iniesta in May 2018, Messi was named the team's new captain for the 2018–19 season.[139] He lifted his first trophy as Barcelona's captain, the Supercopa de España, following a 2–1 victory over Sevilla. He helped Barcelona clinch the La Liga title, his tenth but first as captain.[140] With 36 goals in 34 appearances that season, he won his sixth league Golden Boot trophy, equalling Zarra as the player with the most top-scorer awards in La Liga.[141][142] He also captured his sixth Golden Shoe award, and a record third consecutive award since the 2016–17 season.[143] Messi would win his sixth Ballon d'Or, but the subsequent 2019–20 season saw Barcelona go trophyless for the first time since 2007–08.[144] Following a disappointing season, Barcelona announced that Messi sent the club "a document expressing his desire to leave", but Messi ultimately decided to fulfill the final year of his contract.[145][146] The 2020–21 season saw Messi surpass Xavi's record to reach a club record of 768 appearances.[147] He would lead the club to victory in the 2021 Copa del Rey final.[148][149] His last two seasons with Barcelona saw him lead La Liga in goal scoring, giving him a record-breaking total of eight Pichichi trophies.[150][151] Messi became a free agent after his contract expired, with negotiations on a new deal complicated due to Barcelona's financial issues.[152][153] Barcelona would eventually announce that Messi would not be staying at the club, citing financial and structural obstacles posed by La Liga regulations as a reason for Messi's departure.[154][155] In a tearful press conference held at the Camp Nou, Messi confirmed that he would be leaving Barcelona.[156] Messi (middle) with PSG team-mates Kylian Mbappé (left) and Neymar. On 10 August 2021, Messi joined Ligue 1 club Paris Saint-Germain (PSG), reuniting him with Neymar, for the 2021–22 season on a two-year deal until June 2023 with an option for an extra year.[157][158] Messi chose 30 as his squad number, the same he wore as a teenager when he made his senior debut for Barcelona.[159] He would make his debut with the club against Reims, made his first start and Champions League debut for the club against Club Brugge, and made his home debut in a match against Lyon[160][161][162] He scored his first goal for the club in a Champions League group stage win over former manager Pep Guardiola's Manchester City.[163] Having scored 40 goals at club and international level for the calendar year in addition to captaining Argentina to the 2021 Copa América, Messi received a record seventh Ballon d'Or.[164] He finished his debut season with PSG with 11 goals and 14 assists across all competitions, helping the club win their 10th Ligue 1 title.[165] Beginning the 2022–23 season, Messi would win his second trophy with PSG in the Trophée des Champions.[166] A goal against Nice resulted in him surpassing Cristiano Ronaldo as the all-time highest goalscorer in European club football with 702 goals; during the match, he also achieved 1,000 career direct goal contributions at club level.[167][168] By the end of the season, he had 21 goals across all competitors and the highest number of assists in the league with 16, which helped PSG clinch their 11th Ligue 1 title and his second in a row.[169][170][171] Following the last game of the season, manager Christophe Galtier confirmed that it would be Messi's last for PSG, with the club confirming his departure two days later.[172] Messi with Inter Miami in the 2023 U.S. Open Cup. Major League Soccer (MLS) club Inter Miami CF announced the signing of Messi on a two-and-a-half-year contract on 15 July 2023.[173][174] Messi made his 2023 debut for the club in a Leagues Cup match against Cruz Azul, scoring with a free-kick in stoppage time for a victory.[175] DeAndre Yedlin, the previous captain of Inter Miami, gave his armband to Messi, who took over as team captain.[176] Messi's arrival in the US was praised as a revelation, on and off the pitch, and his presence was credited for helping to raise the profile of MLS within the US and abroad. According to Goal, "Every game that he graces sparks a scramble for tickets, with plenty of A-list guests eager to watch him in action".[177] The frenzy over his arrival was dubbed "Messimania", and Inter Miami's No. 10 Messi jersey became the best-selling jersey in the league, and nearly the world.[178] After scoring nine goals in his first six games for Miami, Messi led the team to the club's first-ever trophy, as it won the Leagues Cup against Nashville SC.[179] Messi made his MLS debut against the New York Red Bulls.[180] Miami would miss the playoffs, finishing 14th in the Eastern Conference, having gone winless in their last seven games.[181] On 30 October 2023, following his World Cup win with Argentina and Ligue 1 trophy with PSG, Messi was awarded a record-extending eighth Ballon d'Or.[182] He was also named Time Athlete of the Year, the first footballer ever to win the award.[183] During the 2024 season, Messi broke the record for the most assists in a single MLS game with five assists, and broke the record for the most goal contributions in an MLS game with six, in a 6–2 win over the New York Red Bulls.[184] On 2 October, Messi scored a brace in a 3–2 win over Columbus Crew, clinching the Supporters' Shield, his 46th trophy.[185] In the final game of the regular season on 19 October against the New England Revolution, Messi scored his first hat-trick for the club in a 6–2 victory. Inter Miami's victory over the Revolution also allowed the club to finish with 74 points throughout the regular season, a league record for MLS. He would finish the regular season with 20 goals and 16 assists in 19 matches.[186] In doing so, he became Inter Miami's all-time leading goalscorer.[187] Miami made its first postseason appearance in the 2024 MLS Cup playoffs but were eliminated in the first round after losing two games against Atlanta United FC. Messi would have his first postseason goal in the third game, a 3–2 loss.[188] He would be named the MLS Most Valuable Player following the conclusion of the regular season.[189] During the 2025 season, Messi became the fastest person to reach 40 goals in league history.[190] He was featured in a Superbowl ad by Apple TV for their exclusive MLS coverage. In April he was reported to be negotiating a one-year contract extension to the end of the 2026 season, after the opening of the new Miami stadium.[190] Main article: Career of Lionel Messi § International career As a dual Argentine-Spanish national, Messi was eligible to play for the national team of both countries.[191] He debuted for Argentina in 2004 for Argentina's U20 team against Paraguay, and was subsequently included in the squad for the 2005 South American U-20 Championship, where they would finish third.[192] Messi would then lead the team to victory in the 2005 FIFA World Youth Championship, his first success with Argentina. Finishing the tournament with six goals and two assists, he would also win the Golden Ball.[193][194][195] Messi evades Brazil's Marcelo in the semi-final of the 2008 Summer Olympics. Messi would make his debut with the senior national team in 2005, at age 18, coming off the bench in a friendly against Hungary.[196] Messi would have his first start in 2006 against Peru, and would score his first international goal in a friendly against Croatia.[197][198] His World Cup debut came in the 2006 FIFA World Cup as a substitute in the 74th minute against Serbia and Montenegro, assisting one goal and scoring the final one in their victory. This made him the youngest player to represent and score for Argentina in the World Cup.[199] He would represent Argentina again for the 2007 Copa América, where they would ultimately lose in the final. Messi was named the best young player of the tournament, having scored two goals and provided one assist.[200] The 2008 Summer Olympics would mark another major achievement with his country, as he led Argentina's U23 team to claim the Olympic gold medal over Nigeria. Messi registered two goals and three assists throughout, and was singled out by FIFA as the stand-out player from the tournament's best team.[201] Messi in his number 10 shirt captaining Argentina in 2012. With the international retirement of Juan Román Riquelme, Messi was given Argentina's number 10 shirt.[202] During a 2010 FIFA World Cup group stage match against Greece, where a majority of the starters rested due to a secured place in the knockout rounds, Messi would wear the captain's armband for the first time.[203] Argentina were ultimately eliminated in the quarterfinals against Germany, but Messi was identified as one of the tournament's 10 best players due to his pace and creativity, despite failing to register a single goal and only having one assist.[204] Ahead of the 2011 Copa América, Argentina began building their team around Messi.[205] However, Messi would again be goalless during the tournament but had three assists. The team would ultimately lose to Uruguay in penalties during the quarter-finals.[206] Messi against Germany in the 2014 FIFA World Cup final. Following their unsuccessful performance, a 24-year-old Messi would be awarded the captaincy of the squad.[207] The next several years saw many frustrations for Messi due to his inability to lead Argentina to win an international trophy. During the 2014 FIFA World Cup, Messi and Argentina lost to Germany in the final, though Messi was awarded the Golden Ball as the best player of the tournament regardless due to his overall performance with four goals and an assist.[208][209] Argentina would lose to Chile on penalties in the 2015 Copa América final the next year. At the close of the tournament, Messi was reportedly selected to receive the Golden Ball award, having scored one goal and provided three assists, but he rejected the honour.[210] In the 2016 Copa América Centenario semi-final against the United States, a goal from Messi would put him ahead of Gabriel Batistuta as Argentina's all-time leading goalscorer in international matches.[211] However, Argentina would again fall to Chile on penalties in the final.[212] Messi would have five goals and four assists throughout the tournament.[213] Losing three consecutive finals in three consecutive years caused Messi to retire from international football, but a nationwide campaign in Argentina helped convince him to reverse his decision.[212][214] He would return to the national team to lead them to the 2018 FIFA World Cup. Argentina were in jeopardy of missing the tournament on the last game of the qualifiers against Ecuador, but a hat-trick from Messi dramatically secured their entry.[215] They would go on to lose to France in the Round of 16 during the World Cup, with Messi having one goal and two assists in the tournament.[216] The next year, Messi would again represent Argentina in the 2019 Copa América, where he registered only a single goal and assist. They would lose to hosts Brazil in the semi-final but ended with a third-place finish after defeating Chile.[217] Despite not winning the tournament, this victory would mark the beginning of a 36-game unbeaten streak for Argentina that would last for over three years.[218] Messi facing off against Érick Gutiérrez of Mexico in the 2022 FIFA World Cup group stage. Messi would finally end Argentina's 28-year trophy drought in the 2021 Copa América, as they had not won an international tournament since 1993.[219] During a group stage match against Bolivia, he surpassed Javier Mascherano to become Argentina's most-capped player.[220] Argentina defeated Brazil in the final, and Messi was named the player of the tournament having been directly involved in nine out of the 12 goals scored by Argentina, scoring four of them and assisting five.[219] He captained Argentina to win another international trophy in the 2022 Finalissima against UEFA Euro 2020 winners Italy, where he was named player of the match after providing two assists.[221] At the 2022 FIFA World Cup, Messi led Argentina to its first World Cup victory in 36 years, scoring twice in the final to defeat France.[222] Having scored seven goals and assisting three during the tournament, Messi would again win the Golden Ball, becoming the first player to win it twice.[223] His appearance in the final also set new records for the most appearances (26) and direct goal contributions (21 – 13 goals and 8 assists) at the World Cup.[224] A hat-trick in a 2023 friendly against Curaçao saw Messi reach 100 international goals, the third player and the first South American in history to achieve this milestone.[225] Later that year, a goal against Peru resulted in Messi becoming the all-time top goalscorer in CONMEBOL World Cup qualifiers.[226] During the 2024 Copa América semi-final against Canada, Messi scored his first and only goal of the tournament which also made him the second-highest international goalscorer of all time.[227] Argentina eventually won the final against Colombia for their second consecutive Copa América title, with Messi contributing one goal and assist overall while also setting a new record for most appearances (39) at Copa América.[228] Messi prepares to shoot with his dominant left foot in the 2014 FIFA World Cup final. Due to his short stature, Messi has a lower centre of gravity than taller players, which gives him greater agility, allowing him to change direction more quickly and evade opposing tackles;[229][230] this has led the Spanish media to dub him La Pulga Atómica ("The Atomic Flea").[231][232][233] Despite being physically unimposing, he possesses significant upper-body strength, which, combined with his low centre of gravity and resulting balance, aids him in withstanding physical challenges from opponents; he has consequently been noted for his lack of diving in a sport rife with playacting.[28][230][234] His short, strong legs allow him to excel in short bursts of acceleration while his quick feet enable him to retain control of the ball when dribbling at speed.[235] His former Barcelona manager Pep Guardiola once stated, "Messi is the only player that runs faster with the ball than he does without it."[236] Although he has improved his ability with his weaker foot since his mid-20s, Messi is predominantly a left-footed player; with the outside of his left foot, he usually begins dribbling runs, while he uses the inside of his foot to finish and provide passes and assists.[237][238] A prolific goalscorer, Messi is known for his finishing, positioning, quick reactions, and ability to make attacking runs to beat the defensive line. He also functions in a playmaking role, courtesy of his vision and range of passing.[239] He has often been described as a magician; a conjurer, creating goals and opportunities where seemingly none exist.[240][241][242] Moreover, he is an accurate free kick and penalty kick taker.[230][243] As of May 2025, Messi ranks third all time in goals scored from direct free kicks with 67,[244] the most among active players.[245] He also has a penchant for scoring from chips.[246] Messi's dribbling abilities allow him to weave past several defenders and orchestrate attacking plays. Messi's pace and technical ability enable him to undertake individual dribbling runs towards goal, in particular during counterattacks, usually starting from the halfway line or the right side of the pitch.[234][243][247] He is widely considered to be one of the greatest dribblers of all time.[248][249] With regard to this ability, his former Argentina manager Diego Maradona has said of him, "The ball stays glued to his foot; I've seen great players in my career, but I've never seen anyone with Messi's ball control."[238] Beyond his individual qualities, he is also a well-rounded, hard-working team player, known for his creative combinations, in particular with former Barcelona midfielders Xavi and Andrés Iniesta.[229][230] As his career advanced, and his athleticism and tendency to dribble diminished slightly with age, Messi began to dictate play in deeper areas of the pitch and developed into one of the best passers and playmakers in football history.[250][251][252] His work-rate off the ball and defensive responsibilities also decreased as his career progressed; by covering less ground on the pitch, and instead conserving his energy for short bursts of speed, he was able to improve his efficiency, movement, and positional play, and was also able to avoid muscular injuries, despite often playing a large number of matches throughout a particular season on a consistent basis. Indeed, while he was injury-prone in his early career, he was later able to improve his injury record by running less off the ball, and by adopting a stricter diet, training regime, and sleep schedule.[253] A versatile forward, Messi often plays as a classic number 10. Tactically, Messi plays in a free attacking role; a versatile player, he is capable of attacking on either wing or through the centre of the pitch. His favoured position in childhood was the playmaker behind two strikers, known as the enganche in Argentine football, but he began his career in Spain as a left-winger or left-sided forward.[254] Upon his first-team debut, he was moved onto the right wing by manager Frank Rijkaard; from this position, he could more easily cut through the defence into the middle of the pitch and curl shots on goal with his left foot, rather than predominantly cross balls for teammates.[236] Under Guardiola and subsequent managers, he most often played in a false nine role; positioned as a centre-forward or lone striker, he would roam the centre, often moving deep into midfield and drawing defenders with him, in order to create and exploit spaces for passes, other teammates' attacking runs off the ball, Messi's own dribbling runs, or combinations with Xavi and Iniesta.[38] Under the stewardship of Luis Enrique, Messi initially returned to playing in the right-sided position that characterised much of his early career in the manager's 4–3–3 formation,[255][256] while he was increasingly deployed in a deeper, free playmaking role in later seasons.[257][258] Under manager Ernesto Valverde, Messi played in a variety of roles. While he occasionally continued to be deployed in a deeper role, from which he could make runs from behind into the box,[259] or even on the right wing[260] or as a false nine,[261][262] he was also used in a more offensive, central role in a 4–2–3–1,[258] or as a second striker in a 4–4–2 formation, where he was once again given the licence to drop deep, link-up with midfielders, orchestrate his team's attacking plays, and create chances for his attacking partner Luis Suárez.[263][264] With the Argentina national team, Messi has similarly played anywhere along the frontline. Under various managers, he has been employed on the right wing, as a false nine, as an out-and-out striker, in a supporting role alongside another forward, or in a deeper, free creative role as a classic number 10 playmaker or attacking midfielder behind the strikers.[265][266] Messi is widely regarded as one of the two best players of his generation, alongside Portuguese forward Cristiano Ronaldo.[267] He is also considered one of the greatest footballers in the history of the sport.[268] A prodigious talent as a teenager, Messi established himself among the world's best players before age 20.[269] Shortly after teammate Ronaldinho won the 2005 Ballon d'Or, he commented, "I'm not even the best at Barça" in reference to his 18-year-old protégé.[270] Four years later, after Messi won his first Ballon d'Or by a record margin,[81] the public debate regarding his qualities as a player moved beyond his status in contemporary football to the possibility that he was one of the greatest players in history.[24][234][271] An early proponent was his then-Barcelona manager Pep Guardiola, who, as early as August 2009, declared Messi to be the best player he had ever seen.[272] In the following years, this opinion gained greater acceptance among pundits, managers, former and current players.[92][273] By the end of Barça's second treble-winning season, the view of Messi as one of the greatest footballers of all time had become the apparent view among many fans and pundits in continental Europe.[274][275] Messi would receive dismissals by critics throughout his career based on the fact that he had not won an international tournament at senior level with Argentina.[276][277][278] However, his subsequent victories in the 2021 Copa América and the 2022 FIFA World Cup resulted in him finally winning every top tier trophy at both the club and country levels, an achievement that many pundits felt cemented Messi's legacy.[268] Main article: Messi–Ronaldo rivalry Messi has been compared with Cristiano Ronaldo (left) throughout much of their careers. Among his contemporary peers, Messi is most often compared and contrasted with Cristiano Ronaldo, who many consider his career rival.[267] Both achieved numerous individual accolades, won dozens of trophies for both club and country, and are the two leading goal scorers in history. Although Messi has at times denied any rivalry,[279][280] they are widely believed to push one another in their aim to be the best player in the world.[281] Pundits have compared the ongoing rivalry to past sports rivalries like the Muhammad Ali–Joe Frazier rivalry in boxing, the Prost–Senna rivalry in motorsport, and the tennis rivalries between Federer–Nadal and Borg–McEnroe.[282] Fans and pundits alike regularly argue the individual merits of both players.[281][283] Messi is lauded for his combination of dribbling, playmaking, passing and goalscoring, while Ronaldo has received praise for his exceptional speed and athleticism, goalscoring skills, and performance under pressure.[284][285] Beyond their playing styles, the debate also revolves around their differing physiques – Ronaldo is 1.87 m (6 ft 1+1⁄2 in) with a muscular build, compared to Messi's smaller size – and contrasting public personalities with Ronaldo's self-confidence and theatrics a foil to Messi's humility.