

Biography



Name:	Mo Farah
Date of birth:	23 March 1983
Place of birth:	Mogadishu Somalia
Famous for:	Won gold medals in both 5,000-meter and 10,00-meter races at both 2012 London Olympics and the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics.

According to initial accounts of his childhood, he and his twin brother, Hassan Farah, were born in Mogadishu, Somalia. They were among the six children born to Muktar Farah, who was a U.K. citizen, and his Somali wife. Violent conflict in Somalia drove the Farah family from their home in Mogadishu, and, when the twins were eight, Mo Farah was sent to join his father in London. However, in a 2022 documentary, Farah stated that these claims are largely fiction. In actuality his birth name is Hussein Abdi Kahin; he was born in present-day Somaliland, a self-declared republic; and his father, who had never been to England, was killed when the boy was just four years old. Because of the unrest in Somalia, at about age eight or nine he was sent to live with an uncle in Djibouti. Once there, unbeknownst to his mother, an unknown relative. She also changed his name to Mohamed Farah. After arriving in England, however, he was forced to work as a servant. At about the age of 12 he began attending school. An exceptional athlete, he eventually confided in his sports teacher about his living situation. Farah was removed from home and placed with a Somali family. Although Farah had dreams of becoming an association football [soccer] player, he was steered toward running by his sports teacher, who drove him to club training sessions and who later served as best man when Farah married in 2010. Farah finished ninth in his first English schools cross-country champions in 1996 but the next year he won the race, taking the first of five school titles. He was supported in his early career by a number of major figures, including women's marathoner Paula Radcliffe, who paid for his driving lessons, and philanthropist Sir Eddie Kulukundis, who covered the legal fees for his naturalization as a British citizen. It was about his time that Farah reestablished contact with his mother.

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