

Bill Gates' Net Worth Eclipses \$100 Billion

Bill Gates' net worth surpassed \$100 billion last week as Microsoft shares ticked up prior to the company's earnings announcement on April 24. He remains the second richest person in the world.

Gates trails only Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, who is worth an estimated \$153.2 billion, according to *Forbes'* real-time [rankings](#) of the world's billionaires. Bezos will soon give a slice of that fortune away. He and his wife, MacKenzie, are in the process of finalizing their divorce. The couple announced in early April that she will receive a quarter of his Amazon stake, currently valued at more than \$35 billion.

Gates made his fortune through Microsoft, the computer company he cofounded in 1975 with Paul Allen. (Allen [died in](#) October 2018.) He now holds a diversified fortune; less than 12.5% of his net worth comes from Microsoft shares. The majority of his assets are held in his investment firm, Cascade, including a stake in Berkshire Hathaway, the conglomerate founded by Gates' friend Warren Buffett.

An uptick in Microsoft's share price this week, combined with solid performance from Gates' other investments, was enough to send his net worth above \$100 billion on April 16.

In 2010 Gates and Buffett cofounded the Giving Pledge, an initiative that works to persuade high-net-worth individuals to give at least half of their assets to charity either during their lives or after they die. To date nearly 200 people have signed on, such as Elon Musk and Airbnb cofounder Brian Chesky.

Gates has already gifted over \$35 billion to charity, largely to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation—the world's largest private philanthropy—which he chairs with his wife, Melinda. The foundation focuses on public health and is perhaps best known for its efforts alongside Rotary International to eradicate polio.

Gates has held a 12-figure fortune before. In April 1999, at the peak of the dot-com bubble, his net worth briefly surpassed \$100 billion, or roughly \$150 billion in today's dollars when adjusted for inflation.

A native of Seattle, Gates was a precocious child. He spent so much time reading that his parents forbade him from bringing books to the dinner table. Later, as a high school senior, he took time away from classes to code with his friend Paul Allen at a power plant in North Bonneville, Washington.

Soon after, Gates dropped out of Harvard and partnered with Allen to launch Microsoft out of a garage in Albuquerque, New Mexico. By the end of the 1980s it was the largest PC

software company in the world.

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