[286] Regarding individual achievements, Messi has won eight Ballons d'Or to Ronaldo's five,[287] eight FIFA World's Best Player awards to Ronaldo's five, and six European Golden Shoes to Ronaldo's four.[288] Off the pitch, Ronaldo is his direct competitor in terms of salary, sponsorships, and social media fanbase.[289] Messi's head-to-head record against teams that feature Ronaldo consists of 15 wins, 9 draws, and 10 losses in competitive club matches, one win and loss each in international friendlies, and one win in a club friendly. The first competitive matchup between the two occurred in 2008, when Ronaldo's Manchester United were drawn to play Messi's Barcelona in the 2007–08 UEFA Champions League semi-finals, where Ronaldo and Manchester United would eventually advance 1–0 on aggregate, and go on to win the final.[290] The two players and their teams would meet again in the next year's Champions League, this time in the final, with Messi and Barcelona emerging as the victors after a 2–0 result.[291] After this, Ronaldo would transfer to Real Madrid, the main rivals of Barcelona, and from 2009–10 to 2017–18, Messi faced Ronaldo at least twice every season in El Clásico, which ranks among the world's most viewed annual sports events.[292][289] Ronaldo's would then transfer to Juventus in the summer of 2018; their final matchup in a competitive match would occur during a 2020–21 UEFA Champions League group stage match, where Ronaldo's two goals from the penalty spot helped Juventus to a 3–0 victory against Messi's Barcelona.[293] After Ronaldo left Real Madrid for Juventus, Messi stated: "I miss Cristiano. Although it was a bit difficult to see him win trophies, he gave La Liga prestige."[294] Following Messi leading Argentina to victory in the 2022 World Cup, a number of football critics, commentators, and players have opined that Messi settled the debate between the two players.[295][296] Ronaldo himself declared a year later that his rivalry with Messi was over and "gone", after 36 official fixtures and 15 years of "sharing the stage".[297] Main article: New Maradona "I have seen the player who will inherit my place in Argentinian football and his name is Messi." – Diego Maradona hailing the 18-year-old Messi as his successor in February 2006.[298] Throughout his career, Messi has been compared with his compatriot Diego Maradona, who was also considered the best player of his generation and one of greatest in the history of the sport.[299][300] This was due to their short statures, their similar playing styles as diminutive, left-footed playmakers, and the fact that they both came from Argentina.[301] Initially, Messi was merely one of many young Argentine players to receive the "New Maradona" moniker, but as his career progressed, Messi proved his similarity beyond all previous contenders, establishing himself as the best player Argentina had produced since Maradona.[35][302] Even when Messi was 18 years old, Maradona called him the best player in the world and hailed him as his successor.[298] Messi and Maradona would work together as player and manager for Argentina's national side from 2008 through the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the latter thoroughly impressed with the former's skills.[303] It was during this period that Messi was given Argentina's number 10 shirt that Maradona famously wore. Maradona gave Messi his blessing, telling him: "the No 10 is yours. There's nobody better than you to wear it."[202] Due to their similar size and style of play, Messi was constantly compared with his compatriot Diego Maradona by pundits and his countrymen. During the early and middle parts of his career, Messi was generally held in lesser esteem than Maradona in Argentine society. Part of this had to do with Messi's lack of tournament success and perceived uneven output with the national team during this period – Maradona had famously led Argentina to victory in the 1986 FIFA World Cup with a dominant overall performance, which set expectations for Messi to do the same.[276][299][304] Also unlike Maradona, Messi never played in the Argentine Primera División, therefore depriving his countrymen a chance to watch him develop and prove himself, and through no fault of his own would do this overseas in La Liga instead.[28][304] Argentines also identified more with the fiery, extroverted and controversial Maradona who came from the slums, character traits that they felt aligned with their national values, as opposed to the reserved, introverted and unassuming Messi who had a comparably unremarkable upbringing in Rosario.[278][304][305] Several pundits, footballing figures, and Maradona himself would point to this temperament to question Messi's leadership capabilities for the national team.[276][306][307] Furthermore, Messi's lack of outward passion for the Albiceleste shirt, early tendency not to sing the national anthem, and disinclination to emotional displays have in the past led to the false perception that he felt more Catalan rather than truly Argentine.[206][308] However, despite having lived in Barcelona since age 13, Messi rejected the option of representing Spain internationally, saying: "Argentina is my country, my family, my way of expressing myself. I would change all my records to make the people in my country happy."[309] A mural featuring both Maradona and Messi following Argentina's World Cup win in 2022. Football journalist Tim Vickery stated the perception of Messi among Argentines changed in 2019, with Messi making a conscious effort to become "more one of the group, more Argentine".[308] Other pundits noted that Messi had grown more assertive as a leader during the 2019 Copa América by becoming more vocal with his teammates both on and off the pitch, finally singing the national anthem with the team before matches, and speaking with journalists at length after matches, the latter of which he rarely did for Barcelona.[310] Following the 2022 World Cup win for Messi and Argentina, Vickery felt that Messi would now be held in the same esteem by his compatriots as Maradona.[308] Former footballer turned journalist Jorge Valdano said he saw a "Maradonian" edge to Messi's performances during the tournament, while compatriot Osvaldo Ardiles mentioned that Messi's provoking actions against the Netherlands side during the quarter-final were "more of a Maradona reaction," further endearing Messi to his countrymen.[311][312] Messi himself later remarked that the World Cup victory "won over all the people of Argentina. Today 95% or 100% of Argentines love me and that's a beautiful feeling."[313] Messi's success on the pitch earned him several lucrative endorsement deals along with widespread recognition and popularity. Messi was among the Time 100, an annual list of the world's most influential people, in 2011, 2012 and 2023.[314][315][316] According to a 2014 survey in 15 international markets, Messi was familiar to 87% of respondents around the world, of whom 78% perceived him favourably, making him the second-most recognised player globally, behind Cristiano Ronaldo, and the most likable of all contemporary players.[317][318] World Press Photo selected "The Final Game", a photo of Messi facing the World Cup trophy after Argentina's final defeat to Germany, as the best sports image of 2014.[319] On his economic impact on the city in which he plays, Terry Gibson called him a "tourist attraction".[320] His fanbase on Facebook is among the largest of public figures: within seven hours of its launch in April 2011, Messi's Facebook page had nearly seven million followers, and by July 2023 he had over 114 million followers, the second highest for a sportsperson after Ronaldo.[321][322] He has over 500 million Instagram followers, the second highest for an individual and sportsperson after Ronaldo.[323] His World Cup celebration post from 18 December 2022 is the most liked post on Instagram with over 75 million likes.[324] On 20 March 2023, during a return to Buenos Aires following his World Cup victory, Messi was mobbed by hundreds of adoring fans when he and his family were out to dinner. When news spread where Messi and his family were, the restaurant was soon surrounded by locals hoping to get a glimpse of their World Cup-winning captain. Police assistance would be needed to get Messi back to his car in the early hours of the morning.[325] In April 2023, Messi was featured in the 200 year old Thrissur Pooram festival in Kerala, India.[326] During the festival, umbrellas carrying the illuminated cut outs of Messi holding the World Cup trophy were displayed on the top of caparisoned elephants during the Kudamattam ceremony.[327] In December 2023, a set of shirts Messi had worn during the 2022 World Cup was sold at auction for $7.8 million.[328] During an exhibition match on 4 February 2024 in which Inter Miami faced off against the Hong Kong League players at Hong Kong Stadium, Messi remained on the bench the entire game, causing massive backlash in Hong Kong and China as a result.[329] A Messi commercial was taken off air in those regions,[330] while others remained despite pressure from Chinese social-media users.[331][332][333] Furthermore, the Chinese Football Association temporarily halted its partnership with the Argentine Football Association over the incident on 8 February.[334] Messi was the world's highest-paid footballer for five years out of six between 2009 and 2014; he was the first player to exceed the €40 million benchmark, with earnings of €41 million in 2013, and the €50–€60 million points, with income of €65 million in 2014.[335][336] Messi was second on Forbes list of the world's highest-paid athletes, after Cristiano Ronaldo, with income of $81 million from salary and endorsements in 2015–16.[337] In 2018, he was the first player to exceed the €100 million benchmark for a calendar year, with earnings of €126 million ($154 million) in combined income from salaries, bonuses and endorsements.[338] Forbes ranked him the world's highest-paid athlete in 2019.[339] From 2008, he was Barcelona's highest-paid player, receiving a salary that increased incrementally from €7.8 million to €13 million over the next five years.[340][341][109] Signing a new contract in 2017, he earned $667,000 per week in wages, and Barcelona paid him $60 million as a signing on bonus.[342] His buyout clause was set at $835 million (€700 million).[342] In 2020, Messi became the second footballer, as well as the second athlete in a team sport, after Ronaldo, to surpass $1 billion in earnings during their careers.[343] Messi's Argentina jersey, supplied by Adidas, was sold out worldwide during the 2022 World Cup.[344] In addition to salary and bonuses, much of Messi's income derives from endorsements; SportsPro has consequently cited him as one of the world's most marketable athletes every year since their research began in 2010.[345] His main sponsor since 2006 is Adidas. As Barcelona's leading youth prospect, he was signed with Nike since age 14, but transferred to Adidas after they successfully challenged their rival's claim to his image rights in court.[346] Messi established himself as their leading brand endorser;[289] from 2008, he had a long-running signature collection of Adidas F50 boots, and in 2015, became the first footballer to receive his own sub-brand of Adidas boots, the Adidas Messi.[347][348] Since 2017, he has worn the latest version of the Adidas Nemeziz.[349] In 2015, a Barcelona jersey with Messi's name and number was the best-selling replica jersey worldwide.[350] At the 2022 World Cup, Adidas sold out Messi's No. 10 Argentina jersey worldwide.[344] After blessing himself, Messi often celebrates a goal by pointing a finger on each hand towards the sky in dedication to his late grandmother.[351] His goal celebration features in the FIFA video game series. As a commercial entity, Messi's brand has been based exclusively on his talents and achievements as a player, in contrast to arguably more glamorous players like Ronaldo and David Beckham. At the start of his career, he thus mainly held sponsorship contracts with companies that employ sports-oriented marketing, such as Adidas, Pepsi, and Konami.[352][353] From 2010, concurrently with increased achievements as a player, his marketing appeal widened, leading to long-term endorsement deals with luxury brands Dolce & Gabbana and Audemars Piguet.[352][354] Messi is a global brand ambassador for Gillette, Turkish Airlines, Ooredoo, and Tata Motors, among other companies.[355][356][357][358] Messi was the face of Konami's video game series Pro Evolution Soccer, appearing on the covers of PES 2009, PES 2010, PES 2011 and PES 2020. He subsequently signed with rival company EA Sports to become the face of their series FIFA and appeared on consecutive covers from FIFA 13 to FIFA 16.[359][360] In 2013, a Turkish Airlines advertisement starring Messi, in which he engages in a selfie competition with Kobe Bryant, was the most-watched ad on YouTube in 2013, receiving 137 million views, and was voted the best advertisement of the 2005–15 decade to commemorate YouTube's founding.[361][362] In June 2021, Messi signed a five-year deal to become an ambassador for the Hard Rock Cafe brand. He stated, "sports and music are an integral part of my life. It is an honor to be the first athlete to partner with a brand who has a history of teaming with music legends."[363] In May 2022, Messi was unveiled as Saudi Arabia's tourism ambassador. Due to Saudi Arabia's poor human rights record, Messi was condemned for the role which was viewed as an attempt of Saudi sportswashing.[364][365] Throughout his career, Messi has been involved in charitable efforts aimed at vulnerable children, a commitment that stems in part from the medical difficulties he faced in his own childhood. Since 2004, he has contributed his time and finances to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), an organisation with which Barcelona also have a strong association.[366][367] Messi has served as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador since his appointment in March 2010, completing his first field mission for the organisation four months later as he travelled to Haiti to bring public awareness to the plight of the country's children in the wake of the 2010 Haiti earthquake. He has since participated in UNICEF campaigns targeting HIV prevention, education, and the social inclusion of disabled children.[368] To celebrate his son's first birthday, in November 2013, Messi and Thiago were part of a publicity campaign to raise awareness of mortality rates among disadvantaged children.[369] Messi (pictured in 2007) has worked with UNICEF since 2004 and has served as a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador since 2010. In addition to his work with UNICEF, Messi founded his own charitable organisation, the Leo Messi Foundation, which supports access to health care, education, and sport for children.[370] It was established in 2007 following a visit Messi paid to a hospital for terminally ill children in Boston, an experience that resonated with him to the point that he decided to reinvest part of his earnings into society.[371] Through his foundation, Messi has awarded research grants, financed medical training, and invested in the development of medical centres and projects in Argentina, Spain, and elsewhere in the world.[371][372] In addition to his own fundraising activities, such as his global "Messi and Friends" football matches, his foundation receives financial support from various companies to which he has assigned his name in endorsement agreements, with Adidas as their main sponsor.[373][374] A gold replica of his left foot, weighing 25 kg (55 lb) and valued at $5.3 million, went on sale in Japan in 2013 to raise funds for victims of the 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami.[375] Messi has also invested in youth football in Argentina: he financially supports Sarmiento, a football club based in the Rosario neighbourhood where he was born, committing in 2013 to the refurbishment of their facilities and the installation of all-weather pitches, and funds the management of several youth players at Newell's Old Boys and rival club Rosario Central, as well as at River Plate and Boca Juniors in Buenos Aires.[371] At Newell's Old Boys, his boyhood club, he funded the 2012 construction of a new gymnasium and a dormitory inside the club's stadium for their youth academy. His former youth coach at Newell's, Ernesto Vecchio, is employed by the Leo Messi Foundation as a talent scout for young players.[28] On 7 June 2016, Messi won a libel case against La Razón newspaper and was awarded €65,000 in damages, which he donated to the charity Médecins Sans Frontières.[376] Messi made a donation worth €1 million ($1.1 million) to fight the spread of coronavirus.[377] This was split between Clinic Barcelona in Barcelona and his native Argentina.[378] In addition to this, Messi along with his fellow FC Barcelona teammates announced he would be taking a 70% cut in salaries during the 2020 coronavirus emergency, and contribute further to the club to provide fully to salaries of all the clubs employees.[379] In November 2016, with the Argentine Football Association being run by a FIFA committee for emergency

admitted he 'deeply regrets' missing Barcelona's Champions League final celebrations in 2006". Eurosport. Archived from the original on 22 January 2022. Retrieved 9 May 2023. ^ Lowe, Sid (12 March 2007). "There's Something about Messi". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 18 June 2015. Retrieved 21 July 2015. ^ Hawkey, Ian (20 April 2008). "Lionel Messi on a Mission". The Times. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ Mitten, Andy (10 June 2007). "Hand of Messi Saves Barcelona". The Times. Retrieved 19 June 2022. ^ Davies, Christopher (24 February 2006). "Maradona Hails His Successor". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 21 July 2015. (subscription required) ^ "Ingla: Rijkaard to Blame for Barça Decline". ESPN. 19 May 2008. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 21 July 2015. ^ "Messi Has Ronaldinho's Number". FIFA. 4 August 2008. Archived from the original on 28 March 2015. Retrieved 20 July 2015. ^ Balagué 2013, pp. 476–478. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2008–09". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 9 December 2021. Retrieved 24 July 2015. ^ Roden, Lee (20 April 2015). "Are Messi, Suarez and Neymar Barcelona's Best-Ever Front Three?". ESPN. Archived from the original on 15 June 2019. Retrieved 24 July 2015. ^ Balagué 2013, pp. 453–459. ^ "Real Madrid v Barcelona: Six of the Best 'El Clásicos'". The Daily Telegraph. 9 December 2011. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 24 July 2015. ^ "Barcelona Defeat Athletic Bilbao to Win Copa del Rey". The Daily Telegraph. 14 May 2009. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 24 July 2015. ^ McNulty, Phil (27 May 2009). "Barcelona 2–0 Man Utd". BBC Sport. Retrieved 26 July 2015. ^ Adams, Tom (21 May 2010). "The Treble Club". ESPN FC. Archived from the original on 23 October 2017. Retrieved 26 July 2015. ^ "Barcelona Beat Estudiantes to Win the Club World Cup". BBC Sport. 19 December 2009. Archived from the original on 23 March 2012. Retrieved 26 July 2015. ^ "Messi Sweeps up Goalscoring Honours". UEFA. 28 May 2009. Archived from the original on 10 May 2019. Retrieved 26 July 2015. ^ a b Balagué 2013, pp. 519–524. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2009–10". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 18 March 2022. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ a b Lowe, Sid (17 May 2010). "La Liga Title the Least Barcelona Deserve as Madrid Again Finish Empty Handed". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 18 August 2024. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ Haslam, Andrew (22 May 2010). "Messi Takes Scoring Plaudits". UEFA. UEFA. Archived from the original on 22 March 2019. Retrieved 27 July 2010. ^ Wilson, Joseph (30 September 2010). "Messi Receives Golden Boot for Top European Scorer". U-T San Diego. Archived from the original on 27 August 2016. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ "Magic Messi Wins Supercopa for Barça". ESPN FC. 21 August 2010. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 27 July 2010. ^ McNulty, Phil (28 May 2011). "Barcelona 3–1 Man Utd". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 28 January 2016. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ Lowe, Sid (11 January 2011). "Lionel Messi Is the World's Best Player but Xavi Deserved FIFA's Award". The Guardian. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ "Top Scorer Messi Matches Van Nistelrooy Mark". UEFA. UEFA. 28 May 2011. Archived from the original on 30 May 2011. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ a b "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2010–11". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 30 June 2015. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ "Spanish Primera División Statistics: Top Assists 2010–11". ESPN FC. Archived from the original on 9 July 2015. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ a b Cascarino, Tony; Barclay, Patrick (27 May 2011). "Is Sublime Lionel Messi the Greatest Footballer Ever?". The Times. Archived from the original on 17 May 2015. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ Hayward, Paul (7 January 2013). "FIFA Ballon d'Or 2012: Lionel Messi Rewarded for Displays No Rival Could Ever Match". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Tempers Flare into Brawl as Barcelona Beats Real Madrid". USA Today. 17 August 2011. Archived from the original on 18 October 2020. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ Winter, Henry (26 August 2011). "Barcelona 2 Porto 0: Match Report". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Barcelona Win FIFA Club World Cup". BBC Sport. 18 December 2011. Archived from the original on 22 December 2015. