

How Warren Buffett became the world's richest investor

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The Oracle of Omaha had an approach that didn't make him very popular with his fellow billionaires. Because in the end Warren Buffett decided to give away over 99% of his wealth to charity, and as it stands he's already given away well over \$25 billion dollars with plans to increase that to over \$100 billion.



But how did an odd boy growing up in the corn and cattle country of Omaha, Nebraska, become one of the richest men in the world? The answer is surprisingly simple as you'll see in the HBO documentary, *Becoming Warren Buffett*. [Watch it now »](#)

The documentary goes into detail about what type of person Warren Buffett is, and how the characteristics he developed as a child shaped him for success. You'll also get a unique insight into Buffett as a husband and father directly from his immediate family.

Young Buffett

Warren Buffett was highly competitive and inquisitive as a child. And unlike most kids, he really enjoyed working with

numbers and reading. A lot!

Buffett's idea of a good time as a kid would be to invite his mates around and bet on which marble would reach the drainpipe first when dropped into a bathtub.



Buffett's bathtub and marble fixation. Image: HBO

He also has a clear memory of his grandmother giving him a copy of the *World Almanac of Facts* and he's still able to tell you that Omaha's population was 214,006 in 1930, the year he was born.

Buffett also had a rebellious streak in him, and as a teenager he took pleasure in tormenting his teachers. "At the time AT&T was the stock that all teachers owned for their retirement. And I decided it would drive my teachers a little crazy if I went and short the stock... So I shorted AT&T and brought the confirmation letter to school to show the teachers. They found me a pain in the neck, but they did think I knew a lot about stocks."

Buffet was 13 years old when he did this.

Between two billionaires

The documentary shows you how close Warren Buffett and Bill Gates became, and explains why Buffett entrusted his entire fortune to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.



Bill Gates and Warren Buffett dressing up. Image: HBO

“Bill’s dad asked each of us to write down on a piece of paper one word that would best describe what helped us the most. Bill and I without any collaboration at all both wrote down the word ‘focus’.”

This was a major characteristic of Buffett’s success. When he was interested in something he would lock onto it with eagle-eye focus and read up on new subjects for up to six hours a day. This hunger to always be learning (and teaching) is something that truly defines Warren Buffett.

The hard knocks

It wasn’t always smooth sailing for the billionaire. In the documentary you’ll hear from Buffett’s family about his tendency to isolate himself, and how he has mostly lived a solitary life.

“He was a genius. But I think that a genius is by default lonely and isolated,” says his first wife, Susan Buffet.

“He’s a loner in a sense and it’s difficult to connect with him on an emotional level because that’s not his basic mode of operation. He was there physically, but he was upstairs reading all the time,” says his son, Howard.

There have also been times when Warren Buffett’s reputation have been on the line, and it could’ve ended him. One acquisition in particular, Salomon Brothers Inc, almost brought Buffett to his knees. You’ll see why in the documentary, but it can take 20 years to build a good reputation, and minutes to destroy it.

Becoming Warren Buffett puts you on the inside track of the Omaha Oracle’s life. He’ll go down as the greatest investor to ever live, and probably the most generous philanthropist on the planet.

Focus, determination and the insatiable hunger to keep learning are major factors that contributed to Buffett’s success. It’s hard to pinpoint exactly which characteristic contributed the most, but once you’ve watched the documentary you’ll walk away with a sense that there is more to be done, and more to achieve.

[Watch *Becoming Warren Buffett* on Showmax right now.](#)

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