

# Vincent van Gogh

Vincent van Gogh was a fascinating artist who became famous after he died. He was most famous for Starry Night, The Bedroom, Irises and Sunflowers.

He certainly lived a very interesting life.

Here we take a look at some amazing facts about this incredible man.

Vincent van Gogh was born on March 30, 1853, in Groot-Zundert, Netherlands. He was named after his grandfather and his brother who died at birth one year before Van Gogh was born

His stillborn brother was also named Vincent van Gogh.

Before this famous painter started creating his works of art he wanted to be a pastor in the Dutch Reformed Church just like his father.

He also had a number of other jobs before he started painting full time. He was a teacher in London, worked in a bookstore and worked in an art gallery.

Van Gogh was 27 years old when he painted his first piece.

When he first began painting, he used peasants as models and also used very dark colors like black, grey and dark greens.

He would later paint flowers, landscapes and himself, mostly because he was too poor to pay any models.

He was also very good friends with another famous artist, Paul Gauguin.

He painted over 900 paintings in the space of just 10 years. He clearly loved what he was doing.

When he was working he would often forget to eat as he was so involved in his work. His health obviously wasn't very good because of this. Besides not eating, he also suffered from a disease where he got lots of seizures, which had to do with his brain.

During one of his seizures he tried to attack his good friend Paul Gauguin with an open razor. After that he landed up cutting off a part of his own ear, not his whole ear like many people believe.

Unbelievably he only sold one painting in his lifetime, called 'The Red Vineyard'. Like many painters he only became famous after he died.

During his life he wrote over 800 letters. Most of them were to his brother Theo, who was also his closest friend.

### Van Gogh's Most Famous Painting

Vincent van Gogh was what we would call a little bit mad! Because of this he landed up staying in a mental hospital in France.

While he was there he painted his most famous painting 'The Starry Night'.

### How did Vincent van Gogh Die?

No one is really sure how he died, but there are two rumors.

One was that he shot himself in a wheat field in France but didn't die until two days later. The other rumor was that two boys shot him.

He was only 37 at the time. His brother Theo was by his side when he died and said that Vincent's last words were "La tristesse durera toujours," which means "the sadness will last forever."

Vincent's brother Theo died only six months after Vincent. He is buried next to him in France. At least they were together!

After Vincent died, his brother's wife collected all of his paintings and letters and she dedicated herself to getting his work the fame he deserved. Clearly her hard work paid off!

Van Gogh was influenced by Japanese prints and woodcuts which he studied very deeply.

In some of his paintings of himself his ear is bandaged from when he cut it. It looks like his right ear in the pictures because he was using a mirror to paint himself, but it was actually his left ear that was cut.

You can see the painting *Starry Night* at the New York Museum of Modern Art.

He was most definitely an interesting artist with a very different life.