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Messi Crowned World's Best". ESPN FC. 9 January 2012. Archived from the original on 5 April 2019. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Messi Wins UEFA Best Player in Europe Award". UEFA. 25 August 2011. Archived from the original on 18 August 2021. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "UEFA Champions League 2011–12: Statistics". UEFA. Archived from the original on 22 March 2019. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Record-Breaking Messi Takes Top Scorer Honour". UEFA. 19 May 2012. Archived from the original on 10 May 2019. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi as Dominant as Michael Jordan, Claims Barcelona's Pep Guardiola, After He Breaks Goal Record". The Daily Telegraph. 21 March 2012. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi Receives Golden Boot Award as Europe's Top Scorer". Sports Illustrated. 29 October 2012. Archived from the original on 17 October 2021. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Messi Smashes Müller's 40-Year Record". ESPN FC. 9 December 2012. Archived from the original on 7 April 2019. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ Brassell, Andy (27 April 2012). "Pep Guardiola Leaves Lasting Legacy at Barcelona". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 17 October 2013. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ Lowe, Sid (13 May 2013). "A Sense of Anticlimax but Barcelona Still Deserve Their La Liga Title". The Guardian. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ Rogers, Iain (10 December 2012). "Fatherhood Hasn't Slowed Record-Breaking Messi". Reuters. Archived from the original on 8 April 2019. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ a b Mohamed, Majid (8 January 2013). "Barcelona's Lionel Messi Becomes Most Decorated Player in History after Winning Unprecedented Fourth Straight Ballon d'Or". The Independent. Archived from the original on 14 June 2022. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ Chowdhury, Saj (9 January 2013). "Ballon d'Or Contenders Messi, Ronaldo and Iniesta in Profile". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 7 January 2013. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ a b Balagué 2013, p. 556. ^ "Messi Signs New Barcelona Deal". CNN. 7 February 2013. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ Rogers, Iain (11 May 2013). "Captain Messi Inspires Another Barça League Triumph". Reuters. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi Awarded Golden Shoe for Third Time after 46 La Liga Goals for Barcelona". The Independent. 20 November 2013. Archived from the original on 22 May 2019. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ Caioli 2015, ch. 38. ^ Lowe, Sid (11 April 2013). "Messidependencia Brought into Focus as Barcelona Show Vulnerability". The Guardian. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ "Santos FC to face FC Barcelona in the Joan Gamper Trophy". FCBarcelona.com. 28 June 2013. Retrieved 29 June 2013. ^ "Barcelona win Super Cup against Atlético despite Messi's penalty miss". Guardian. 28 August 2013. Archived from the original on 21 January 2021. Retrieved 29 August 2013. ^ Lowe, Sid (12 March 2014). "One Flick of Lionel Messi's Left Foot Ends Talk of Crisis at Barcelona". The Guardian. Retrieved 10 August 2015. ^ "Barcelona's Lionel Messi: I Had a Lot of Problems during 2013–14 Season". ESPN FC. 19 February 2014. Retrieved 10 August 2015. ^ "Barcelona appoint Luis Enrique as first-team coach". BBC Sport. 19 May 2014. Archived from the original on 19 May 2014. Retrieved 19 May 2014. ^ "Suárez joins Barça". FCBarcelona.com. 11 July 2014. Archived from the original on 12 July 2014. Retrieved 30 July 2014. ^ Tighe, Sam (13 May 2015). "Complete analysis of the new-look Barcelona under Luis Enrique". Bleacher Report. Archived from the original on 19 June 2021. Retrieved 19 June 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi: Barcelona Forward Will Leave 'Unreachable' Record". BBC Sport. 23 November 2015. Retrieved 10 August 2015. ^ Jurejko, Jonathan (12 May 2015). "Bayern Mun 3–2 Barcelona". BBC Sport. Retrieved 11 August 2015. ^ Borden, Sam (6 June 2015). "Barcelona Overwhelms Juventus to Win Fifth Champions League Title". The New York Times. Retrieved 11 August 2015. ^ Lowe, Sid (6 June 2015). "Barcelona's Luis Suárez, Leo Messi and Neymar Too Good for Juventus". The Guardian. Retrieved 11 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi Says Free Kick Goals in UEFA Super Cup Were 'Lucky'". ESPN FC. 11 August 2015. Retrieved 4 September 2015. ^ Corrigan, Dermot (20 December 2015). "Lionel Messi: Club World Cup triumph proves Barcelona are 'best in the world'". ESPN FC. Retrieved 21 December 2015. ^ Corrigon, Dermot (12 January 2016). "Lionel Messi wins 2015 Ballon d'Or ahead of Cristiano Ronaldo, Neymar". ^ Bieler, Des (3 February 2016). "Lionel Messi's 500th goal shows off scintillating skill". The Washington Post. Retrieved 17 February 2016. ^ Güell, Robert (23 May 2016). "Messi, Suárez and Neymar Jr end season with 131 goals". FC Barcelona. Retrieved 24 May 2016. ^ Besa, Ramon (18 August 2016). "Messi levanta la Supercopa" [Messi lifts the Supercup]. El País (in Spanish). Retrieved 18 August 2016. ^ "Lionel Messi equals Ronald Koeman's Barcelona free-kick record". ESPN FC. 11 January 2017. Retrieved 16 January 2017. ^ "Messi receives fourth Golden Shoe Award: Each day I enjoy it more". Marca. Spain. 24 November 2017. Retrieved 24 November 2017. ^ Power, Patrick (2 August 2017). "The astonishing stats behind the best attacking trio in the world". BeSoccer.com. Archived from the original on 1 October 2024. Retrieved 27 August 2024. ^ "Luis Enrique, nine titles in three seasons with FC Barcelona". FCBarcelona.com. 28 May 2017. Archived from the original on 28 August 2024. Retrieved 28 August 2024. ^ "Lionel Messi signs new deal through 2020/21 season". FC Barcelona. 25 November 2017. Retrieved 25 November 2017. ^ "Sevilla 0–5 Barcelona". BBC Sport. 21 April 2018. Retrieved 21 April 2018. ^ "Messi Wins Fifth Golden Shoe After Winning Pichichi Trophy". Goal. 20 May 2018. Retrieved 20 May 2018. ^ "Lionel Messi will be Barcelona's next captain". Sport. 25 April 2018. Archived from the original on 31 March 2019. Retrieved 9 August 2018. ^ Wilson, Joseph (27 April 2019). "Messi helps Barcelona clinch Spanish league title". The Washington Post. Archived from the original on 27 April 2019. Retrieved 27 April 2019. ^ "The best individual season of all time? – A look at Lionel Messi's 2018/19 season". Overlyzer. Retrieved 19 March 2022. ^ Wilson, Joseph (19 May 2019). "Messi hits 50 goals for Barca, Madrid ends season to forget". Associated Press. Archived from the original on 6 February 2023. Retrieved 22 May 2019. ^ a b "Messi wins his sixth Golden Shoe award". FC Barcelona. 24 May 2019. Retrieved 25 May 2019. ^ Magee, Will (2 December 2019). "Ballon d'Or: live updates from the ceremony as Lionel Messi and Virgil van Dijk compete for top award". The Telegraph. ISSN 0307-1235. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 2 December 2019. ^ "Messi tells Barca he wants to leave, signaling end of era". AP NEWS. 25 August 2020. Retrieved 26 August 2020. ^ "Messi breaks silence on Barcelona exit saga: 'The president did not keep his word'". Goal. Retrieved 4 September 2020. ^ "Leo Messi surpasses Xavi Hernández record". FC Barcelona. 21 March 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi sets an utterly ridiculous record as he leads Barcelona to Copa Del Rey glory". Caught Offside. 17 April 2021. Retrieved 18 April 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi nets two, Barcelona beats Athletic Bilbao to win Copa del Rey". TSN. 17 April 2021. Retrieved 17 April 2021. ^ Nesci, Gianluca (19 July 2020). "Messi stands alone after winning Pichichi award for 7th time". The Score. Retrieved 21 July 2020. ^ "Messi: The Pichichi of Pichichis". Marca. Retrieved 31 December 2022. ^ Uría, Rubén (1 July 2021). "Messi officially becomes a free agent as superstar's Barcelona contract expires". Goal. Retrieved 1 July 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi: Barcelona forward agrees contract extension with 50 per cent pay cut". Sky Sports. United Kingdom. 14 July 2021. Archived from the original on 14 July 2021. Retrieved 14 July 2021. ^ "Leo Messi not staying at FC Barcelona". FC Barcelona. Retrieved 13 July 2022. ^ Thomas, Lyall; Solhekol, Kaveh (8 August 2021). "Lionel Messi 'shocked' and 'surprised' at Barcelona contract collapse". Sky Sports. Archived from the original on 6 August 2021. Retrieved 6 August 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi Says Goodbye To FC Barelona At Tearful Press Conference". Forbes. Retrieved 4 December 2022. ^ "Lionel Messi signs two-year Paris St-Germain deal after leaving Barcelona". BBC. Retrieved 10 August 2021. ^ "Leo Messi signs for Paris Saint-Germain". PSG. 10 August 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi shirt number revealed by PSG". The Independent. Archived from the original on 14 June 2022. Retrieved 11 August 2021. ^ "Messi's PSG debut breaks Spain viewing records". ESPN. 30 August 2021. Retrieved 30 August 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi Makes First PSG Start But Club Brugge Hold On For A Draw". NDTVSports.com. Retrieved 19 September 2021. ^ "Icardi strikes late to give PSG win over Lyon on Messi's home debut". Reuters. 19 September 2021. Retrieved 19 September 2021. ^ Morse, Ben (29 September 2021). "Lionel Messi scores first PSG goal in Champions League win over Manchester City". CNN. Retrieved 30 September 2021. ^ "Ballon d'Or: Lionel Messi wins award as best player in world football for seventh time". BBC. Retrieved 29 November 2021. ^ "Worst season in Lionel Messi's career! How did the Argentine perform in the 2021–22 season for PSG?". Goal.com. Retrieved 12 June 2022. ^ "A final, lots of goals and a trophy: a great start to the season!". Paris Saint-Germain FC. 31 July 2022. Retrieved 31 July 2022. ^ Hayward, Ben (9 April 2023). "Lionel Messi overtakes Cristiano Ronaldo for goals scored in Europe with latest PSG strike". FourFourTwo. Retrieved 15 April 2023. ^ "Lionel Messi edges Cristiano Ronaldo once again, Argentinian is now the all-time club goal leader in Europe". Marca. 8 April 2023. Retrieved 15 April 2023. ^ "Ligue 1 Uber Eats Team of the Season". Ligue1 COM. Retrieved 4 June 2023. ^ Summerscales, Robert (3 June 2023). "Lionel Messi Ends Ligue 1 Season With More Assists Than Any Other Player". Futbol on FanNation. Retrieved 4 June 2023. ^ Ronald, Issy (28 May 2023). "Lionel Messi breaks Cristiano Ronaldo record as PSG wins historic Ligue 1 title". CNN. Retrieved 4 June 2023. ^ "Lionel Messi: PSG manager Christophe Galtier confirms forward's departure". BBC Sport. 1 June 2023. Retrieved 1 June 2023. ^ "Inter Miami CF Signs Seven-Time Ballon d'Or Winner, World Cup Champion, Lionel Messi | Inter Miami CF". Inter Miami CF. 15 July 2023. Retrieved 16 July 2023. ^ Sigal, Jonathan (15 July 2023). "Official! Lionel Messi signs with Inter Miami". Major League Soccer. Retrieved 15 July 2023. ^ Dominski, Michael (21 July 2023). "Lionel Messi's Inter Miami vs Cruz Azul live updates: Messi free-kick goal wins Leagues Cup match". The Athletic. Retrieved 21 July 2023. ^ mlssoccer. "Classy! Messi gives Yedlin armband for Leagues Cup celebrations | MLSSoccer.com". mlssoccer. Retrieved 6 May 2025. ^ "'He has changed everything' - Inter Miami chief hails Lionel Messi's impact on MLS as he compares eight-time Ballon d'Or winner to NBA legend Michael Jordan". Goal.com. 15 October 2024. Retrieved 12 March 2025. ^ Rodríguez, Eduardo Burgos; Brennan, Joe (23 October 2024). "Here's just how much of an impact Messi has had on MLS and Inter Miami". AS USA. Retrieved 12 March 2025. ^ Deen, Safid. "Inter Miami vs. Nashville live updates: Messi wins Leagues Cup after penalty shootout". usatoday.com. Retrieved 20 August 2023. ^ Blum, Ronald (26 August 2023). "Messi scores dazzling goal in MLS debut, leads Miami over New York Red Bulls". Associated Press. Retrieved 26 August 2023. ^ Lewis, Aimee (22 October 2023). "Lionel Messi's final game of the season for Inter Miami ends in defeat". CNN. Retrieved 8 November 2023. ^ "Men's Ballon d'Or: Lionel Messi wins eighth award, beating Erling Haaland to trophy". BBC Sport. BBC. 30 October 2023. Retrieved 30 October 2023. ^ Summerscales, Robert (5 December 2023). "Lionel Messi Becomes First Men's Soccer Player To Be Named TIME Athlete Of The Year". Sport Illustrated. Retrieved 25 December 2023. ^ "SIX goal contributions! Lionel Messi sets two more MLS records vs. RBNY". Major League Soccer. 4 May 2024. Archived from the original on 5 May 2024. Retrieved 4 May 2024. ^ "Lionel Messi, Inter Miami win MLS Supporters Shield with 3-2 win at Crew. It's Messi's 46th trophy". Associated Press. 2 October 2024. Archived from the original on 10 October 2024. Retrieved 20 October 2024. ^ Reynolds, Tim (19 October 2024). "Messi and Inter Miami finish with best record in MLS history, roll past New England 6-2". Associated Press. Retrieved 19 October 2024. ^ Becherano, Lizzy (19 October 2024). "Lionel Messi hat trick helps Inter Miami break MLS points record". ESPN. Retrieved 19 October 2024. ^ Deen, Safid (9 November 2024). "Messi, Inter Miami see record-setting season end in stunning playoff collapse: Highlights". USA TODAY. Archived from the original on 10 November 2024. Retrieved 9 November 2024. ^ a b "Inter Miami star Lionel Messi wins MLS MVP". The Globe and Mail. 6 December 2024. Retrieved 6 December 2024. ^ a b Gordillo, George (12 April 2025). "Lionel Messi eyes Inter Miami extension as he refuses to leave before christening their new stadium". MARCA. Retrieved 6 May 2025. ^ Himmelman, Jeff (5 June 2014). "The Burden of Being Messi". The New York Times. Retrieved 11 August 2015. ^ a b Balagué 2013, pp. 209–219. ^ "Messi passes Ali Daei". The Athletic. 10 July 2024. Archived from the original on 10 July 2024. Retrieved 10 July 2024. ^ Saaid, Hamdan (12 September 2008). "Games of the XXIX. Olympiad". Rec.Sport.Soccer Statistics Foundation. Archived from the original on 6 August 2024. Retrieved 6 August 2024. ^ "Magic Messi Sparks High Drama in the Lowlands". FIFA. July 2005. Archived from the original on 6 September 2015. Retrieved 12 August 2015. ^ Vickery, Tim (22 August 2005). "Messi Handles 'New Maradona' Tag". BBC Sport. Retrieved 12 August 2015. ^ "Messi Is a Jewel Says Argentina Coach". ESPN FC. 10 October 2005. Retrieved 12 August 2015. ^ Mamrud, Roberto. "Lionel Andrés Messi – Century of International Appearances". Rec.Sport.Soccer Statistics Foundation. Archived from the original on 23 January 2023. Retrieved 23 January 2023. ^ "Argentina 6–0 Serbia & Montenegro". BBC Sport. 16 June 2006. Archived from the original on 22 September 2015. Retrieved 12 August 2015. ^ "Missing Some Stars, Brazil Wins Copa América". The New York Times. 16 July 2007. Retrieved 12 August 2015. ^ "Report and Statistics: Men's and Women's Olympic Football Tournaments Beijing 2008" (PDF). FIFA. p. 21. Archived from the original (PDF) on 6 December 2008. Retrieved 12 August 2015. ^ a b Chadband, Ian (28 April 2009). "Lionel Messi Can Achieve More at Barcelona than Diego Maradona". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 13 August 2015. ^ Smith, Rory (22 June 2010). "Greece 0 Argentina 2: Match Report". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 13 August 2015. ^ "Adidas Golden Ball Nominees Announced". FIFA. 9 July 2010. Archived from the original on 11 April 2015. Retrieved 13 August 2015. ^ Cox, Michael (13 November 2014). "Lionel Messi Showing Some Promising Signs in a New Argentina Role". ESPN FC. Retrieved 13 August 2015. ^ a b Balagué 2013, pp. 414–420. ^ Hughes, Rob (10 July 2014). "If Messi Is Argentina's Star, Then Mascherano Is the Glue". The New York Times. Retrieved 13 August 2015. ^ Murray, Scott (13 July 2014). "World Cup Final 2014: Germany v Argentina – as It Happened". The Guardian. Retrieved 14 August 2015. ^ Bate, Adam (16 July 2014). "World Cup Final: Was Lionel Messi Really a Disappointment in Brazil or Have We Just Become Numb to His Genius?". Sky Sports. Retrieved 14 August 2015. ^ Garcia, Adriana (7 July 2015). "Argentina's Lionel Messi Grateful for Support after Copa América Defeat". ESPN FC. Retrieved 14 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi equals Argentina's all-time goal-scoring record". ESPN FC. 22 June 2016. Retrieved 22 June 2016. ^ a b "Lionel Messi retires from Argentina after Copa America final loss to Chile". ESPN FC. 27 June 2016. ^ "HTML Center". estadisticas.conmebol.com. Archived from the original on 10 June 2020. Retrieved 8 April 2020. ^ "Messi 'God's gift' to Argentina – president". AS. 28 June 2016. Archived from the original on 23 September 2020. Retrieved 28 June 2016. ^ "Lionel Messi hat-trick secures Argentina's passage to World Cup". The Guardian. 11 October 2017. ^ Begley, Emlyn (30 June 2018). "France 4–3 Argentina". BBC Sport. Retrieved 30 June 2018. ^ Vickery, Tim (6 July 2019). "Messi's red card overshadows Argentina's encouraging win and Chile's end of an era". ESPN. Retrieved 7 July 2019. ^ Bonn, Kyle; Savage, Will (16 November 2022). "Lionel Messi and Argentina 36-game unbeaten run ends at World Cup: How Saudi Arabia denied Albiceleste's world record bid". Sporting News. Retrieved 3 February 2025. ^ a b Das, Andrew (11 July 2021). "Messi and Argentina Beat Brazil to Win the Copa América". The New York Times. ISSN 0362-4331. Retrieved 11 July 2021. ^ Marsden, Sam (28 June 2021). "Messi sets Argentina appearances mark in Copa America match vs. Bolivia". ESPN. Retrieved 29 June 2021. ^ UEFA.com (1 June 2022). "Argentina's Lionel Messi named official Finalissima Player of the Match". UEFA. Retrieved 2 June 2022. ^ Nemer, Roy (19 December 2022). "Lionel Messi scores record 18 goals in 2022 with the Argentina national team". Mundo Albiceleste. Retrieved 19 June 2024. ^ "World Cup final: Lionel Messi named best player as Kylian Mbappe wins Golden Boot". BBC Sport. 18 December 2022. Retrieved 18 December 2022. ^ Anand, Anish (19 December 2022). "2022 World Cup stats: Messi joins Maradona, overtakes Ronaldo; Mbappe's record 4". ESPN. Retrieved 22 December 2022. ^ "Lionel Messi makes history with 100th goal for Argentina". FOX Sports. 28 March 2023. Retrieved 30 March 2023. ^ "Lionel Messi becomes Conmebol WC qualifiers all-time leading scorer". MARCA. 18 October 2023. Archived from the original on 1 October 2024. Retrieved 13 July 2024. ^ "Messi passes Ali Daei". The Athletic. 10 July 2024. Archived from the original on 10 July 2024. Retrieved 10 July 2024. ^ Thames, Alanis (14 July 2024). "Argentina wins record 16th Copa America title, beats Colombia 1-0 after Messi gets hurt". Associated Press. Retrieved 10 September 2024. ^ a b Schnibben, Cordt (6 June 2012). "The Golden Yell: Ronaldo and Messi Battle to Define a Football Era". Der Spiegel. Archived from the original on 8 June 2012. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ a b c d Ritter, Karl (12 July 2014). "Five Reasons Why Messi Stands out in Soccer World". Boston Globe. Archived from the original on 25 September 2015. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Messi, goals for 2010". Mundo Deportivo (Spanish). 7 December 2009. Archived from the original on 6 February 2020. Retrieved 26 February 2016. ^ "Lionel Messi becomes the 'Atomic Flea'". Goal. 20 September 2012. Archived from the original on 14 September 2020. Retrieved 26 February 2016. ^ "Messi, The Atomic Flea who became the best in the world". AS (Spanish). 28 January 2016. Archived from the original on 3 March 2016. Retrieved 26 February 2016. ^ a b c Garside, Kevin (29 March 2010). "Arsenal v Barcelona: Lionel Messi Making Case for World's Greatest Ever Player". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ Brown, Lucas (30 September 2005). "Lionel Messi – the New Maradona?". UEFA. Archived from the original on 1 October 2017. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ a b Reng, Ronald (27 May 2011). "Lionel Messi". FT Magazine. Archived from the original on 30 June 2015. Retrieved 19 July 2015. ^ Balagué 2013, p. 553. ^ a b Monti, Fabio (8 April 2010). "Controllo, Corsa, Tocco di Palla: Perché nel Calcio Piccolo è Bello" [Control, Stroke and Touch on the Ball: Because in Football Small Is Beautiful]. Corriere della Sera (in Italian). Archived from the original on 21 February 2011. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Top 25 Greatest Playmakers Ever". The Sportster. 4 July 2015. Archived from the original on 29 November 2020. Retrieved 22 September 2020. ^ "Cristiano Ronaldo, Lionel Messi, goals, records, highlights, Juventus, hat trick, statistics, best stats, age, break down". Fox Sports. 7 January 2020. Archived from the original on 26 March 2021. Retrieved 10 August 2020. ^ "As Lionel Messi turns 32, a fan ruminates on the ambivalent legacy of the football wizard". Telegraph India. Archived from the original on 6 July 2021. Retrieved 10 August 2020. ^ "Lionel Messi steals the show for Barcelona at Dundee United". The Daily Telegraph. 27 July 2008. ISSN 0307-1235. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 10 August 2020. ^ a b Tomas, Francesc (25 June 2015). "Six Reasons Why Lionel Messi Is the World's Best". ESPN FC. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Most goals via free-kicks in football history". Sports Adda. 7 August 2023. Archived from the original on 3 August 2023. Retrieved 25 August 2023. ^ Copeland, Robbie (4 July 2021). "Lionel Messi becomes top free-kick scorer among active players". 90min.com. Archived from the original on 3 August 2021. Retrieved 3 August 2021. ^ del Río, Joel (22 February 2017). "The art of the chip: Falcao matches Totti, Messi and Raul". Marca. Archived from the original on 2 November 2022. Retrieved 11 April 2017. ^ Cohen, Roger (21 June 2010). "The Loose Vuvuzela". The New York Times. Archived from the original on 12 April 2020. Retrieved 12 April 2020. ^ Davis, Scott (6 June 2015). "Here's what makes Lionel Messi so impossible to defend". Business Insider. Archived from the original on 24 October 2015. Retrieved 8 November 2015. ^ Ronay, Barney (7 May 2015). "Lionel Messi: the genius who operates to a different set of physical rules". