

Tony Parker



CHRIS ELISE

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Tony Parker was born on 7th of May 1982. The son of a professional basketball player, Parker played for two years in the French basketball league before entering the 2001 NBA Draft. He was selected by the San Antonio Spurs with the 28th overall pick in the draft and quickly became their starting point guard, helping the Spurs win four NBA championships in 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2014. Employing his pace and high field goal percentage to great effect, Parker has been named to six NBA All-Star games, three All-NBA Second Teams, and an All-NBA Third Team. He was also the 2007 NBA Finals MVP.



At first, Parker was more interested in soccer, but after watching the evolution of Michael Jordan into a global basketball superstar, he changed his mind. Moreover, Parker's two younger brothers were also heavily involved in basketball, T.J. and Pierre would go on to play basketball at college and professional levels. As Parker built his skill, his lack of size decided his position on-court. He played the point guard position recognizing that his speed and agility made this position ideal for him. He was eventually talent-spotted and asked to attend the INSEP in Paris. After playing in the French amateur leagues for two seasons, Parker turned professional and signed with Paris Basket Racing in 1999.



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Parker played for France's Junior National Teams at the 1997 FIBA Europe Under-16 Championship, both the 1998 and 2000 FIBA Europe Under-18 Championships, and the 2002 FIBA Europe Under-20 Championship. He was elected the Most Valuable Player of the 2000 FIBA Europe Under-18 Championship, when France captured the gold medal, as he averaged 14.4 points and 2.5 assists per game. Parker averaged 25.8 points, 6.8 assists, and 6.8 steals per game at the 2002 FIBA Europe Under-20 Championship. With the French senior national team, Parker has played in the 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011 and 2013 FIBA EuroBaskets. France won the bronze medal in the 2005 FIBA EuroBasket, by defeating the Spanish national team 98–68 in the bronze medal game. As the captain of the French national team since 2003, Parker was slated to lead France at the 2006 FIBA World Championship, but he was unable to play after breaking a finger when he caught his hand in the jersey of a Brazilian national team player in France's final warm up for the tournament. During the EuroBasket 2007, Parker averaged 20.1 points per game and 2.8 assists per game in nine tournament games, but France was defeated in the quarter-finals by the Russian national team. He passed the 2010 FIBA World Championship to recover fully from some injuries he had during the 2009–10 NBA season. Parker returned to the team in 2011, and France reached the finals of the 2011 EuroBasket, losing to Spain. Parker also joined the team for the 2012 Summer Olympics in London. In 2013, Parker and the French national team won the 2013 FIBA EuroBasket tournament.



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