***Prince Diana***

***Early life***

***Diana Frances Spencer was born on 1 July 1961 at***[***Park House***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandringham_House#Park_House)***, Sandringham, Norfolk.***[***[2]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEMorton199770-2)***She was the fourth of five children of***[***John Spencer, Viscount Althorp***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Spencer,_8th_Earl_Spencer)***(1924–1992), and***[***Frances Spencer, Viscountess Althorp***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frances_Spencer,_Viscountess_Althorp)***(***[***née***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/N%C3%A9e)[***Roche***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baron_Fermoy)***; 1936–2004).***[***[3]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEMorton199770%E2%80%9371-3)***The***[***Spencer family***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spencer_family)***had been closely allied with the***[***British royal family***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_royal_family)***for several generations;***[***[4]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBrown200732%E2%80%9333-4)***her grandmothers,***[***Cynthia Spencer, Countess Spencer***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cynthia_Spencer,_Countess_Spencer)***, and***[***Ruth Roche, Baroness Fermoy***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ruth_Roche,_Baroness_Fermoy)***, had served as***[***ladies-in-waiting***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ladies-in-waiting)***to***[***Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen_Elizabeth_The_Queen_Mother)***.***[***[5]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBradford20062-5)***Her parents were hoping for a boy to carry on the family line, and no name was chosen for a week until they settled on Diana Frances after her mother and***[***Lady Diana Spencer***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana_Russell,_Duchess_of_Bedford)***, a many-times-great-aunt who was also a prospective Princess of Wales.***[***[6]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEMorton199771-6)***Within the family, she was also known informally as "Duch", a reference to her duchess-like attitude in childhood.***[***[7]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-7)

***On 30 August 1961,***[***[8]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-Time-Christening-8)***Diana was baptised at***[***St. Mary Magdalene Church, Sandringham***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Mary_Magdalene_Church,_Sandringham)***.***[***[6]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEMorton199771-6)***She grew up with three siblings:***[***Sarah***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lady_Sarah_McCorquodale)***,***[***Jane***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Fellowes,_Baroness_Fellowes)***, and***[***Charles***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Spencer,_9th_Earl_Spencer)***.***[***[9]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBrown200737%E2%80%9338-9)***Her infant brother, John, died shortly after his birth one year before Diana was born.***[***[10]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBrown200737-10)***The desire for an heir added strain to her parents' marriage, and Lady Althorp was sent to***[***Harley Street***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harley_Street)***clinics in London to determine the cause of the "problem".***[***[6]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEMorton199771-6)***The experience was described as "humiliating" by Diana's younger brother, Charles: "It was a dreadful time for my parents and probably the root of their divorce because I don't think they ever got over it."***[***[6]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEMorton199771-6)***Diana grew up in Park House, situated on the [Sandringham estate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandringham_estate" \o "Sandringham estate).***[***[11]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBrown200741-11)***The family leased the house from its owner,***[***Queen Elizabeth II***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen_Elizabeth_II)***, whom Diana called "Aunt Lilibet" since childhood.***[***[12]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-12)***The royal family frequently holidayed at the neighbouring Sandringham House, and Diana played with the Queen's sons***[***Prince Andrew***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prince_Andrew)***and***[***Prince Edward***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prince_Edward,_Earl_of_Wessex)***.***[***[13]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBradford20062,_20-13)

***Diana was seven years old when her parents divorced.***[***[14]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBrown200742-14)***Her mother later began a relationship with***[***Peter Shand Kydd***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Shand_Kydd)***and married him in 1969.***[***[15]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBradford200640,_42-15)***Diana lived with her mother in London during her parents' separation in 1967, but during that year's Christmas holidays, Lord Althorp refused to let his daughter return to London with Lady Althorp. Shortly afterwards, he won custody of Diana with support from his former mother-in-law, Lady Fermoy.***[***[16]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBrown200740%E2%80%9341-16)***In 1976, Lord Althorp married***[***Raine, Countess of Dartmouth***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raine,_Countess_of_Dartmouth)***.***[***[17]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBradford200634-17)***Diana's relationship with her stepmother was particularly bad.***[***[18]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-Morton-Raine-18)***She resented Raine, whom she called a "bully". On one occasion Diana pushed her down the stairs.***[***[18]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-Morton-Raine-18)***She later described her childhood as "very unhappy" and "very unstable, the whole thing".***[***[19]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-19)***She became known as Lady Diana after her father later inherited the title of***[***Earl Spencer***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Earl_Spencer_(peerage))***in 1975, at which point her father moved the entire family from Park House to***[***Althorp***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Althorp)***, the Spencer seat in***[***Northamptonshire***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northamptonshire)***.***[***[20]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBradford200629-20)