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 11 December 2015. Retrieved 8 November 2015. ^ "Top 25 Greatest Playmakers Ever". the Sportster. 4 July 2015. Archived from the original on 2 November 2022. Retrieved 22 September 2020. ^ Haugstad, Thore (28 July 2017). "FourFourTwo's 100 Greatest Footballers EVER: No.2, Lionel Messi". FourFourTwo. Archived from the original on 9 November 2020. Retrieved 30 April 2019. ^ Rangarajan, Aditya (6 December 2018). "Lionel Messi misses out on World's best Playmaker 2018 title, finishes second to Real Madrid star". Fox Sports Asia. Archived from the original on 8 December 2018. Retrieved 30 April 2019. ^ Hayward, Ben (23 October 2012). "How Messi went from injury-prone teenager to bionic man". Goal. Footballco. Archived from the original on 7 July 2019. Retrieved 7 July 2019. ^ Balagué 2013, pp. 155–156, 405–406. ^ West, Andy (19 March 2015). "Motivated Lionel Messi Transforms Barcelona's Hopes for Trophy Treble". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 19 September 2015. Retrieved 11 August 2015. ^ Tweedale, Alistair (21 May 2016). "How Luis Suarez moved Lionel Messi onto Barcelona's wing and became the best centre-forward on the planet". The Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 30 June 2018. ^ Martin, Richard (19 April 2015). "In focus: Messi's changing role". UEFA. Archived from the original on 18 April 2016. Retrieved 8 November 2016. ^ a b Balagué, Guillem; Wright, Nick; Smith, Adam (30 October 2017). "Barcelona's improvement under Ernesto Valverde examined". Sky Sports. Archived from the original on 30 June 2018. Retrieved 30 June 2018. ^ Siregar, Cady (7 March 2018). "Barcelona top-scorer Lionel Messi explains how has role has developed under Valverde". Squawka. Archived from the original on 15 July 2018. Retrieved 13 August 2018. ^ Butt, Muhammad (12 August 2018). "Dembele is going nowhere: Five things learned from Barcelona's Super Cup win v Sevilla". Squawka. Archived from the original on 13 August 2018. Retrieved 13 August 2018. ^ "Valverde returns Messi to the False 9 role". Marca. 21 August 2017. Archived from the original on 14 August 2018. Retrieved 13 August 2018. ^ Sanz, Sergi (11 November 2017). "Valverde recycles Messi". Marca. Archived from the original on 13 August 2018. Retrieved 13 August 2018. ^ Chandler, Michael J. (6 January 2018). "3 ways Barcelona could line up with Coutinho". The Score. Archived from the original on 6 July 2021. Retrieved 30 June 2018. ^ Clarke, Tom (19 February 2018). "Dissected: How the new Barcelona play – and why there's hope for Chelsea". The Times. Archived from the original on 30 June 2018. Retrieved 30 June 2018. ^ Cox, Michael (13 November 2014). "Lionel Messi Showing Some Promising Signs in a New Argentina Role". ESPN FC. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 13 August 2015. ^ Mazur, Martin (18 June 2016). "Argentina's great tactical dilemma: where should Lionel Messi play?". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 4 July 2018. Retrieved 4 July 2018. ^ a b Various sources: Macdonald, Paul. "A future without Messi and Ronaldo". Goal. Archived from the original on 29 October 2020. Retrieved 8 June 2018. Staunton, Peter. "Messi and Ronaldo: Changing the face of football". Goal. Archived from the original on 4 August 2019. Retrieved 8 June 2018. Haugstad, Thore (11 January 2016). "Whoever wins the Ballon d'Or, the Messi-Ronaldo duopoly is coming to an end". Eurosport. Archived from the original on 20 January 2021. Retrieved 8 June 2018. ^ a b Various sources: "Why Lionel Messi is the best male athlete of all time". BBC Sport. 13 December 2022. Archived from the original on 2 September 2024. Retrieved 26 February 2025. Lane, Barnaby (18 December 2022). "Lionel Messi cements status as soccer GOAT as Argentina wins thrilling World Cup final". Business Insider. Archived from the original on 24 February 2024. Retrieved 20 December 2022. McIntyre, Doug (18 December 2022). "Lionel Messi Cements His Goat Status With A Little Help From His Friends". Fox Sports. Archived from the original on 4 April 2023. Retrieved 20 January 2023. O'Hanlon, Ryan (16 December 2022). "Why Lionel Messi is the best male athlete of all time". ESPN. Archived from the original on 18 December 2022. Retrieved 26 February 2025. Robinson, Joshua; Clegg, Jonathan (19 December 2022). "Messi's Argentina Beats France to Win the World Cup". The Wall Street Journal. Archived from the original on 9 October 2024. Retrieved 26 February 2025. Robson, James (18 December 2022). "Messi wins World Cup to push claim to be soccer's GOAT". Associated Press. Archived from the original on 3 July 2024. Retrieved 7 October 2024. Smith, Rory (18 December 2022). "For Messi, and Argentina, the (Extra) Wait Is Worth It". The New York Times. Archived from the original on 22 November 2024. Retrieved 26 February 2025. ^ "Messi: I'm Not the Best". FIFA. 31 May 2007. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 21 July 2015. ^ Ball, Phil (23 February 2006). "Britain v Spain (Sort Of)". ESPN FC. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ Minshull, Phil (30 March 2010). "Is Messi the Greatest Ever?". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 9 November 2020. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Messi Es el Mejor Jugador que Veré Jamás" [Messi Is the Best Player I Have Ever Seen]. El Mundo (in Spanish). 29 August 2009. Archived from the original on 22 March 2019. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi: Is the Barcelona and Argentina Star the Greatest Player Ever?". The Daily Telegraph. 29 May 2011. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ "Magical Messi Grabs Hat-trick in Copa America as Argentina Romp into Quarters". The Daily Telegraph. Agence France-Presse. 11 June 2016. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 29 June 2016. ^ Jenson, Pete (30 May 2015). "Lionel Messi: Is the Barcelona Forward the Greatest of Them All?". The Independent. Archived from the original on 14 June 2022. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ a b c Tilghman, John (4 November 2010). "Maradona vs. Messi: A Laughable Comparison". Bleacher Report. Archived from the original on 1 May 2019. Retrieved 1 May 2019. ^ Cairns, Dan (8 January 2013). "How Does Lionel Messi Stack up against Football Legends?". BBC Newsbeat. Archived from the original on 11 November 2020. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ a b Lea, Greg (22 June 2016). "Why the Messi vs Maradona debate is flawed (And always will be)". Archived from the original on 1 October 2024. Retrieved 1 October 2024. ^ "Barcelona's Lionel Messi Blames Media for Inventing Rivalry with Real Madrid's Cristiano Ronaldo". The Daily Telegraph. 15 August 2012. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ Snowball, Ben (11 June 2015). "Lionel Messi: Cristiano Ronaldo Is Not My Rival". Eurosport. TNT Sports International. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ a b West, Andy (22 March 2014). "Real Madrid v Barcelona: Has Ronaldo Overtaken Messi?". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 24 August 2015. Retrieved 10 August 2015. ^ Various sources: Hunter, Graham (28 November 2010). "The game's best rivalry". ESPN. Archived from the original on 6 October 2014. Retrieved 30 September 2014. "Messi v Ronaldo". Sky Sports. Sky Group. 17 October 2011. Archived from the original on 6 October 2014. "The Special Two". The Times. 21 December 2012. Archived from the original on 26 June 2015. Retrieved 13 October 2014. ^ Mendes, Chris (24 June 2014). "World Cup 2014: Cristiano Ronaldo's Personal Duel with Lionel Messi Is Affecting His Performances for Portugal". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 17 August 2015. ^ Smith, Ben (20 April 2012). "Barcel

2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021)Barcelona’s Lionel Messi from Argentina, left, and Real Madrid’s Cristiano Ronaldo from Portugal, right, during a La Liga match at Camp Nou on Nov. 29, 2010.Manu Fernandez—AP PhotoTeam Trophies: Advantage MessiWith their clubs, Messi and Ronaldo have each lifted numerous trophies, the most renowned being the Champions League, an annual tournament of the best teams in European professional soccer. Ronaldo, who holds the record for most Champions League goals of all time (141), leads Messi by one on that trophy count. Messi, meanwhile, has a greater number of domestic cups and league titles.The biggest factor setting the two apart is now their international success: they’d both sought a World Cup for so long, each winning regional tournaments with their countries but repeatedly falling short of the top prize. In the eyes of many soccer watchers, Messi’s victorious last dance on the global stage will surely cement his superiority in the history books.UEFA Champions League TitlesMessi: 4 (2006, 2009, 2011, 2015 with Barcelona) Ronaldo: 5 (2008 with Manchester United; 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018 with Real Madrid)UEFA Super CupsMessi: 3 (2009, 2011, 2015 with Barcelona) Ronaldo: 4 (2008 with Manchester United; 2014, 2016, 2017 with Real Madrid)Domestic League TitlesMessi: 11 (La Liga in 2004-2005, 2005-2006, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2012-2013, 2014-2015, 2015-2016, 2017-2018, 2018-2019; Ligue 1 in 2021-2022) Ronaldo: 7 (Premier League in 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009; La Liga in 2011-2012, 2016-2017; Serie A in 2018-2019, 2019-2020)Domestic CupsMessi: 16 (Supercopa de España in 2005, 2006, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2018; Copa del Rey in 2009, 2012, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2021; Trophée des Champions in 2022) Ronaldo: 13 (Supertaça Cândido de Oliveira in 2002; FA Cup in 2004; EFL Cup in 2006, 2009; FA Community Shield in 2007, 2008; Copa del Rey in 2011, 2014; Supercopa de España in 2012, 2017; Supercoppa Italiana in 2019, 2021; Coppa Italia in 2021)Senior International Tournaments Besides the World CupMessi: 2 (2021 Copa América, 2022 CONMEBOL-UEFA Cup of Champions) Ronaldo: 2 (2016 European Championship, 2019 UEFA Nations League)FIFA World CupsMessi: 1 (2022) Ronaldo: 0Ronaldo and Messi walk off the pitch during a La Liga match between Real Madrid and Barcelona at Santiago Bernabéu Stadium in Madrid, Spain, on Dec. 23, 2017.Power Sport Images/Getty ImagesIcons on the field and off it (they’re the two most-followed Instagram accounts in the world), Messi and Ronaldo are both arguably better than any men’s soccer player to have come before them.But as they each prepare to leave the stage in the coming years, there’s an ascendant generation—from 23-year-old French phenom Kylian Mbappé, the world’s highest-paid soccer player who already has a World Cup trophy under his belt and scored thrice in the final on Sunday to almost win his second, to 22-year-old Erling Haaland, Manchester City’s Norwegian rising star who in the last four years has scored 159 goals in 156 games for clubs and country—vying to take their places at the perch of the world’s most popular sport.Yet until the youngsters prove that they, too, can compete at the highest level—not just for a few seasons but consistently over decades—Ronaldo and Messi will jointly remain in a league of their own, undoubtedly among the GOAT.Between the two, however, Messi just made his legacy that much stronger. Argentine footballer (born 1987) "Messi" redirects here. For other uses, see Messi (disambiguation). Lionel Messi Messi with Argentina at the 2022 FIFA World CupPersonal informationFull name Lionel Andrés Messi[1]Date of birth (1987-06-24) 24 June 1987 (age 37)[1]Place of birth Rosario, Santa Fe, ArgentinaHeight 1.70 m (5 ft 7 in)[1]Position(s) ForwardTeam informationCurrent team Inter MiamiNumber 10Youth career1992–1995 Grandoli1995–2000 Newell's Old Boys2000–2004 BarcelonaSenior career*Years Team Apps (Gls)2003–2004 Barcelona C 10 (5)2004–2005 Barcelona B 22 (6)2004–2021 Barcelona 520 (474)2021–2023 Paris Saint-Germain 58 (22)2023– Inter Miami 38 (31)International career‡2004–2005 Argentina U20 18 (14)2008 Argentina U23 5[α] (2)2005– Argentina 193 (112) Medal record Men's football Representing Argentina FIFA World Cup Winner 2022 Qatar Runner-up 2014 Brazil Copa América Winner 2021 Brazil Winner 2024 United States Runner-up 2007 Venezuela Runner-up 2015 Chile Runner-up 2016 United States 2019 Brazil Finalissima Winner 2022 England Olympics 2008 Beijing Team U20 World Cup Winner 2005 Netherlands South American U20 Championship 2005 Colombia Websitemessi.comSignature *Club domestic league appearances and goals, correct as of 07:56, 1 June 2025 (UTC)‡ National team caps and goals, correct as of 03:37, 11 June 2025 (UTC) This article is part ofa series aboutLionel Messi Argentine professional footballer Career International goals Achievements Rivalry with Cristiano Ronaldo New Maradona Eponyms and public art Cougar Dog Lioloaemus messii Sistine Chapel of Football Media Messi (2014) Messi (2017) Messi and Maud (2017) Take the Ball Pass the Ball (2018) Messi's World Cup: The Rise of a Legend (2024) Family Antonela Roccuzzo Maxi Biancucchi Emanuel Biancucchi Related Hong Kong v Inter Miami Más+ Deportivo LSM vte Lionel Andrés "Leo" Messi[note 1] (Spanish pronunciation: [ljo'nel an'dres 'mesi] ; born 24 June 1987) is an Argentine professional footballer who plays as a forward for and captains both Major League Soccer club Inter Miami and the Argentina national team. Widely regarded as one of the greatest players of all time, Messi set numerous records for individual accolades won throughout his professional footballing career such as eight Ballon d'Or awards and eight times being named the world's best player by FIFA.[note 2] He is the most decorated player in the history of professional football having won 45 team trophies,[note 3] including twelve Big Five league titles, four UEFA Champions Leagues, two Copa Américas, and one FIFA World Cup. Messi holds the records for most European Golden Shoes (6), most goals in a calendar year (91), most goals for a single club (672, with Barcelona), most goals (474), hat-tricks (36) and assists (192) in La Liga, most assists (18) and goal contributions (32) in the Copa América, most goal contributions (21) in the World Cup, most international appearances (193) and international goals (112) by a South American male, and the second-most in the latter category outright. A prolific goalscorer and creative playmaker, Messi has scored over 850 senior career goals and has provided over 380 assists for club and country.[21] Born in Rosario, Argentina, Messi relocated to Spain to join Barcelona at age 13, and made his competitive debut at age 17 in October 2004. He gradually established himself as an integral player for the club, and during his first uninterrupted season at age 22 in 2008–09 he helped Barcelona achieve the first treble in Spanish football. This resulted in Messi winning the first of four consecutive Ballons d'Or, and by the 2011–12 season he would set La Liga and European records for most goals in a season and establish himself as Barcelona's all-time top scorer. The following two seasons, he finished second for the Ballon d'Or behind Cristiano Ronaldo, his perceived career rival. However, he regained his best form during the 2014–15 campaign, where he became the all-time top scorer in La Liga, led Barcelona to a historic second treble, and won a fifth Ballon d'Or in 2015. He assumed Barcelona's captaincy in 2018 and won a record sixth Ballon d'Or in 2019. During his overall tenure at Barcelona, Messi won a club-record 34 trophies, including ten La Liga titles and four Champions Leagues, among others. Financial difficulties at Barcelona led to Messi signing with French club Paris Saint-Germain in August 2021, where he would win the Ligue 1 title during both of his seasons there. He joined Major League Soccer club Inter Miami in July 2023. An Argentine international, Messi is the national team's all-time leading goalscorer and most-capped player. His style of play as a diminutive, left-footed dribbler, drew career-long comparisons with compatriot Diego Maradona, who described Messi as his successor. At the youth level, he won the 2005 FIFA World Youth Championship and gold medal in the 2008 Summer Olympics. After his senior debut in 2005, Messi became the youngest Argentine to play and score in a World Cup in 2006. Assuming captaincy in 2011, he then led Argentina to three consecutive finals in the 2014 FIFA World Cup, the 2015 Copa América and the Copa América Centenario, all of which they would lose. After initially announcing his international retirement in 2016, he returned to help his country narrowly qualify for the 2018 FIFA World Cup, which they would exit early. Messi and the national team finally broke Argentina's 28-year trophy drought by winning the 2021 Copa América, which helped him secure his seventh Ballon d'Or that year. He then led Argentina to win the 2022 Finalissima, as well as the 2022 FIFA World Cup, his country's third overall world championship and first in 36 years. This followed with a record-extending eighth Ballon d'Or in 2023, and a victory in the 2024 Copa América. Messi has endorsed sportswear company Adidas since 2006. According to France Football, he was the world's highest-paid footballer for five years out of six between 2009 and 2014, and was ranked the world's highest-paid athlete by Forbes in 2019 and 2022. Messi was among Time's 100 most influential people in the world in 2011, 2012, and 2023. In 2020 and 2023, he was named the Laureus World Sportsman of the Year, the first team-sport athlete to win it. In 2020, Messi was named to the Ballon d'Or Dream Team and became the second footballer and second team-sport athlete to surpass $1 billion in career earnings. Following his arrival and impact on football in the US, Messi was named Time's Athlete of the Year in 2023, and was bestowed with the Presidential Medal of Freedom by US president Joe Biden in 2025. Messi's childhood home in Rosario, Santa Fe. Messi was born on 24 June 1987 in Rosario, Santa Fe Province.[22] He was the third of four children of Jorge Messi, a steel factory manager, and his wife Celia Cuccittini, who worked in a magnet manufacturing workshop. On his father's side, he is of Italian and Spanish descent, the great-grandson of immigrants from the north-central Adriatic Marche region of Italy, and on his mother's side, he has primarily Italian ancestry.[3] Growing up in a tight-knit, football-loving family, "Leo" developed a passion for the sport from an early age, playing constantly with his older brothers, Rodrigo and Matías, and his cousins, Maximiliano and Emanuel Biancucchi, both of whom became professional footballers.[23] At the age of four he joined local club Grandoli, where he was coached by his father. Another early influence came from his maternal grandmother, Celia, who accompanied him to training and matches.[24] He was greatly affected by her death, shortly before his eleventh birthday. Since then, as a devout Catholic, he has celebrated his goals by looking up and pointing to the sky in tribute to his grandmother.[25][26] "When you saw him you would think: this kid can't play ball. He's a dwarf, he's too fragile, too small. But immediately you'd realise that he was born different, that he was a phenomenon and that he was going to be something impressive." – Newell's Old Boys youth coach Adrián Coria shares his first impression of the 12-year-old Messi.[27] Messi is a lifelong supporter of Newell's Old Boys, based in Rosario. When he was seven years old, he first started playing for Newell's. During the six years he played for them, he scored almost 500 goals, and was a member of "The Machine of '87", a nearly unbeatable youth side named for the year of their birth. Messi would regularly entertain crowds by performing ball tricks during half-time, when the first team played home games.[28][29][30] His goalscoring idol growing up was Brazilian striker Ronaldo, who Messi called "the best forward I've ever seen".[31] His future as a professional player was threatened when, aged 10, he was diagnosed with a growth hormone deficiency. He began growth hormone therapy at age 11,[32] however his father's health insurance covered only two years of the therapy, which cost at least 1,000 pesos per month. Newell's agreed to contribute, but later reneged on their promise.[33] He was scouted by Buenos Aires club River Plate, whose playmaker Pablo Aimar he idolised.[34][35] It was speculated for a time that he failed to sign with River Plate due to his ill health; however, in a 2019 interview, Messi revealed that River Plate had wanted to sign him after he scored four goals at a trial, and even offered to pay for his medical treatment, however Newell's refused to release his player card, preventing the transfer.[36] Messi enrolled at Barcelona's youth academy, La Masia, aged 13. As the Messi family had relatives in Catalonia, they sought to arrange a trial with Barcelona in September 2000. First-team director Charly Rexach immediately wanted to sign him, but the board of directors hesitated; at the time it was highly unusual for European clubs to sign foreign players of such a young age. On 14 December, an ultimatum was issued for Barcelona to prove their commitment, and Rexach, with no other paper at hand, offered a contract on a paper napkin.[34][37] In February 2001, the family relocated to Barcelona, where they moved into an apartment near the club's stadium, Camp Nou. During his first year in Spain, Messi rarely played with the Infantiles due to a transfer conflict with Newell's; as a foreigner, he could only be fielded in friendlies and the Catalan league. Without football, he struggled to integrate into the team. He was reserved by nature, and was so quiet that some of his teammates initially believed he was mute. At home, he suffered from homesickness after his mother moved back to Rosario with his brothers and younger sister, María Sol, while he stayed in Barcelona with his father.