

Kamala Harris



Kamala Devi Harris is a **politician** and an **attorney**. She might be the **vice-president** of the United States of America and could make history by being the first woman, the first Black person and the first South Asian-American person to be the US vice-president.

Childhood

Kamala was born on 20th October 1964 in Oakland, California. Kamala's mother, Shyamala, had moved to the USA from India so that she could continue to study science at university. Kamala's father, Donald, moved to the USA from Jamaica and he is a university **economics** professor. Shyamala and Donald divorced when Kamala was seven years old.

Kamala has a younger sister called Maya; the pair did lots of things together when they were young, including singing in a children's choir and travelling around the world to see their family.

Education

When Kamala was 12 years old, she moved to Canada with her mother and her sister so that Shyamala could begin working at the Jewish General Hospital. This meant that Kamala and Maya attended a French-speaking primary school: Notre-Dame-des-Neiges. After this, they attended Westmount High School, where they spoke English.

After graduating from Westmount High School in 1981, Kamala moved back to the USA; she attended Howard University in Washington DC until 1986, where she studied political science and economics. After that, Kamala returned to California to attend law school at the University of California. In 1989, Kamala was awarded her Juris Doctor, which is a professional degree that is needed if someone wants to practise law.

After graduating with her Juris Doctor, Kamala's first job was as a deputy district attorney. This meant that she was responsible for making sure that the law was applied fairly if someone had committed a crime.

In 2010, Kamala was elected as California's Attorney General. This meant that she was the main person in charge of making sure that the laws of California were upheld. She was the first woman, the first Black person and the first South Asian person to have this job. After this, Kamala became a member of the US Senate. In this role, Kamala worked hard to promote equality for all people.

Becoming Vice-President

In 2019, Kamala supported Joe Biden in his campaign to become president of the USA after reluctantly recognising that she did not have the money to fund her own successful campaign.

In 2020, Joe Biden announced that he had chosen Kamala to be his 'running mate'. This meant that Kamala would become vice-president if Joe was elected as president. Joe Biden is currently the projected winner of the presidential election. Any vote count disputes should be resolved by 8th December 2020 and the president-elect and vice-president-elect will be sworn into office on 20th January 2021.

Glossary

attorney:	A lawyer who works in court to help people who are on trial.
economics:	The study of how people choose to spend their money on goods and services.
politician:	A person whose job it is to be involved in governing an area or a country.
vice-president:	The person who is second in command after the president.

Questions

1. Where was Kamala born? Tick one.

- India
- California
- Jamaica
- Canada

2. In which year was Kamala awarded her Juris Doctor? Tick one.

- 1964
- 1981
- 1989
- 2008

3. Find and copy the **two** languages that Kamala would have needed to speak while living in Canada.

- _____
- _____

4. What did Kamala study at Howard University?

5. Look at the section called **Career**.

Find and copy one word which means 'chosen by votes'.

6. Explain why Kamala might become vice-president rather than the president of the USA.

7. Using information from the text, summarise Kamala's childhood in 30 words or fewer.

8. Predict what you think Kamala will do over the next ten years.