***Marriage***

***Diana first met the Prince of Wales (later***[***Charles III***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_III)***),***[***Elizabeth II***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_II)***'s eldest son and***[***heir apparent***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heir_apparent)***, when she was 16 in November 1977. He was then 29 and dating her older sister, Sarah.***[***[36]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBradford200640-36)[***[37]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-37)***Charles and Diana were guests at a country weekend during the summer of 1980 and he took a serious interest in her as a potential bride.***[***[38]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-38)***The relationship progressed when he invited her aboard the royal yacht***[***Britannia***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMY_Britannia)***for a sailing weekend to [Cowes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cowes" \o "Cowes). This was followed by an invitation to***[***Balmoral Castle***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Balmoral_Castle)***(the royal family's Scottish residence) to meet his family.***[***[39]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-age17nov-39)[***[40]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEDimbleby1994279-40)***She was well received by the Queen, the Queen Mother and the***[***Duke of Edinburgh***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prince_Philip,_Duke_of_Edinburgh)***. Charles subsequently courted Diana in London. He proposed on 6 February 1981 at***[***Windsor Castle***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windsor_Castle)***, and she accepted, but their engagement was kept secret for two and a half weeks.***[***[35]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEMorton1997118-35)

***.***[***[48]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-48)

***Children***

***The couple had residences at***[***Kensington Palace***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kensington_Palace)***and***[***Highgrove House***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Highgrove_House)***, near***[***Tetbury***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tetbury)***. On 5 November 1981, Diana's pregnancy was announced.***[***[49]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBrown2007195-49)***In January 1982–12 weeks into the pregnancy—Diana fell down a staircase at Sandringham, suffering some bruising, and the royal [gynaecologist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gynaecologist" \o "Gynaecologist)***[***Sir George Pinker***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Pinker)***was summoned from London; the [foetus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foetus" \o "Foetus) was uninjured.***[***[50]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-TelgPinker-50)***Diana later confessed that she had intentionally thrown herself down the stairs because she was feeling "so inadequate".***[***[51]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-51)***On 21 June 1982, Diana gave birth to the couple's first son,***[***Prince William***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prince_William)***.***[***[52]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-52)***She subsequently suffered from***[***postpartum depression***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postpartum_depression)***after her first pregnancy.***[***[53]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-53)***Amidst some media criticism, she decided to take William—who was still a baby—on her first major tours of Australia and New Zealand, and the decision was popularly applauded. By her own admission, Diana had not initially intended to take William until***[***Malcolm Fraser***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malcolm_Fraser)***, the***[***Australian prime minister***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_prime_minister)***, made the suggestion.***[***[54]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEMorton1997142%E2%80%93143-54)

***A second son,***[***Harry***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prince_Harry,_Duke_of_Sussex)***, was born on 15 September 1984.***[***[55]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEMorton1997147-55)***Diana said she and Charles were closest during her pregnancy with Harry.***[***[56]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-BBC-Hewitt-56)***She was aware their second child was a boy, but did not share the knowledge with anyone else, including Charles as he was hoping for a girl.***[***[57]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-57)

***Diana gave her sons wider experiences than was usual for royal children.***[***[21]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-robinson-21)[***[58]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-58)[***[59]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-59)***She rarely deferred to Charles or to the royal family, and was often intransigent when it came to the children. She chose their first given names, dismissed a royal family nanny and engaged one of her own choosing, selected their schools and clothing, planned their outings, and took them to school herself as often as her schedule permitted. She also organised her public duties around their timetables.***[***[60]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEMorton1997184-60)***Diana was reported to have described Harry as "naughty, just like me", and William as "my little wise old***

***Divorce***

***[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Diana,_Princess_of_Wales.jpg)***

***The Princess of Wales in Russia, 1995***

***Journalist***[***Martin Bashir***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Bashir)[***interviewed Diana***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/An_Interview_with_HRH_The_Princess_of_Wales)***for the BBC current affairs show***[***Panorama***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panorama_(British_TV_programme))***. The interview was broadcast on 20 November 1995.***[***[114]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-Panorama-114)***Diana discussed her own and her husband's extramarital affairs.***[***[115]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-115)***Referring to Charles's relationship with Camilla, she said: "Well, there were three of us in this marriage, so it was a bit crowded." She also expressed doubt about her husband's suitability for kingship.***[***[114]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-Panorama-114)***Authors***[***Tina Brown***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tina_Brown)***,***[***Sally Bedell Smith***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sally_Bedell_Smith)***, and***[***Sarah Bradford***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarah_Bradford)***support Diana's admission in the interview that she had suffered from***[***depression***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Major_depressive_disorder)***,***[***"rampant bulimia"***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bulimia_nervosa)***and had engaged numerous times in the act of [self mutilation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Self_mutilation" \o "Self mutilation); the show's transcript records Diana confirming many of her mental health problems, including that she had "hurt [her] arms and legs".***[***[114]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-Panorama-114)***The combination of illnesses from which Diana herself said she suffered resulted in some of her biographers opining that she had***[***borderline personality disorder***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Borderline_personality_disorder)***.***[***[116]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-116)[***[117]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-NYT-Critics-117)***It was later revealed that Bashir had used***[***forged***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forgery)***bank statements to win Diana and her brother's trust to secure the interview, falsely indicating people close to her had been paid for spying.***[***[118]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-118)