[28][37][38] After a year at Barcelona's youth academy, La Masia, Messi was finally enrolled in the Royal Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) in February 2002. Now he could play in all competitions, and quickly befriended his teammates, among whom were Cesc Fàbregas and Gerard Piqué.[39] After completing his growth hormone therapy at 14,[40] Messi became an integral part of the "Baby Dream Team", Barcelona's greatest-ever youth side. During his first full season (2002–03), he was top scorer with 36 goals in 30 games for the Cadetes A, who won an unprecedented treble of the league, the Spanish cup, and the Copa Catalunya.[39][41] In the Copa Catalunya final, their 4–1 victory over Espanyol became referred to in club lore as the partido de la máscara, the final of the mask. A week after suffering a broken cheekbone during a league match, Messi was allowed to start the game on the condition that he wear a plastic protector; soon hindered by the mask, he took it off and scored two goals in 10 minutes before his substitution.[42] At the close of the season, he received an offer to join Arsenal, his first from a foreign club. Although Fàbregas and Piqué soon left for England with their own offers, Messi chose to remain in Barcelona.[37][43][44] Messi continued to progress through his club's ranks at a rapid pace, debuting for four youth teams during the 2003–04 season.[45] After being named player of the tournament in four separate international pre-season competitions with the Juvenil B, he played only one official match with the team before being promoted to the Juvenil A. In the Juvenil A he scored 18 goals in 11 league games.[46][47] Messi was then one of several youth players called up to strengthen a depleted first team during the international break. French winger Ludovic Giuly explained that Messi caught everyone's attention in a training session with Frank Rijkaard's first team: "He destroyed us all... They were kicking him all over the place to avoid being ridiculed by this kid, he just got up and kept on playing. He would dribble past four players and score a goal. Even the team's starting centre-backs were nervous. He was an alien."[48] "It seemed as if he had been playing with us all his life." – Barcelona's then assistant coach Henk ten Cate on Messi's first-team debut.[49] At 16 years, four months, and 23 days old, Messi made his first-team debut when he came on in the 75th minute during a friendly against José Mourinho's Porto on 16 November 2003.[37][50] His performance, creating two chances and a shot on goal, impressed the technical staff, and he subsequently began training daily with the club's reserve side, Barcelona B, as well as weekly with the first team.[51] After his first training session with the senior squad, Barça's new star player, Ronaldinho, told his teammates that he believed the 16-year-old would become an even better player than himself.[52] Ronaldinho soon befriended Messi, whom he called "little brother". This greatly eased Messi's transition into the first team.[53][54] To gain further match experience, Messi joined Barcelona C in addition to the Juvenil A, playing his first game for the third team on 29 November. He helped save them from the relegation zone of the Tercera División, scoring five goals in ten games, including a hat-trick in eight minutes during a Copa del Rey match while man-marked by Sevilla's Sergio Ramos.[46][55] His progress was reflected in his first professional contract, signed on 4 February 2004, which lasted until 2012 and contained an initial buyout clause of €30 million. A month later, on 6 March, he made his debut for Barcelona B in the Segunda División B, and his buyout clause automatically increased to €80 million.[46][56] He played five games with the B team that season but did not score.[57] Physically he was weaker than his opponents, who were often much older and taller, and in training he worked on increasing his muscle mass and overall strength in order to be able to shake off defenders. Towards the end of the season, he returned to both youth teams, helping the Juvenil B win the league. He finished the campaign having scored goals for four of his five teams, with a total of 36 goals in all official competitions.[46][55] Main article: Career of Lionel Messi § Club career Messi (pictured in 2005) at the age of 18 playing for FC Barcelona, where he played for 17 years. Messi began the 2004–05 season as a guaranteed starter for the Barcelona B team, but after some lobbying by the senior players, he was promoted to the first team by manager Frank Rijkaard.[52] He made his La Liga debut for Barcelona on 16 October 2004 against Espanyol,[37] and scored his first senior goal on 1 May 2005 against Albacete, from an assist by Ronaldinho, becoming at that time the youngest-ever scorer for the club.[58][59] At 17 years, three months, and 22 days old, he was at the time the youngest player to represent Barcelona in an official competition, and the club won the league title during that season.[54][60] On his 18th birthday, he signed his first contract as a senior team player, a five-year contract through 2010 with a release clause of €150 million.[61] Three months later, as his performance continued to make waves, his contract was updated to a nine-year contract, doubling his salary and keeping him at the club until 2014.[56][62] Barcelona began the 2005–06 season by winning the Supercopa de España without Messi, who was not selected to participate in the competition.[19] By the end of the season, the team won La Liga again as well as the UEFA Champions League, although Messi did not play in the final for the latter due to injury.[63][64] During the 2006–07 season, Messi scored his first hat-trick in a Clásico against Real Madrid, the first player to do so in 12 years.[65] An incredibly finesse goal from Messi against Getafe and another goal scored by a handball against Espanyol gained notice for their similarities to the two famous goals scored by fellow Argentine Diego Maradona in the 1986 World Cup match against England, drawing comparisons between the two that Messi would face throughout his career.[66][67][68] The team finished the season with only one trophy – the 2006 Supercopa de España. Barcelona finished the next 2007–08 season trophyless, leading to Rijkaard's departure.[69] At the beginning of the 2008–09 season, his first under Barcelona's new manager, former captain Pep Guardiola, Messi was given the number 10 shirt.[70] Over time, he effectively became the tactical focal point of Guardiola's possession-based system, increasing his goalscoring rate as a result.[71] During that season, Messi scored 38 total goals, and alongside Samuel Eto'o and Thierry Henry, contributed to a total of 100 goals in all competitions, a record at the time for the club.[72][73] Messi played as a false nine for the first time in a Clásico against Real Madrid, setting up his side's first goal and scoring twice in the team's greatest-ever score at Santiago Bernabéu Stadium.[74][75] He played his first final, winning the Copa del Rey.[76] In addition, Barcelona won the La Liga title and later won the Champions League, thus achieving the first treble in the history of Spanish football.[77] Messi during the 2009 Joan Gamper Trophy against Manchester City. During the first half of the 2009–10 season, Barcelona would also win the Supercopa de España, UEFA Super Cup and FIFA Club World Cup, resulting in becoming the first club to achieve the sextuple.[78][79] Messi finished as the Champions League top scorer, the youngest in the tournament's history.[80] For his efforts in 2009, Messi won the Ballon d'Or and the FIFA World Player of the Year award.[81] Messi scored a total of 47 goals in all competitions, equaling Ronaldo's club record from the 1996–97 campaign.[82][83] He finished the season as top scorer in the Champions League,[84] and La Liga, winning his second consecutive league trophy and earned his first European Golden Shoe.[83][85] After the team won the Champions League, he signed a new 7-year contract through 2016.[61] In the 2010–11 campaign, Messi won the Supercopa de España,[86] Champions League,[87] and a third consecutive La Liga title. His club performances in 2010 earned him his second consecutive Ballon d'Or.[88] Messi was the top scorer in the Champions League, for the third consecutive year,[89] and the league's top scorer and assist provider.[90][91] He became Barcelona's all-time single-season top scorer with 53 goals.[90][92] "I feel sorry for those who want to compete for Messi's throne – it's impossible, this kid is unique." – Pep Guardiola after Messi became Barcelona's all-time top scorer at the age of 24 in March 2012[93] Messi began the 2011–12 season winning both the Spanish and European Super Cups trophies.[94][95] At the close of the year, he won the FIFA Club World Cup and earned the Golden Ball for a second time.[96] For his efforts in 2011, he received the FIFA Ballon d'Or, becoming only the fourth player in history to win the Ballon d'Or three times,[97] and the inaugural UEFA Best Player in Europe Award.[98] During the year 2012, Messi became the second player to be top scorer in four Champions League campaigns.[99][100] Messi became the top goalscorer in Barcelona's history at 24 years old, overtaking the 57-year record of César Rodríguez's 232 goals with a hat-trick against Granada.[101] He finished the season as league top scorer in Spain and Europe for a second time, with 50 goals, a La Liga record, while his 73 goals in all competitions made him the single-season top scorer in the history of European club football excluding regional and local competitions.[102][103] The team would also win the Copa del Rey that season, their 14th trophy under Guardiola, who resigned following the season after a four-year cycle of success.[104] Messi scored a record-breaking 91 goals with Argentina (above) and Barcelona (below) in 2012. For the start of the 2012–13 season, Barcelona had virtually secured their La Liga title by the start of 2013.[105] A double scored against Real Betis saw Messi becoming Barcelona's all-time top scorer in La Liga, and surpassed Gerd Müller's record of most goals scored in a calendar year; Messi would score a record 91 goals in all competitions for Barcelona and Argentina throughout 2012.[106][107] Messi again won the FIFA Ballon d'Or, becoming the first player in history to win the Ballon d'Or four times.[107][108] He signed a new contract committing himself to the club through 2018, and wore the captain's armband for the first time in a league match against Rayo Vallecano.[109][110][111] The team would win La Liga again that year, Messi's sixth, equalling Real Madrid's 100-point record of the previous season. With 60 goals in all competitions, including 46 goals in La Liga, he finished the campaign as league top scorer in Spain and Europe for the second consecutive year, becoming the first player in history to win the European Golden Shoe three times.[112] Messi's overall input into the team's attack had increased significantly. Whereas he contributed to 24% of the team's goals in their treble-winning campaign in 2008–09, this number rose to more than 40% by the end of the 2012–13 season.[113] These statistics, as well as lopsided losses in the Champions League where Messi was unfit, gave credence to the notion of Messidependencia, Barcelona's perceived tactical and psychological dependence on their star player.[114] To offset the load on Messi, Barcelona would sign Brazilian forward Neymar from Santos before the 2013–14 season.[115] The team would win the Supercopa de España at the beginning of the season.[116] Messi finished the campaign with his worst output in five seasons, though he still managed to score 41 goals in all competitions.[117] For the first time in five years, Barcelona ended the season without a major trophy.[118] Messi dribbling past Patrice Evra of Juventus during the 2015 UEFA Champions League final. Barcelona hired coach Luis Enrique before the 2014–15 season, and would continue to aid Messi in the attack by signing Uruguayan forward Luis Suárez, who had won the European Golden Shoe the year before at Liverpool.[119][120] Luis Enrique's system would feature quick transitions from defense to attack, led by the front three of Messi, Suárez and Neymar. The attacking trio, which colloquially became known as 'MSN', would break goalscoring records.[121] A hat-trick scored against Sevilla earlier in the season would also make him the all-time top scorer in La Liga, as he surpassed the 59-year record of 251 league goals held by Telmo Zarra.[122] After securing the La Liga title, the Copa del Rey, and the Champions League that year, Messi helped Barcelona become the first club to win the continental treble twice.[123][124] He would record 58 goals, but combined with Neymar and Suárez, the attacking trio scored a total of 122 goals in all competitions that season, a record in Spanish football.[125] Messi opened the 2015–16 season by helping Barcelona's win over Sevilla in the UEFA Super Cup.[126] Messi capped off the year by winning the 2015 FIFA Club World Cup final over River Plate in Yokohama, collecting his fifth club trophy of the calendar year.[127] On 11 January 2016, Messi won the FIFA Ballon d'Or for a record fifth time in his career.[128] He would end the season by winning La Liga as well as the Copa del Rey again.[129] In total, Messi scored 41 goals, and Barcelona's attacking trio of him, Neymar and Suárez managed a Spanish record of 131 combined goals throughout the season, breaking the record they had set the previous season.[130] The 2016–17 season would end with Messi winning the Supercopa de España and the Copa del Rey.[131][132] He would finish the season with 54 goals, while his 37 goals in La Liga saw him claim both the Pichichi and European Golden Boot Awards for the fourth time in his career.[133] Messi, Neymar and Suárez would combine for 110 goals by season's end. Neymar would depart for Paris Saint Germain the next year, leaving the attacking trio with a combined total of 363 goals over the course of three seasons.[134] Luis Enrique would also leave Barcelona at the end of the season after managing the club to a total of nine trophies during his three-year tenure.[135] Messi, wearing the captain's armband, against Real Valladolid in 2018. Messi would sign a new deal with Barcelona on 25 November 2017, his ninth contract with the club, keeping him with the club through 2021.[136] The 2017–18 season saw Messi achieving the domestic double, winning La Liga and the Copa del Rey once again.[137] He once again finished the season as the top scorer in La Liga, with 34 goals, which also saw him win his fifth European Golden Shoe award.[138] With the departure of former captain Andrés Iniesta in May 2018, Messi was named the team's new captain for the 2018–19 season.[139] He lifted his first trophy as Barcelona's captain, the Supercopa de España, following a 2–1 victory over Sevilla. He helped Barcelona clinch the La Liga title, his tenth but first as captain.[140] With 36 goals in 34 appearances that season, he won his sixth league Golden Boot trophy, equalling Zarra as the player with the most top-scorer awards in La Liga.[141][142] He also captured his sixth Golden Shoe award, and a record third consecutive award since the 2016–17 season.[143] Messi would win his sixth Ballon d'Or, but the subsequent 2019–20 season saw Barcelona go trophyless for the first time since 2007–08.[144] Following a disappointing season, Barcelona announced that Messi sent the club "a document expressing his desire to leave", but Messi ultimately decided to fulfill the final year of his contract.[145][146] The 2020–21 season saw Messi surpass Xavi's record to reach a club record of 768 appearances.[147] He would lead the club to victory in the 2021 Copa del Rey final.[148][149] His last two seasons with Barcelona saw him lead La Liga in goal scoring, giving him a record-breaking total of eight Pichichi trophies.[150][151] Messi became a free agent after his contract expired, with negotiations on a new deal complicated due to Barcelona's financial issues.[152][153] Barcelona would eventually announce that Messi would not be staying at the club, citing financial and structural obstacles posed by La Liga regulations as a reason for Messi's departure.[154][155] In a tearful press conference held at the Camp Nou, Messi confirmed that he would be leaving Barcelona.[156] Messi (middle) with PSG team-mates Kylian Mbappé (left) and Neymar. On 10 August 2021, Messi joined Ligue 1 club Paris Saint-Germain (PSG), reuniting him with Neymar, for the 2021–22 season on a two-year deal until June 2023 with an option for an extra year.[157][158] Messi chose 30 as his squad number, the same he wore as a teenager when he made his senior debut for Barcelona.[159] He would make his debut with the club against Reims, made his first start and Champions League debut for the club against Club Brugge, and made his home debut in a match against Lyon[160][161][162] He scored his first goal for the club in a Champions League group stage win over former manager Pep Guardiola's Manchester City.[163] Having scored 40 goals at club and international level for the calendar year in addition to captaining Argentina to the 2021 Copa América, Messi received a record seventh Ballon d'Or.[164] He finished his debut season with PSG with 11 goals and 14 assists across all competitions, helping the club win their 10th Ligue 1 title.[165] Beginning the 2022–23 season, Messi would win his second trophy with PSG in the Trophée des Champions.[166] A goal against Nice resulted in him surpassing Cristiano Ronaldo as the all-time highest goalscorer in European club football with 702 goals; during the match, he also achieved 1,000 career direct goal contributions at club level.[167][168] By the end of the season, he had 21 goals across all competitors and the highest number of assists in the league with 16, which helped PSG clinch their 11th Ligue 1 title and his second in a row.[169][170][171] Following the last game of the season, manager Christophe Galtier confirmed that it would be Messi's last for PSG, with the club confirming his departure two days later.[172] Messi with Inter Miami in the 2023 U.S. Open Cup. Major League Soccer (MLS) club Inter Miami CF announced the signing of Messi on a two-and-a-half-year contract on 15 July 2023.[173][174] Messi made his 2023 debut for the club in a Leagues Cup match against Cruz Azul, scoring with a free-kick in stoppage time for a victory.[175] DeAndre Yedlin, the previous captain of Inter Miami, gave his armband to Messi, who took over as team captain.[176] Messi's arrival in the US was praised as a revelation, on and off the pitch, and his presence was credited for helping to raise the profile of MLS within the US and abroad. According to Goal, "Every game that he graces sparks a scramble for tickets, with plenty of A-list guests eager to watch him in action".[177] The frenzy over his arrival was dubbed "Messimania", and Inter Miami's No. 10 Messi jersey became the best-selling jersey in the league, and nearly the world.[178] After scoring nine goals in his first six games for Miami, Messi led the team to the club's first-ever trophy, as it won the Leagues Cup against Nashville SC.[179] Messi made his MLS debut against the New York Red Bulls.[180] Miami would miss the playoffs, finishing 14th in the Eastern Conference, having gone winless in their last seven games.[181] On 30 October 2023, following his World Cup win with Argentina and Ligue 1 trophy with PSG, Messi was awarded a record-extending eighth Ballon d'Or.[182] He was also named Time Athlete of the Year, the first footballer ever to win the award.[183] During the 2024 season, Messi broke the record for the most assists in a single MLS game with five assists, and broke the record for the most goal contributions in an MLS game with six, in a 6–2 win over the New York Red Bulls.[184] On 2 October, Messi scored a brace in a 3–2 win over Columbus Crew, clinching the Supporters' Shield, his 46th trophy.[185] In the final game of the regular season on 19 October against the New England Revolution, Messi scored his first hat-trick for the club in a 6–2 victory. Inter Miami's victory over the Revolution also allowed the club to finish with 74 points throughout the regular season, a league record for MLS. He would finish the regular season with 20 goals and 16 assists in 19 matches.[186] In doing so, he became Inter Miami's all-time leading goalscorer.[187] Miami made its first postseason appearance in the 2024 MLS Cup playoffs but were eliminated in the first round after losing two games against Atlanta United FC. Messi would have his first postseason goal in the third game, a 3–2 loss.[188] He would be named the MLS Most Valuable Player following the conclusion of the regular season.[189] During the 2025 season, Messi became the fastest person to reach 40 goals in league history.[190] He was featured in a Superbowl ad by Apple TV for their exclusive MLS coverage. In April he was reported to be negotiating a one-year contract extension to the end of the 2026 season, after the opening of the new Miami stadium.[190] Main article: Career of Lionel Messi § International career As a dual Argentine-Spanish national, Messi was eligible to play for the national team of both countries.[191] He debuted for Argentina in 2004 for Argentina's U20 team against Paraguay, and was subsequently included in the squad for the 2005 South American U-20 Championship, where they would finish third.[192] Messi would then lead the team to victory in the 2005 FIFA World Youth Championship, his first success with Argentina. Finishing the tournament with six goals and two assists, he would also win the Golden Ball.