

11 Surprising Facts about William Shatner

He's Canadian

Though his iconic character, Captain Kirk, was an all-American kind of guy, Shatner is actually Canadian. He was born in Montreal in 1931.

He's Jewish

Shatner's grandparents were all Jewish people who immigrated to Canada from European countries such as Poland and Hungary. In addition to being raised in this religious tradition, young Shatner worked as a camp counselor at a Jewish summer camp in Canada.



He's a Prolific Husband

Shatner has been married a whopping four times. His third wife died in a drowning accident at their California home in 1999, an autopsy detected alcohol and Valium in her system and Shatner became a major advocate of 'Friendly House' a non-profit helping women recovering from alcoholism. He married his fourth wife, Elizabeth Martin, in 2001.

Hearing Problems

In a 1967 episode of 'Star Trek,' Shatner and his costar Leonard Nimoy suffered hearing damage as the result of a botched special effects explosion. Both actors reported having tinnitus, or persistent ringing in their ears, thereafter.

Horse Sense

Shatner has a demonstrated interest in horses and is active in the California horse show circuit. He used his riding talents in one of his later 'Star Trek' movie appearances, riding in a scene in 'Star Trek: Generations' alongside Patrick Stewart.



Doberman Dude

In addition to his love for horses, Shatner is a big fan of the Doberman pinscher dog breed. He's owned Dobermans for decades, and at one point, he even had one named Kirk after his famous 'Star Trek' character.

Sci-Fi Renaissance Man

In addition to starring in one of the most popular sci-fi franchises of all time, Shatner is also a published sci-fi author. He created the TekWar series of books, which were ghostwritten by a man named Ron Goulart in the 80s and 90s. The series spawned a TV show and video game.

A Very Long Career

After making his official screen acting debut with a small role in 1951's 'The Butler's Night Off,' Shatner has been working steadily. His IMDB lists more than 200 acting credits as of September 2015.

A Very Interesting Career

Though 'Star Trek' is the dominating force of Shatner's career, he's made some interesting choices in his decades as a working actor. In 1966, he appeared in a film, 'Incubus,' that had dialogue spoken entirely in the constructed language Esperanto.

Strong Personality

Shatner's personality can be strong and more than a bit abrasive, with 'Star Trek' costars such as George Takei openly expressing their dislike for the man. For his own part, Shatner has described himself as being perfect and seems to have the self-confidence to back up that belief.

A True Canadian

Though Shatner now resides in the United States, he's still a proud Canadian. He was part of that country's Olympic closing ceremonies in 2010, appearing solo in the center of a giant Canadian flag.