***The interview proved to be the tipping point. On 20 December, Buckingham Palace announced that the Queen had sent letters to Charles and Diana, advising them to divorce.***[***[119]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-lat1995mon-119)[***[120]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-ap23july-120)***The Queen's move was backed by the Prime Minister and by senior***[***Privy Counsellors***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Privy_Council_of_the_United_Kingdom)***, and, according to the BBC, was decided after two weeks of talks.***[***[121]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-121)***Charles formally agreed to the divorce in a written statement soon after.***[***[119]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-lat1995mon-119)***In February 1996, Diana announced her agreement after negotiations with Charles and representatives of the Queen,***[***[122]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-122)***irritating Buckingham Palace by issuing her own announcement of the divorce agreement and its terms. In July 1996, the couple agreed on the terms of their divorce.***[***[123]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-NYT-Divorce-123)***This followed shortly after Diana's accusation that Charles's personal assistant Tiggy Legge-Bourke had aborted his child, after which Legge-Bourke instructed her solicitor***[***Peter Carter-Ruck***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Carter-Ruck)***to demand an apology.***[***[124]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-Time-Bio-124)[***[125]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-Charles-Spencer-125)***Diana's private secretary***[***Patrick Jephson***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patrick_Jephson)***resigned shortly before the story broke, later writing that she had "exulted in accusing Legge-Bourke of having had an abortion".***[***[126]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-jephson1-126)[***[127]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-127)***The rumours of Legge-Bourke's alleged abortion were apparently spread by Martin Bashir as a means to gain his Panorama interview with Diana.***[***[128]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-128)

***The***[***decree nisi***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Decree_nisi)***was granted on 15 July 1996 and the divorce was finalised on 28 August 1996.***[***[129]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-129)[***[130]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-timeline-130)***Diana was represented by***[***Anthony Julius***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anthony_Julius)***in the case.***[***[131]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-131)***The couple shared custody of their children.***[***[132]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-132)***She received a lump sum settlement of £17 million (equivalent to £34 million in 2021) as well as £400,000 per year. The couple signed a confidentiality agreement that prohibited them from discussing the details of the divorce or of their married life.***[***[133]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBradford2006306-133)[***[123]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-NYT-Divorce-123)***Days before,***[***letters patent***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Letters_patent)***were issued with general rules to regulate royal titles after divorce. Diana lost the style "***[***Her Royal Highness***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Her_Royal_Highness)***" and instead was styled Diana, Princess of Wales. As the mother of the prince expected to one day ascend to the throne, she continued to be regarded as a member of the royal family and was accorded the same precedence she enjoyed during her marriage.***[***[134]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-RoyalMembership-134)***The Queen reportedly wanted to let Diana continue to use the style of Royal Highness after her divorce, but Charles had insisted on removing it.***[***[123]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-NYT-Divorce-123)***Prince William was reported to have reassured his mother: "Don't worry, Mummy, I will give it back to you one day when I am King."***[***[135]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-135)***Almost a year before, according to***[***Tina Brown***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tina_Brown)***, Prince Philip had warned Diana: "If you don't behave, my girl, we'll take your title away." She is said to have replied: "My title is a lot older than yours, Philip."***[***[136]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-FOOTNOTEBrown2007392-136)

***Death***

***Main article:***[***Death of Diana, Princess of Wales***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Death_of_Diana,_Princess_of_Wales)

***[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Alma_tunnel_Paris.jpg)***

***East entrance to the***[***Pont de l'Alma***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pont_de_l%27Alma)***tunnel***[***[287]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-287)

***On 31 August 1997, Diana died in a car crash in the***[***Pont de l'Alma***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pont_de_l%27Alma)***tunnel in Paris while the driver was fleeing the***[***paparazzi***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paparazzi)***.***[***[288]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-288)***The crash also resulted in the deaths of her companion***[***Dodi Fayed***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dodi_Fayed)***and the driver,***[***Henri Paul***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henri_Paul)***, who was the acting security manager of the***[***Hôtel Ritz Paris***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/H%C3%B4tel_Ritz_Paris)***.***[***Trevor Rees-Jones***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trevor_Rees-Jones_(bodyguard))***, who was employed as a bodyguard by Dodi's father,***[***[289]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-289)***survived the crash, suffering a serious head injury. The televised funeral, on 6 September, was watched by a British television audience that peaked at 32.10 million, which was one of the United Kingdom's***[***highest viewing figures ever***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_most_watched_television_broadcasts_in_the_United_Kingdom#Most_watched_special_events)***. Millions more watched the event around the world.***[***[290]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-290)[***[291]***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,_Princess_of_Wales#cite_note-291)

***https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diana,\_Princess\_of\_Wales***