[193][194][195] Messi evades Brazil's Marcelo in the semi-final of the 2008 Summer Olympics. Messi would make his debut with the senior national team in 2005, at age 18, coming off the bench in a friendly against Hungary.[196] Messi would have his first start in 2006 against Peru, and would score his first international goal in a friendly against Croatia.[197][198] His World Cup debut came in the 2006 FIFA World Cup as a substitute in the 74th minute against Serbia and Montenegro, assisting one goal and scoring the final one in their victory. This made him the youngest player to represent and score for Argentina in the World Cup.[199] He would represent Argentina again for the 2007 Copa América, where they would ultimately lose in the final. Messi was named the best young player of the tournament, having scored two goals and provided one assist.[200] The 2008 Summer Olympics would mark another major achievement with his country, as he led Argentina's U23 team to claim the Olympic gold medal over Nigeria. Messi registered two goals and three assists throughout, and was singled out by FIFA as the stand-out player from the tournament's best team.[201] Messi in his number 10 shirt captaining Argentina in 2012. With the international retirement of Juan Román Riquelme, Messi was given Argentina's number 10 shirt.[202] During a 2010 FIFA World Cup group stage match against Greece, where a majority of the starters rested due to a secured place in the knockout rounds, Messi would wear the captain's armband for the first time.[203] Argentina were ultimately eliminated in the quarterfinals against Germany, but Messi was identified as one of the tournament's 10 best players due to his pace and creativity, despite failing to register a single goal and only having one assist.[204] Ahead of the 2011 Copa América, Argentina began building their team around Messi.[205] However, Messi would again be goalless during the tournament but had three assists. The team would ultimately lose to Uruguay in penalties during the quarter-finals.[206] Messi against Germany in the 2014 FIFA World Cup final. Following their unsuccessful performance, a 24-year-old Messi would be awarded the captaincy of the squad.[207] The next several years saw many frustrations for Messi due to his inability to lead Argentina to win an international trophy. During the 2014 FIFA World Cup, Messi and Argentina lost to Germany in the final, though Messi was awarded the Golden Ball as the best player of the tournament regardless due to his overall performance with four goals and an assist.[208][209] Argentina would lose to Chile on penalties in the 2015 Copa América final the next year. At the close of the tournament, Messi was reportedly selected to receive the Golden Ball award, having scored one goal and provided three assists, but he rejected the honour.[210] In the 2016 Copa América Centenario semi-final against the United States, a goal from Messi would put him ahead of Gabriel Batistuta as Argentina's all-time leading goalscorer in international matches.[211] However, Argentina would again fall to Chile on penalties in the final.[212] Messi would have five goals and four assists throughout the tournament.[213] Losing three consecutive finals in three consecutive years caused Messi to retire from international football, but a nationwide campaign in Argentina helped convince him to reverse his decision.[212][214] He would return to the national team to lead them to the 2018 FIFA World Cup. Argentina were in jeopardy of missing the tournament on the last game of the qualifiers against Ecuador, but a hat-trick from Messi dramatically secured their entry.[215] They would go on to lose to France in the Round of 16 during the World Cup, with Messi having one goal and two assists in the tournament.[216] The next year, Messi would again represent Argentina in the 2019 Copa América, where he registered only a single goal and assist. They would lose to hosts Brazil in the semi-final but ended with a third-place finish after defeating Chile.[217] Despite not winning the tournament, this victory would mark the beginning of a 36-game unbeaten streak for Argentina that would last for over three years.[218] Messi facing off against Érick Gutiérrez of Mexico in the 2022 FIFA World Cup group stage. Messi would finally end Argentina's 28-year trophy drought in the 2021 Copa América, as they had not won an international tournament since 1993.[219] During a group stage match against Bolivia, he surpassed Javier Mascherano to become Argentina's most-capped player.[220] Argentina defeated Brazil in the final, and Messi was named the player of the tournament having been directly involved in nine out of the 12 goals scored by Argentina, scoring four of them and assisting five.[219] He captained Argentina to win another international trophy in the 2022 Finalissima against UEFA Euro 2020 winners Italy, where he was named player of the match after providing two assists.[221] At the 2022 FIFA World Cup, Messi led Argentina to its first World Cup victory in 36 years, scoring twice in the final to defeat France.[222] Having scored seven goals and assisting three during the tournament, Messi would again win the Golden Ball, becoming the first player to win it twice.[223] His appearance in the final also set new records for the most appearances (26) and direct goal contributions (21 – 13 goals and 8 assists) at the World Cup.[224] A hat-trick in a 2023 friendly against Curaçao saw Messi reach 100 international goals, the third player and the first South American in history to achieve this milestone.[225] Later that year, a goal against Peru resulted in Messi becoming the all-time top goalscorer in CONMEBOL World Cup qualifiers.[226] During the 2024 Copa América semi-final against Canada, Messi scored his first and only goal of the tournament which also made him the second-highest international goalscorer of all time.[227] Argentina eventually won the final against Colombia for their second consecutive Copa América title, with Messi contributing one goal and assist overall while also setting a new record for most appearances (39) at Copa América.[228] Messi prepares to shoot with his dominant left foot in the 2014 FIFA World Cup final. Due to his short stature, Messi has a lower centre of gravity than taller players, which gives him greater agility, allowing him to change direction more quickly and evade opposing tackles;[229][230] this has led the Spanish media to dub him La Pulga Atómica ("The Atomic Flea").[231][232][233] Despite being physically unimposing, he possesses significant upper-body strength, which, combined with his low centre of gravity and resulting balance, aids him in withstanding physical challenges from opponents; he has consequently been noted for his lack of diving in a sport rife with playacting.[28][230][234] His short, strong legs allow him to excel in short bursts of acceleration while his quick feet enable him to retain control of the ball when dribbling at speed.[235] His former Barcelona manager Pep Guardiola once stated, "Messi is the only player that runs faster with the ball than he does without it."[236] Although he has improved his ability with his weaker foot since his mid-20s, Messi is predominantly a left-footed player; with the outside of his left foot, he usually begins dribbling runs, while he uses the inside of his foot to finish and provide passes and assists.[237][238] A prolific goalscorer, Messi is known for his finishing, positioning, quick reactions, and ability to make attacking runs to beat the defensive line. He also functions in a playmaking role, courtesy of his vision and range of passing.[239] He has often been described as a magician; a conjurer, creating goals and opportunities where seemingly none exist.[240][241][242] Moreover, he is an accurate free kick and penalty kick taker.[230][243] As of May 2025, Messi ranks third all time in goals scored from direct free kicks with 67,[244] the most among active players.[245] He also has a penchant for scoring from chips.[246] Messi's dribbling abilities allow him to weave past several defenders and orchestrate attacking plays. Messi's pace and technical ability enable him to undertake individual dribbling runs towards goal, in particular during counterattacks, usually starting from the halfway line or the right side of the pitch.[234][243][247] He is widely considered to be one of the greatest dribblers of all time.[248][249] With regard to this ability, his former Argentina manager Diego Maradona has said of him, "The ball stays glued to his foot; I've seen great players in my career, but I've never seen anyone with Messi's ball control."[238] Beyond his individual qualities, he is also a well-rounded, hard-working team player, known for his creative combinations, in particular with former Barcelona midfielders Xavi and Andrés Iniesta.[229][230] As his career advanced, and his athleticism and tendency to dribble diminished slightly with age, Messi began to dictate play in deeper areas of the pitch and developed into one of the best passers and playmakers in football history.[250][251][252] His work-rate off the

affairs are largely run as a family business: his father, Jorge, has been his agent since he was 14, and his oldest brother, Rodrigo, handles his daily schedule and publicity. His mother and other brother, Matías, manage his charitable organization, the Leo Messi Foundation, and take care of personal and professional matters in Rosario.[409] Since leaving for Spain aged 13, Messi has maintained close ties to his hometown of Rosario, even preserving his distinct Rosarino accent. He has kept ownership of his family's old house, although it has long stood empty; he maintains a penthouse apartment in an exclusive residential building for his mother, as well as a family compound just outside the city. Once when he was in training with the national team in Buenos Aires, he made a three-hour trip by car to Rosario immediately after practice to have dinner with his family, spent the night with them, and returned to Buenos Aires the next day in time for practice. Messi keeps in daily contact via phone and text with a small group of confidants in Rosario, most of whom were fellow members of "The Machine of '87" at Newell's Old Boys. He was on bad terms with the club after his transfer to Barcelona, but by 2012 their public feud had ended, with Newell's embracing their ties with Messi, even issuing a club membership card to his newborn son.[28][371][410] Messi has long planned to return to Rosario to end his playing career at Newell's.[411] Messi holds triple citizenship, as he is a citizen of Argentina, Italy, and Spain.[412] Messi's financial affairs came under investigation in 2013 for suspected tax evasion. Offshore companies in tax havens Uruguay and Belize were used to evade €4.1 million in taxes related to sponsorship earnings between 2007 and 2009. An unrelated shell company in Panama set up in 2012 was subsequently identified as belonging to the Messis in the Panama Papers data leak. Messi, who pleaded ignorance of the alleged scheme, voluntarily paid arrears of €5.1 million in August 2013. On 6 July 2016, Messi and his father were both found guilty of tax fraud and were handed suspended 21-month prison sentences and respectively ordered to pay €1.7 million and €1.4 million in fines.[413] Facing the judge, he said, "I just played football. I signed the contracts because I trusted my dad and the lawyers and we had decided that they would take charge of those things."[414] As of match played 14 June 2025 Appearances and goals by club, season and competition Club Season League National cup[a] Continental[b] Other Total Division Apps Goals Apps Goals Apps Goals Apps Goals Apps Goals Barcelona C 2003–04[415] Tercera División 10 5 — — — 10 5 Barcelona B 2003–04[416] Segunda División B 5 0 — — — 5 0 2004–05[417] Segunda División B 17 6 — — — 17 6 Total 22 6 — — — 22 6 Barcelona 2004–05[417] La Liga 7 1 1 0 1 0 — 9 1 2005–06[418] La Liga 17 6 2 1 6 1 0 0 25 8 2006–07[419] La Liga 26 14 2 2 5 1 3[c] 0 36 17 2007–08[420] La Liga 28 10 3 0 9 6 — 40 16 2008–09[421] La Liga 31 23 8 6 12 9 — 51 38 2009–10[422] La Liga 35 34 3 1 11 8 4[d] 4 53 47 2010–11[423] La Liga 33 31 7 7 13 12 2[e] 3 55 53 2011–12[424] La Liga 37 50 7 3 11 14 5[f] 6 60 73 2012–13[425] La Liga 32 46 5 4 11 8 2[e] 2 50 60 2013–14[426] La Liga 31 28 6 5 7 8 2[e] 0 46 41 2014–15[427] La Liga 38 43 6 5 13 10 — 57 58 2015–16[428] La Liga 33 26 5 5 7 6 4[g] 4 49 41 2016–17[429] La Liga 34 37 7 5 9 11 2[e] 1 52 54 2017–18[430] La Liga 36 34 6 4 10 6 2[e] 1 54 45 2018–19[431] La Liga 34 36 5 3 10 12 1[e] 0 50 51 2019–20[432] La Liga 33 25 2 2 8 3 1[e] 1 44 31 2020–21[433] La Liga 35 30 5 3 6 5 1[e] 0 47 38 Total 520 474 80 56 149 120 29 22 778 672 Paris Saint-Germain 2021–22[434] Ligue 1 26 6 1 0 7 5 — 34 11 2022–23[435] Ligue 1 32 16 1 0 7 4 1[h] 1 41 21 Total 58 22 2 0 14 9 1 1 75 32 Inter Miami 2023 MLS 6 1 1 0 — 7[i] 10 14 11 2024 MLS 19 20 — 3[j] 2 3[k] 1 25 23 2025 MLS 13 10 — 7[j] 5 1[l] 0 21 15 Total 38 31 1 0 10 7 11 11 60 49 Career total 648 538 83 56 173 136 41 34 945 764 ^ Includes Copa del Rey, Coupe de France, U.S. Open Cup ^ All appearances in UEFA Champions League, unless otherwise noted ^ One appearance in UEFA Super Cup, two appearances in Supercopa de España ^ One appearance in UEFA Super Cup, one appearance and two goals in Supercopa de España, two appearances and two goals in FIFA Club World Cup ^ a b c d e f g h Appearance(s) in Supercopa de España ^ One appearance and one goal in UEFA Super Cup, two appearances and three goals in Supercopa de España, two appearances and two goals in FIFA Club World Cup ^ One appearance and two goals in UEFA Super Cup, two appearances and one goal in Supercopa de España, one appearance and one goal in FIFA Club World Cup ^ Appearance in Trophée des Champions ^ Appearances in Leagues Cup ^ a b Appearances in CONCACAF Champions Cup ^ Appearances in MLS Cup playoffs ^ Appearance in FIFA Club World Cup See also: List of international goals scored by Lionel Messi As of match played 10 June 2025 Appearances and goals by national team, year and competition Team Year Competitive Friendly Total Apps Goals Apps Goals Apps Goals Argentina U20[192][436] 2004 — 2 3 2 3 2005 16[a] 11 — 16 11 Total 16 11 2 3 18 14 Argentina U23[437][438] 2008 5[b] 2 — 5[α] 2 Total 5 2 0 0 5 2 Argentina[442][443] 2005 3[c] 0 2 0 5 0 2006 3[d] 1 4 1 7 2 2007 10[e] 4 4 2 14 6 2008 6[f] 1 2 1 8 2 2009 8[f] 1 2 2 10 3 2010 5[g] 0 5 2 10 2 2011 8[h] 2 5 2 13 4 2012 5[i] 5 4 7 9 12 2013 5[i] 3 2 3 7 6 2014 7[j] 4 7 4 14 8 2015 6[k] 1 2 3 8 4 2016 10[l] 8 1 0 11 8 2017 5[m] 4 2 0 7 4 2018 4[n] 1 1 3 5 4 2019 6[o] 1 4 4 10 5 2020 4[p] 1 — 4 1 2021 16[q] 9 — 16 9 2022 10[r] 8 4 10 14 18 2023 5[s] 3 3 5 8 8 2024 9[t] 4 2 2 11 6 2025 2[s] 0 — 2 0 Total 137 61 56 51 193 112 Career total 157 74 58 54 214 128 ^ Nine appearances and five goals in the 2005 South American U-20 Championship, seven appearances and six goals in the 2005 FIFA World Youth Championship. ^ Appearances in the 2008 Summer Olympics. ^ Appearances in 2006 FIFA World Cup qualification. ^ Appearances in 2006 FIFA World Cup. ^ Six appearances and two goals in 2007 Copa América, four appearances and two goals in 2010 FIFA World Cup qualification. ^ a b Appearances in 2010 FIFA World Cup qualification. ^ Appearances in 2010 FIFA World Cup. ^ Four appearances in 2011 Copa América, four appearances and two goals in 2014 FIFA World Cup qualification. ^ a b Appearances in 2014 FIFA World Cup qualification. ^ Appearances in 2014 FIFA World Cup. ^ Appearances in 2015 Copa América. ^ Five appearances and three goals in 2018 FIFA World Cup qualification, five appearances and five goals in Copa América Centenario. ^ Appearances in 2018 FIFA World Cup qualification. ^ Appearances in 2018 FIFA World Cup. ^ Appearances in 2019 Copa América. ^ Appearances in 2022 FIFA World Cup qualification. ^ Nine appearances and five goals in 2022 FIFA World Cup qualification, seven appearances and four goals in 2021 Copa América. ^ Two appearances and one goal in 2022 FIFA World Cup qualification, one appearance in 2022 Finalissima, seven appearances and seven goals in 2022 FIFA World Cup. ^ a b Appearances in 2026 FIFA World Cup qualification. ^ Five appearances and one goal in 2024 Copa América, four appearances and three goals in 2026 FIFA World Cup qualification. For a comprehensive listing of Messi's achievements, see List of career achievements by Lionel Messi. Messi (Golden Ball winner) pictured with future teammate Neymar (Bronze Ball winner) at the conclusion of the 2011 FIFA Club World Cup final. Barcelona[11][12][20] La Liga: 2004–05, 2005–06, 2008–09, 2009–10, 2010–11, 2012–13, 2014–15, 2015–16, 2016–17, 2017–18, 2018–19 Copa del Rey: 2008–09, 2011–12, 2014–15, 2015–16, 2016–17, 2017–18, 2020–21 Supercopa de España:[note 3] 2006, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016, 2018 UEFA Champions League: 2005–06, 2008–09, 2010–11, 2014–15 UEFA Super Cup: 2009, 2011, 2015 FIFA Club World Cup: 2009, 2011, 2015 Paris Saint-Germain[12][20] Ligue 1: 2021–22, 2022–23 Trophée des Champions: 2022 Inter Miami[12][13][20] Supporters' Shield: 2024 Leagues Cup: 2023 Argentina U20[12][20] FIFA World Youth Championship: 2005 Argentina U23[12][20] Olympic Games: 2008 Argentina[12][20] FIFA World Cup: 2022 Copa América: 2021, 2024 Finalissima: 2022 Individual Ballon d'Or: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2019, 2021, 2023[note 2] FIFA World Player of the Year/FIFA Ballon d'Or/The Best FIFA Men's Player: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015, 2019, 2022, 2023[note 2] European Golden Shoe: 2009–10, 2011–12, 2012–13, 2016–17, 2017–18, 2018–19[143][444] FIFA World Cup Golden Ball: 2014, 2022[12][445] FIFA World Cup Silver Boot: 2022 FIFA Club World Cup Golden Ball: 2009, 2011[12] FIFA U-20 World Cup Golden Ball: 2005[12] FIFA U-20 World Cup Golden Boot: 2005[12] UEFA Club Footballer of the Year: 2008–09 UEFA Men's Player of the Year Award: 2010–11, 2014–15 UEFA Champions League top scorer: 2008–09, 2009–10, 2010–11, 2011–12, 2014–15, 2018–19 Copa América Golden Ball: 2015, 2021 Copa América Golden Boot: 2021 La Liga Best Player: 2008–09, 2009–10, 2010–11, 2011–12, 2012–13, 2014–15,[446][447][448] 2016–17,[449] 2017–18,[450] 2018–19[451][452] MLS Most Valuable Player: 2024[189] Pichichi Trophy: 2009−10, 2011–12, 2012−13, 2016–17, 2017−18, 2018–19, 2019–20, 2020–21 Laureus World Sportsman of the Year: 2020,[445] 2023[453] Ballon d'Or Dream Team: 2020[454] FIFPRO World 11: 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023[455][456] Argentine Sportsperson of the Year: 2011, 2021, 2022, 2023[457] Argentine Footballer of the Year: 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023[446][445][458] Orders Creu de Sant Jordi, Catalonia (30 April 2019)[459] Presidential Medal of Freedom, United States (4 January 2025)[384][460] portal portalAssociation football portalArgentina portalBiography portal European Cup and UEFA Champions League records and statistics La Liga records and statistics List of Argentina international footballers List of association football rivalries List of FC Barcelona players List of FC Barcelona records and statistics List of Paris Saint-Germain FC players List of Inter Miami CF players List of FIFA World Cup winning players List of largest sports contracts List of men's footballers with 50 or more international goals List of men's footballers with 100 or more international caps List of men's footballers with 500 or more goals List of men's footballers with the most official appearances List of most-followed Instagram accounts List of most-liked Instagram posts List of players who have appeared in the most FIFA World Cups List of top international men's football goalscorers by country ^ According to FCBarcelona.com, and his authorised biography, Messi by Guillem Balagué, his surname is the single "Messi", in accordance with Argentine customs.[2][3] Other sources, including a 2014 document by FIFA, give his surname as the double "Messi Cuccittini".[4] After winning a libel case in 2017, Messi's own management company stated: "The football player Lionel Andres Messi Cuccittini has donated a total of €72,783.20 to the organisation Doctors Without Borders."[5] ^ a b c Messi received France Football's 2009 Ballon d'Or and FIFA's 2009 FIFA World Player of the Year award, prior to their six-year merger; he proceeded to win the newly formed award, the FIFA Ballon d'Or, four times: 2010, 2011, 2012, 2015. Both organisations credited him with five (FIFA) Ballon d'Or awards.[6][7][8] He then went on to win the Ballon d'Or three more times – 2019, 2021, 2023 – again solely assigned by France Football, and won the newly established The Best FIFA Men's Player three times as well – 2019, 2022, 2023. France Football recognizes him as a record eight-time world's best player.[9][10] ^ a b According to FC Barcelona,[11] FIFA,[12] Major League Soccer,[13] the Royal Spanish Football Federation,[14] and multiple media outlets,[15][16][17] Messi also won the 2005 Supercopa de España, bringing his Barcelona trophy total to 35 and his career total to 46.[18] However, this particular trophy is not credited here since Messi was out of the squad and did not feature in any of the two games against Real Betis.[19][20] ^ a b Does not include an unofficial friendly match played on 24 May 2008 in Barcelona between Argentina U23 and the Catalonia national football team,[439][440] as Catalonia is not an affiliated with either FIFA or UEFA as a national member association and is therefore not allowed to participate in official competitions.