David Beckham

David Beckham is one of the most iconic athletes and decorated soccer players of all time. Beckham has played for Manchester United, England, Real Madrid and the L.A. Galaxy. He is married to Victoria Beckham, also known as Posh from the Spice Girls.

Soccer star David Beckham was born on May 2, 1975, in London, England. A phenom almost from the moment he could first kick a soccer ball, Beckham began playing for Manchester United, England's legendary soccer team, at age 18, and was a starter by age 20. In 2007, he signed a five-year, $250 million contract with the L.A. Galaxy. In May 2013, he announced plans to retire.

Born on May 2, 1975, in Leytonstone, London, England, to parents Ted Beckham, an appliance repairman, and his wife Sandra, a hair stylist, David Beckham was the family's only son. A middle child between two sisters, Beckham grew up with parents and siblings who were committed fans of Manchester United, England's legendary soccer franchise. At an early age, Beckham showed his own promise as a footballer, winning the coveted Bobby Charlton Soccer Schools National Skills competition at 11 years old. His talent soon caught the notice of Manchester United team officials, who asked him to try out for the club's youth league. By the age of 16, Beckham had left home and was playing for United's training division. Two years later he made the club, and by 1995, he was a full-time starter.

Beckham wasted little time in making a splash on the English soccer landscape. The talented goal scorer was named the Professional Footballers' Association Young Player of the Year in 1997. A year later, he was one of the leading faces of England's World Cup team.

His bravado and good looks offered up plenty of off-field potential, too. In 1998, Beckham, who'd already signed a deal with Adidas, netted $13 million in endorsement deals. The Beckham brand only enhanced in value when he met Victoria Adams, also known as "Posh Spice" of the Spice Girls, in 1997. The two quickly fell in love, and on March 4, 1999, they had their first child, a son they named Brooklyn Joseph. Two months later, Beckham and Victoria tied the knot at a lavish $800,000 wedding at a castle outside of Dublin, Ireland.

On the field, Beckham didn't miss a beat. In 1999, he led Manchester United to the Premier League title, the FA Cup championship, and the Champions League title. Thanks to a last-minute free kick against Greece in 2001, England qualified for the 2002 World Cup. That same year, Beckham signed a three-year $22 million contract to remain with Manchester United.

But Beckham's time with United proved to be shorter than anyone thought. In 2003, he was acquired by Real Madrid in a stunner of a deal that brought to light Beckham's growing rift with Manchester's manager, Sir Alex Ferguson. Spanish soccer fans were thrilled to have their archrival join their team. Americans, meanwhile, were just getting to know him with the release of the movie, Bend it Like Beckham, a delightful movie that tells the story of a young girl who bucks her family's traditional ways, and falls in love with English soccer.