[441] ^ a b c "FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ – Squad List: Argentina (ARG)" (PDF). FIFA. 18 December 2022. p. 1. Archived (PDF) from the original on 18 December 2022. Retrieved 18 December 2022. ^ "Profile: Lionel Andrés Messi". FC Barcelona. Archived from the original on 18 October 2014. Retrieved 8 September 2015. ^ a b Balagué 2013, pp. 32–37. ^ "2014 FIFA World Cup Brazil: List of Players" (PDF). FIFA. 10 June 2014. p. 2. Archived from the original (PDF) on 25 June 2014. Retrieved 8 September 2015. ^ Marsden, Sam (2 November 2017). "Messi donates to charity after libel case win". ESPN. Archived from the original on 4 February 2021. Retrieved 3 November 2017. ^ Lacombe, Rémy (11 January 2016). "Messi, le Cinquième Élément" [Messi, the Fifth Element]. France Football (in French). Archived from the original on 21 January 2024. Retrieved 21 January 2024. ^ "Messi, Lloyd, Luis Enrique and Ellis Triumph at FIFA Ballon d'Or 2015". FIFA. 11 January 2016. Archived from the original on 2 February 2016. Retrieved 26 May 2016. ^ Straeten, Karine van der; Laslier, Jean-François; Daoust, Jean-François; Blais, André; Arrondel, Luc; Anderson, Christopher J. (2020). "Messi, Ronaldo, and the Politics of Celebrity Elections: Voting for the Best Soccer Player in the World". Perspectives on Politics. 18 (1): 91–110. doi:10.1017/S1537592719002391. ISSN 1537-5927. ^ "Ballon d'Or 2023 : Lionel Messi sacré pour la huitième fois" [Ballon d'Or 2023: Lionel Messi crowned for the eighth time] (in French). L'Equipe. 30 October 2023. Archived from the original on 21 January 2024. Retrieved 21 January 2024. ^ "Lionel Messi wins The Best FIFA Men's Player Award". FIFA. 15 January 2024. Archived from the original on 21 January 2024. Lionel Messi has been crowned The Best FIFA Men's Player 2023, retaining the title he won in 2022 [...] Messi also won the 2019 Best FIFA Men's Player award and was recognised by FIFA as the leading player in the men's game on five occasions prior to that – 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2015 – making this his eighth individual award in total. ^ a b "Messi wins 35th trophy with Barça". FC Barcelona. 17 April 2021. Archived from the original on 1 September 2024. Retrieved 20 July 2024. ^ a b c d e f g h i j k "The World Cup, The Best and all of Lionel Messi's trophy wins". FIFA. 19 January 2024. Archived from the original on 15 July 2024. Retrieved 16 July 2024. ^ a b "Lionel Messi extends world record: Inter Miami win Supporters' Shield". Major League Soccer. 3 October 2024. Archived from the original on 3 October 2024. Retrieved 3 October 2024. ^ "Conditions regarding the marketing of the "Spanish Super Cup" audiovisual rights in the international markets" (PDF). Royal Spanish Football Federation. 12 November 2019. Archived (PDF) from the original on 25 July 2024. Retrieved 25 July 2024. Lionel Messi is the competition's all-time leading scorer and most successful player with eight titles. ^ Aldunate, Ramiro (18 April 2021). "The legend of Messi". Marca. Archived from the original on 20 July 2024. Retrieved 20 July 2024. ^ Corrigan, Dermot (18 April 2021). "Messi's magic has just won him a 35th trophy with Barcelona – but will it be the last?". The New York Times. Archived from the original on 20 July 2024. Retrieved 20 July 2024. ^ Azzoni, Tales (1 July 2021). "Messi's future up in the air as Barcelona contract ends". Associated Press. Retrieved 20 July 2024. ^ "Lionel Messi wins 46th trophy as Inter Miami secures 2024 Supporters' Shield". Marca. 3 October 2024. Archived from the original on 6 October 2024. Retrieved 6 October 2024. ^ a b Romero Nuñez, Fernando (22 August 2023). "Messi wins first title at Miami, does he hold the all-time record?". Buenos Aires Herald. Archived from the original on 20 July 2024. Retrieved 20 July 2024. ^ a b c d e f g Maverino, Silvio (15 July 2024). "Lionel Messi se convirtió en el jugador más ganador de la historia del fútbol" [Lionel Messi became the winningest player in football history]. El Gráfico (in Spanish). ISSN 0017-291X. Archived from the original on 16 July 2024. Retrieved 16 July 2024. ^ Ponce, Karina (23 February 2025). "Messi, cerca del mayor récord de asistencias". Diario AS (in Spanish). Retrieved 27 February 2025. ^ "Messi | Ficha del jugador 20/21 | Delantero". FC Barcelona (in Spanish). Archived from the original on 11 August 2021. Retrieved 1 June 2021. ^ Caioli 2012, pp. 9–10. ^ a b Carlin, John (27 March 2010). "Lionel Messi: Magic in His Feet". The Independent. Archived from the original on 5 July 2015. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ Balagué 2013, pp. 44–45. ^ Maume, Chris (11 July 2014). "Lionel Messi: The World at His Feet". The Independent. Archived from the original on 14 June 2022. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ Caioli 2012, p. 38. ^ a b c d e f Thompson, Wright (22 October 2012). "Here and Gone: The Strange Relationship between Lionel Messi and His Hometown in Argentina". ESPN. Archived from the original on 14 October 2013. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ Fitzpatrick, Richard (23 June 2017). "The Machine of '87: Messi's Boyhood Teammates Recall Early Signs of Greatness". Bleacher Report. Archived from the original on 24 June 2017. Retrieved 25 June 2017. ^ Caioli 2012, pp. 31–35. ^ "Messi: Brazil striker Ronaldo my hero". FourFourTwo. Archived from the original on 12 May 2022. Retrieved 8 September 2018. ^ Mackie, Ed (14 December 2022). "What height is Lionel Messi? Explaining his growth deficiency as a child". New York Times. ^ Cazadieu, Jérôme; Juillard, Alexandre; Traïni, Frédéric (15 November 2008). "Leo Messi: La Légende d'El Enano" [Leo Messi: The Legend of El Enano]. L'Équipe via Irish Independent. Archived from the original on 26 September 2015. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ a b Hawkey, Ian (20 April 2008). "Lionel Messi on a Mission". The Times. Archived from the original on 19 August 2023. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ a b Wilson, Paul (16 July 2015). "Pablo Aimar: The Argentinian Wizard Admired by Maradona and Messi". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 18 August 2015. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ "Leo Messi reveló el motivo por el que no fichó por River Plate". Sports Illustrated (in Spanish). 2 June 2019. Archived from the original on 12 January 2024. Retrieved 12 January 2024. ^ a b c d e Lowe, Sid (15 October 2014). "Lionel Messi: How Argentinian Teenager Signed for Barcelona on a Serviette". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 26 July 2015. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ a b Longman, Jeré (21 May 2011). "Lionel Messi: Boy Genius". The New York Times. Archived from the original on 1 July 2016. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ a b Caioli 2012, pp. 61–62. ^ Balagué 2013, pp. 149. ^ Jenson, Pete (27 March 2010). "Fàbregas, Messi, Piqué: Class of 2002". The Independent. Archived from the original on 14 June 2022. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ Hunter 2012, pp. 44–45. ^ "Lionel Messi Could Have Joined Arsenal as a Teenager, Says Arsène Wenger". The Guardian. 21 November 2014. Archived from the original on 7 July 2015. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ "The New Messiah". FIFA. 5 March 2006. Archived from the original on 21 October 2014. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ "All time stats for Messi in the Barça youth teams". FC Barcelona. Retrieved 23 September 2020. ^ a b c d Caioli 2012, pp. 68–71. ^ Bird, Liviu (5 June 2015). "Ex-Teammate, La Masia Coach Recall Lionel Messi's Early Days, Persona". Sports Illustrated. Retrieved 19 July 2015. ^ "Giuly remembers the first time he saw Messi 'kill' his team-mates". Sport. 14 September 2016. ^ Corrigan, Dermot (16 October 2014). "The best quotes about Lionel Messi's 10 years at Barcelona". ESPN FC. ^ Corrigan, Dermot (15 November 2013). "Messi Reflects on Debut 10 Years On". ESPN. Retrieved 19 July 2015. ^ Balagué 2013, pp. 191–193. ^ a b Balagué 2013, pp. 246–249. ^ Hunter 2012, p. 53. ^ a b Carbonell, Rafael (26 October 2004). "El Último Salto de la 'Pulga'" [The Last Jump of the 'Flea']. El País (in Spanish). Archived from the original on 8 December 2015. Retrieved 19 July 2015. ^ a b Balagué 2013, pp. 183–185. ^ a b Balagué 2013, pp. 262–263. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2003–04". BDFutbol. Retrieved 19 July 2015. ^ Hunter 2012, pp. 35–36. ^ Williams, Richard (24 February 2006). "Messi Has All the Qualities to Take World by Storm". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 6 December 2008. Retrieved 19 July 2015. ^ Hunter, Graham (4 June 2015). "Messi, Iniesta and Xavi Driven to Join the Champions League Elite". ESPN. Archived from the original on 23 July 2015. Retrieved 19 July 2015. ^ a b "A history of Messi's nine deals at Barca". ESPN.com. 19 October 2016. Retrieved 6 May 2025. ^ "Starlet Messi Stays at Barça until 2014". ESPN. 17 September 2005. Retrieved 20 July 2015. ^ Hunter 2012, pp. 266–269. ^ "Lionel Messi has admitted he 'deeply regrets' missing Barcelona's Champions League final celebrations in 2006". Eurosport. Archived from the original on 22 January 2022. Retrieved 9 May 2023. ^ Lowe, Sid (12 March 2007). "There's Something about Messi". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 18 June 2015. Retrieved 21 July 2015. ^ Hawkey, Ian (20 April 2008). "Lionel Messi on a Mission". The Times. Retrieved 18 July 2015. ^ Mitten, Andy (10 June 2007). "Hand of Messi Saves Barcelona". The Times. Retrieved 19 June 2022. ^ Davies, Christopher (24 February 2006). "Maradona Hails His Successor". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 21 July 2015. (subscription required) ^ "Ingla: Rijkaard to Blame for Barça Decline". ESPN. 19 May 2008. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 21 July 2015. ^ "Messi Has Ronaldinho's Number". FIFA. 4 August 2008. Archived from the original on 28 March 2015. Retrieved 20 July 2015. ^ Balagué 2013, pp. 476–478. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2008–09". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 9 December 2021. Retrieved 24 July 2015. ^ Roden, Lee (20 April 2015). "Are Messi, Suarez and Neymar Barcelona's Best-Ever Front Three?". ESPN. Archived from the original on 15 June 2019. Retrieved 24 July 2015. ^ Balagué 2013, pp. 453–459. ^ "Real Madrid v Barcelona: Six of the Best 'El Clásicos'". The Daily Telegraph. 9 December 2011. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 24 July 2015. ^ "Barcelona Defeat Athletic Bilbao to Win Copa del Rey". The Daily Telegraph. 14 May 2009. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 24 July 2015. ^ McNulty, Phil (27 May 2009). "Barcelona 2–0 Man Utd". BBC Sport. Retrieved 26 July 2015. ^ Adams, Tom (21 May 2010). "The Treble Club". ESPN FC. Archived from the original on 23 October 2017. Retrieved 26 July 2015. ^ "Barcelona Beat Estudiantes to Win the Club World Cup". BBC Sport. 19 December 2009. Archived from the original on 23 March 2012. Retrieved 26 July 2015. ^ "Messi Sweeps up Goalscoring Honours". UEFA. 28 May 2009. Archived from the original on 10 May 2019. Retrieved 26 July 2015. ^ a b Balagué 2013, pp. 519–524. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2009–10". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 18 March 2022. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ a b Lowe, Sid (17 May 2010). "La Liga Title the Least Barcelona Deserve as Madrid Again Finish Empty Handed". The Guardian. Archived from the original on 18 August 2024. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ Haslam, Andrew (22 May 2010). "Messi Takes Scoring Plaudits". UEFA. UEFA. Archived from the original on 22 March 2019. Retrieved 27 July 2010. ^ Wilson, Joseph (30 September 2010). "Messi Receives Golden Boot for Top European Scorer". U-T San Diego. Archived from the original on 27 August 2016. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ "Magic Messi Wins Supercopa for Barça". ESPN FC. 21 August 2010. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 27 July 2010. ^ McNulty, Phil (28 May 2011). "Barcelona 3–1 Man Utd". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 28 January 2016. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ Lowe, Sid (11 January 2011). "Lionel Messi Is the World's Best Player but Xavi Deserved FIFA's Award". The Guardian. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ "Top Scorer Messi Matches Van Nistelrooy Mark". UEFA. UEFA. 28 May 2011. Archived from the original on 30 May 2011. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ a b "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2010–11". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 30 June 2015. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ "Spanish Primera División Statistics: Top Assists 2010–11". ESPN FC. Archived from the original on 9 July 2015. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ a b Cascarino, Tony; Barclay, Patrick (27 May 2011). "Is Sublime Lionel Messi the Greatest Footballer Ever?". The Times. Archived from the original on 17 May 2015. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ Hayward, Paul (7 January 2013). "FIFA Ballon d'Or 2012: Lionel Messi Rewarded for Displays No Rival Could Ever Match". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Tempers Flare into Brawl as Barcelona Beats Real Madrid". USA Today. 17 August 2011. Archived from the original on 18 October 2020. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ Winter, Henry (26 August 2011). "Barcelona 2 Porto 0: Match Report". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Barcelona Win FIFA Club World Cup". BBC Sport. 18 December 2011. Archived from the original on 22 December 2015. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Messi Crowned World's Best". ESPN FC. 9 January 2012. Archived from the original on 5 April 2019. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Messi Wins UEFA Best Player in Europe Award". UEFA. 25 August 2011. Archived from the original on 18 August 2021. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "UEFA Champions League 2011–12: Statistics". UEFA. Archived from the original on 22 March 2019. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Record-Breaking Messi Takes Top Scorer Honour". UEFA. 19 May 2012. Archived from the original on 10 May 2019. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi as Dominant as Michael Jordan, Claims Barcelona's Pep Guardiola, After He Breaks Goal Record". The Daily Telegraph. 21 March 2012. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi Receives Golden Boot Award as Europe's Top Scorer". Sports Illustrated. 29 October 2012. Archived from the original on 17 October 2021. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Messi Smashes Müller's 40-Year Record". ESPN FC. 9 December 2012. Archived from the original on 7 April 2019. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ Brassell, Andy (27 April 2012). "Pep Guardiola Leaves Lasting Legacy at Barcelona". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 17 October 2013. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ Lowe, Sid (13 May 2013). "A Sense of Anticlimax but Barcelona Still Deserve Their La Liga Title". The Guardian. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ Rogers, Iain (10 December 2012). "Fatherhood Hasn't Slowed Record-Breaking Messi". Reuters. Archived from the original on 8 April 2019. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ a b Mohamed, Majid (8 January 2013). "Barcelona's Lionel Messi Becomes Most Decorated Player in History after Winning Unprecedented Fourth Straight Ballon d'Or". The Independent. Archived from the original on 14 June 2022. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ Chowdhury, Saj (9 January 2013). "Ballon d'Or Contenders Messi, Ronaldo and Iniesta in Profile". BBC Sport. Archived from the original on 7 January 2013. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ a b Balagué 2013, p. 556. ^ "Messi Signs New Barcelona Deal". CNN. 7 February 2013. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ Rogers, Iain (11 May 2013). "Captain Messi Inspires Another Barça League Triumph". Reuters. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi Awarded Golden Shoe for Third Time after 46 La Liga Goals for Barcelona". The Independent. 20 November 2013. Archived from the original on 22 May 2019. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ Caioli 2015, ch. 38. ^ Lowe, Sid (11 April 2013). "Messidependencia Brought into Focus as Barcelona Show Vulnerability". The Guardian. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ "Santos FC to face FC Barcelona in the Joan Gamper Trophy". FCBarcelona.com. 28 June 2013. Retrieved 29 June 2013. ^ "Barcelona win Super Cup against Atlético despite Messi's penalty miss". Guardian. 28 August 2013. Archived from the original on 21 January 2021. Retrieved 29 August 2013. ^ Lowe, Sid (12 March 2014). "One Flick of Lionel Messi's Left Foot Ends Talk of Crisis at Barcelona". The Guardian. Retrieved 10 August 2015. ^ "Barcelona's Lionel Messi: I Had a Lot of Problems during 2013–14 Season". ESPN FC. 19 February 2014. Retrieved 10 August 2015. ^ "Barcelona appoint Luis Enrique as first-team coach". BBC Sport. 19 May 2014. Archived from the original on 19 May 2014. Retrieved 19 May 2014. ^ "Suárez joins Barça". FCBarcelona.com. 11 July 2014. Archived from the original on 12 July 2014. Retrieved 30 July 2014. ^ Tighe, Sam (13 May 2015). "Complete analysis of the new-look Barcelona under Luis Enrique". Bleacher Report. Archived from the original on 19 June 2021. Retrieved 19 June 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi: Barcelona Forward Will Leave 'Unreachable' Record". BBC Sport. 23 November 2015. Retrieved 10 August 2015. ^ Jurejko, Jonathan (12 May 2015). "Bayern Mun 3–2 Barcelona". BBC Sport. Retrieved 11 August 2015. ^ Borden, Sam (6 June 2015). "Barcelona Overwhelms Juventus to Win Fifth Champions League Title". The New York Times. Retrieved 11 August 2015. ^ Lowe, Sid (6 June 2015). "Barcelona's Luis Suárez, Leo Messi and Neymar Too Good for Juventus". The Guardian. Retrieved 11 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi Says Free Kick Goals in UEFA Super Cup Were 'Lucky'". ESPN FC. 11 August 2015. Retrieved 4 September 2015. ^ Corrigan, Dermot (20 December 2015). "Lionel Messi: Club World Cup triumph proves Barcelona are 'best in the world'". ESPN FC. Retrieved 21 December 2015. ^ Corrigon, Dermot (12 January 2016). "Lionel Messi wins 2015 Ballon d'Or ahead of Cristiano Ronaldo, Neymar". ^ Bieler, Des (3 February 2016). "Lionel Messi's 500th goal shows off scintillating skill". The Washington Post. Retrieved 17 February 2016. ^ Güell, Robert (23 May 2016). "Messi, Suárez and Neymar Jr end season with 131 goals". FC Barcelona. Retrieved 24 May 2016. ^ Besa, Ramon (18 August 2016). "Messi levanta la Supercopa" [Messi lifts the Supercup]. El País (in Spanish). Retrieved 18 August 2016. ^ "Lionel Messi equals Ronald Koeman's Barcelona free-kick record". ESPN FC. 11 January 2017. Retrieved 16 January 2017. ^ "Messi receives fourth Golden Shoe Award: Each day I enjoy it more". Marca. Spain. 24 November 2017. Retrieved 24 November 2017. ^ Power, Patrick (2 August 2017). "The astonishing stats behind the best attacking trio in the world". BeSoccer.com. Archived from the original on 1 October 2024. Retrieved 27 August 2024. ^ "Luis Enrique, nine titles in three seasons with FC Barcelona". FCBarcelona.com. 28 May 2017. Archived from the original on 28 August 2024. Retrieved 28 August 2024. ^ "Lionel Messi signs new deal through 2020/21 season". FC Barcelona. 25 November 2017. Retrieved 25 November 2017. ^ "Sevilla 0–5 Barcelona". BBC Sport. 21 April 2018. Retrieved 21 April 2018. ^ "Messi Wins Fifth Golden Shoe After Winning Pichichi Trophy". Goal. 20 May 2018. Retrieved 20 May 2018. ^ "Lionel Messi will be Barcelona's next captain". Sport. 25 April 2018. Archived from the original on 31 March 2019. Retrieved 9 August 2018. ^ Wilson, Joseph (27 April 2019). "Messi helps Barcelona clinch Spanish league title". The Washington Post. Archived from the original on 27 April 2019. Retrieved 27 April 2019. ^ "The best individual season of all time? – A look at Lionel Messi's 2018/19 season". Overlyzer. Retrieved 19 March 2022. ^ Wilson, Joseph (19 May 2019). "Messi hits 50 goals for Barca, Madrid ends season to forget". Associated Press. Archived from the original on 6 February 2023. Retrieved 22 May 2019. ^ a b "Messi wins his sixth Golden Shoe award". FC Barcelona. 24 May 2019. Retrieved 25 May 2019. ^ Magee, Will (2 December 2019). "Ballon d'Or: live updates from the ceremony as Lionel Messi and Virgil van Dijk compete for top award". The Telegraph. ISSN 0307-1235. Archived from the original on 10 January 2022. Retrieved 2 December 2019. ^ "Messi tells Barca he wants to leave, signaling end of era". AP NEWS. 25 August 2020. Retrieved 26 August 2020. ^ "Messi breaks silence on Barcelona exit saga: 'The president did not keep his word'". Goal. Retrieved 4 September 2020. ^ "Leo Messi surpasses Xavi Hernández record". FC Barcelona. 21 March 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi sets an utterly ridiculous record as he leads Barcelona to Copa Del Rey glory". Caught Offside. 17 April 2021. Retrieved 18 April 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi nets two, Barcelona beats Athletic Bilbao to win Copa del Rey". TSN. 17 April 2021. Retrieved 17 April 2021. ^ Nesci, Gianluca (19 July 2020). "Messi stands alone after winning Pichichi award for 7th time". The Score. Retrieved 21 July 2020. ^ "Messi: The Pichichi of Pichichis". Marca. Retrieved 31 December 2022. ^ Uría, Rubén (1 July 2021). "Messi officially becomes a free agent as superstar's Barcelona contract expires". Goal. Retrieved 1 July 2021. ^ "Lionel Messi: Barcelona forward agrees contract extension with 50 per cent pay cut". Sky Sports. United Kingdom. 14 July 2021. Archived from the original on 14 July 2021. Retrieved 14 July 2021. ^ "Leo Messi not staying at FC Barcelona". FC Barcelona. Retrieved 13 July 2022. ^ Thomas, Lyall; Solhekol, Kaveh (8 August 2021). "Lionel Messi 'shocked' and 'surprised' at Barcelona contract collapse". Sky Sports.

Sport (12 February 2021). "Adidas and Messi donate boots to Art Museum to be auctioned in April". Sport. Archived from the original on 12 February 2021. Retrieved 13 February 2021. ^ a b Uki, Goni (14 April 2021). "Lionel Messi helps obtain 50,000 Covid vaccines for South American players". The Guardian. Retrieved 16 April 2021. ^ a b "President Biden Announces Recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom". The White House. 4 January 2025. Retrieved 4 January 2025. ^ Deen, Safid (4 January 2025). "Lionel Messi unable to attend Presidential Medal of Freedom ceremony. Here's why". USA Today. Archived from the original on 6 January 2025. Retrieved 7 January 2025. ^ "The massive Messi mural and other artworks around the world". BBC. 29 June 2016. Retrieved 5 October 2024. ^ Cardenas, Felipe (14 February 2024). "Meeting Messi: How the Argentine superstar changed the lives of a restaurateur, barber and muralist". The Athletic. Retrieved 21 July 2023. ^ "Argentina tiene una réplica futbolera de la Capilla Sixtina". Voy de Viaje. Córdoba, Argentina. 3 May 2018. Archived from the original on 13 December 2021. Retrieved 6 July 2020. ^ "Lionel Messi's Madame Tussauds Waxwork Unveiled At Wembley". Huffington Post. Archived from the original on 12 July 2023. Retrieved 12 July 2023. ^ "Messi statue unveiled in Argentina amid pleas for his return". BBC. 15 December 2021. Retrieved 13 October 2024. ^ "Messi statue to stand next to Maradona, Pele at CONMEBOL museum". Reuters. 31 March 2023. Retrieved 5 October 2024. ^ Barker, Andrew (27 August 2014). "Venice Film Review: 'Messi'". Variety. Archived from the original on 14 December 2020. Retrieved 22 August 2015. ^ "Apple TV+ scores with documentary series featuring legendary football champion Lionel Messi and his FIFA World Cup career, culminating in his dramatic Qatar 2022 win". Apple.com. 6 June 2023. Archived from the original on 21 February 2024. Retrieved 21 February 2024. ^ a b Deen, Safid (4 June 2024). "Lionel Messi debuts new drink Mas+: How to get Messi's new drink online and in stores". USA Today. Retrieved 16 July 2024. ^ "The World's Greatest Soccer Star Lionel Messi Unveils His Next-Generation Hydration Drink to Canadians – Más+ by Messi – Created to Inspire Everyone to Feel Like a Champion in Every Part of Life". Yahoo! Finance. CNW Group. 17 July 2024. Retrieved 17 July 2024. ^ Broadbent, Jessica (14 June 2024). "Will Mas+ by Messi stand the test of time?". JustDrinks.com. Retrieved 16 July 2024. ^ Becherano, Lizzy (19 September 2024). "Lionel Messi launches production company named 525 Rosario". ESPN. ^ "Lionel Messi se sumó al proyecto deportivo de Luis Suárez y el club competirá en el fútbol uruguayo a nivel oficial". ESPN (in Spanish). 27 May 2025. Retrieved 30 May 2025. ^ "Deportivo LSM: las impactantes cifras en Instagram del equipo de Luis Suárez y Lionel Messi y el comunicado en el que destacaron el foco en la formación de futbolistas". El Observador (in Spanish). 28 May 2025. Retrieved 30 May 2025. ^ "Lionel Messi's wife explains her absence at World Cup opener that left him broken hearted". USAHint. 21 June 2018. Archived from the original on 1 July 2018. Retrieved 21 June 2018. ^ "Lionel Messi marries stunning childhood sweetheart Antonella Roccuzzo in Argentine home town". Irish Independent. July 2017. Archived from the original on 1 July 2017. Retrieved 1 July 2017. ^ "Argentina hosts Lionel Messi's 'wedding of the century'". BBC News. Archived from the original on 30 June 2017. Retrieved 1 July 2017. ^ Francombe, Amy (19 December 2022). "Antonela Roccuzzo – the first lady of Argentinean football". Evening Standard. Archived from the original on 19 December 2022. Retrieved 19 January 2022. ^ "Messi Shares Baby Joy". beIN Sports. 17 June 2012.[dead link] ^ "Messi Junior Named Thiago". ESPN FC. 2 November 2012. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 25 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi's Wife Expecting Second Child, Barcelona Star Says". ESPN FC. 30 April 2015. Archived from the original on 24 September 2015. Retrieved 25 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi and wife Antonella Roccuzzo expecting their third child". ESPN FC. 15 October 2017. Archived from the original on 27 March 2019. Retrieved 16 October 2017. ^ Lisi, Clemente (16 September 2020). "A Messi situation: Examining the faith of the world's greatest soccer player". Religion Unplugged. Archived from the original on 18 December 2022. Retrieved 18 December 2022. ^ Balagué 2013, pp. 31, 143, 570. ^ Wright, Chris (5 November 2012). "After Just 72 Hours on the Planet, Thiago Messi Signs for Newell's Old Boys". ESPN FC. Archived from the original on 26 January 2016. Retrieved 25 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi reaffirms desire to return to Newell's Old Boys before retirement". ESPN FC. 5 September 2016. Archived from the original on 20 May 2022. Retrieved 20 May 2022. ^ Montes, Silvia (4 May 2019). "Leo Messi, llamado a votar en las próximas elecciones italianas". Diario AS (in Spanish). Archived from the original on 20 August 2022. Retrieved 20 August 2022. ^ "Messi, father guilty of tax fraud, given suspended 21-month sentences". Sports Illustrated. 6 July 2016. Archived from the original on 7 July 2016. Retrieved 6 July 2016. ^ "Barcelona's Lionel Messi in tax court: I played football and trusted my father". ESPN FC. 2 June 2016. Archived from the original on 27 March 2019. Retrieved 18 December 2022. ^ Caioli 2012, pp. 69–71. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2003–04". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 30 June 2015. Retrieved 19 July 2015. ^ a b "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2004–05". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 30 June 2015. Retrieved 19 July 2015. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2005–06". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 30 June 2015. Retrieved 20 July 2015. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2006–07". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 30 June 2015. Retrieved 21 July 2015. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2007–08". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 30 June 2015. Retrieved 21 July 2015. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2008–09". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 9 December 2021. Retrieved 24 July 2015. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2009–10". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 18 March 2022. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2010–11". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 30 June 2015. Retrieved 27 July 2015. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2011–12". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 18 March 2022. Retrieved 30 July 2015. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2012–13". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 18 March 2022. Retrieved 9 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2013–14". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 10 August 2021. Retrieved 10 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2014–15". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 15 September 2018. Retrieved 11 August 2015. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2015–16". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 15 September 2018. Retrieved 6 September 2015. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2016–17". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 21 August 2023. Retrieved 27 October 2016. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2017–18". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 22 August 2023. Retrieved 27 August 2017. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2018–19". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 21 August 2023. Retrieved 27 August 2018. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2019–20". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 6 July 2021. Retrieved 17 September 2019. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2020–21". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 22 August 2023. Retrieved 9 October 2020. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2021–22". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 30 November 2021. Retrieved 18 August 2021. ^ "Lionel Andrés Messi Cuccittini: Matches 2022–23". BDFutbol. Archived from the original on 21 August 2023. Retrieved 31 July 2022. ^ Balagué 2013, pp. 220–240. ^ Balagué 2013, pp. 436–437. ^ Saaid, Hamdan (12 September 2008). "Games of the XXIX. Olympiad". Rec.Sport.Soccer Statistics Foundation. Retrieved 6 August 2024. ^ "La selección catalana pierde ante Argentina (0–1) en un partido marcado por la política". El Mundo (in Spanish). 24 May 2008. Archived from the original on 27 May 2008. ^ "Fiesta y equilibrio". Mundo Deportivo (in Spanish). 25 May 2008. p. 18. Archived from the original on 25 December 2022. ^ Hawkey, Ian (30 December 2013). "Catalonia and Basque Country reignite call for independent national football identities". The Daily Telegraph. Archived from the original on 28 December 2022. Retrieved 28 December 2022. ^ Mamrud, Roberto (26 August 2024). "Lionel Andrés Messi – Century of International Appearances". Rec.Sport.Soccer Statistics Foundation. Archived from the original on 24 September 2024. Retrieved 24 September 2024. ^ "Lionel Messi: Player Profile". ESPN FC. Archived from the original on 11 October 2018. Retrieved 9 September 2015. ^ Pettigrove, Jason (16 October 2019). "A Sixth Golden Shoe Sees Lionel Messi Stand Alone". Forbes. ISSN 0015-6914. Archived from the original on 19 October 2019. Retrieved 10 June 2024. ^ a b c Toby Davis; Ed Osmond, eds. (18 December 2022). "Argentina's Lionel Messi: World Cup goals, stats and career highlights". Reuters. Archived from the original on 5 February 2023. Retrieved 5 February 2023. ^ a b Otero, Paul M. (12 November 2013). "Palmarés de un Genio: El Coleccionista de Trofeos" [Honours of a Genius: The Collector of Trophies]. Marca (in Spanish). Spain. Archived from the original on 28 March 2019. Retrieved 13 September 2015. ^ "Messi, Mejor Delantero y Mejor Jugador" [Messi, Best Forward and Best Player] (in Spanish). Liga de Fútbol Profesional. 2 December 2013. Archived from the original on 8 December 2015. Retrieved 13 September 2015. ^ "Lionel Messi, 2014–15 Liga BBVA Best Player". Liga de Fútbol Profesional. 30 November 2015. Archived from the original on 22 March 2019. Retrieved 8 January 2016. ^ "Lionel Messi Beats Cristiano Ronaldo To La Liga Best Player Award". soccerladuma. 19 December 2017. Archived from the original on 23 September 2023. Retrieved 19 December 2017. ^ "Leo Messi reçoit le Pichichi et MVP de la Liga 2017–18". FC Barcelona. 12 November 2018. Archived from the original on 23 September 2023. Retrieved 12 November 2018. ^ "Lionel Messi wins La Liga best player award for 2018–19 season". barcablaugranes.com. 17 December 2019. Archived from the original on 23 September 2023. Retrieved 17 December 2019. ^ Pla Diaz, Emilio (17 January 2024). "Spain - Footballer of the Year". Rec.Sport.Soccer Statistics Foundation. Archived from the original on 12 November 2024. Retrieved 7 December 2024. ^ "Laureus Sport Awards: Lionel Messi & Argentina World Cup team win Laureus awards". BBC Sport. 8 May 2023. Archived from the original on 9 May 2023. Retrieved 9 May 2023. ^ Crépin, Timothé (14 December 2020). "Ballon d'Or Dream Team : Découvrez les révélations de ce onze de légende !" (in French). France Football. Archived from the original on 14 December 2020. Retrieved 14 December 2020. ^ "Lionel Messi: World 11 through the years". FIFPRO. 15 January 2024. Archived from the original on 15 January 2024. Retrieved 10 March 2024. ^ "In focus: All Messi's FIFA FIFPRO World 11 inclusions". FIFA. 15 January 2024. Archived from the original on 17 June 2024. Retrieved 17 June 2024. ^ "Por segunda vez en la historia, el Olimpia de Oro fue compartido: Lionel Messi y Belén Casetta fueron galardonados por su 2023". Clarín (in Spanish). 20 December 2023. Archived from the original on 8 January 2024. Retrieved 8 January 2024. ^ "Belén Casetta compartió el Olimpia de Oro con Lionel Messi" (in Spanish). ESPN Deportes. 20 December 2023. Archived from the original on 20 December 2023. Retrieved 21 December 2023. ^ Tort, Àlex (30 April 2019). "La Generalitat otorga la Creu de Sant Jordi a Messi" (in Spanish). La Vanguardia. Retrieved 5 January 2025. ^ "Magic Johnson, Lionel Messi get Presidential Medal of Freedom". ESPN. 4 January 2025. Retrieved 4 January 2025. Bibliography Balagué, Guillem (2013). Messi. Orion Books. ISBN 978-1-4091-4659-9. Caioli, Luca (2012). Messi: The Inside Story of the Boy Who Became a Legend. Corinthian Books. ISBN 978-1-906850-40-1. Caioli, Luca (2015). Messi: More than a Superstar. Icon Books. ISBN 978-1-906850-91-3. Guinness World Records 2015. Guinness World Records. 2014. ISBN 978-1-908843-65-4. Hunter, Graham (2012). Barça: The Making of the Greatest Team in the World. BackPage Press. ISBN 978-0-9564971-8-5. Lisi, Clemente Angelo (2011). A History of the World Cup: 1930–2010. Scarecrow Press. ISBN 978-0-8108-7754-2. Tomkins, Paul (2007). Above Us Only Sky: Liverpool FC's Global Revolution. Anchor Print Group. ISBN 978-0-9556367-0-7. Lionel Messi at Wikipedia's sister projects Media from CommonsNews from WikinewsQuotations from WikiquoteData from Wikidata Official website Profile at Inter Miami Profile at PSG Profile at FC Barcelona Profile at La Liga Profile at Ligue 1 Profile at MLS Lionel Messi at BDFutbol Lionel Messi at Soccerbase Lionel Messi at Soccerway Lionel Messi at National-Football-Teams.com Lionel Messi – FIFA competition record (archived) Lionel Messi – UEFA competition record (archive) Sporting positions Preceded byAndrés Iniesta FC Barcelona captain 2018–2021 Succeeded bySergio Busquets Retrieved from " Want to give your brand videos a cinematic edge? Join our visual experts and special guests for an info-packed hour of insights to elevate your next video project. Tune in on June 24 at 11am ET.Register NowEnjoy sharper detail, more accurate color, lifelike lighting, believable backgrounds, and more with our new model update. Your generated images will be more polished than ever.See What's NewExplore how consumers want to see climate stories told today, and what that means for your visuals.Download Our Latest VisualGPS ReportWant to give your brand videos a cinematic edge? Join our visual experts and special guests for an info-packed hour of insights to elevate your next video project. Tune in on June 24 at 11am ET.Register NowEnjoy sharper detail, more accurate color, lifelike lighting, believable backgrounds, and more with our new model update. Your generated images will be more polished than ever.See What's NewExplore how consumers want to see climate stories told today, and what that means for your visuals.Download Our Latest VisualGPS ReportWant to give your brand videos a cinematic edge? Join our visual experts and special guests for an info-packed hour of insights to elevate your next video project. Tune in on June 24 at 11am ET.Register NowEnjoy sharper detail, more accurate color, lifelike lighting, believable backgrounds, and more with our new model update. Your generated images will be more polished than ever.See What's NewExplore how consumers want to see climate stories told today, and what that means for your visuals.Download Our Latest VisualGPS Report