



## From Cleaning Boiler Rooms to Tesla: How Elon Musk Made Money Before He Was Elon Musk

### Description

Elon Musk is worth around US\$260 billion. To put that in perspective, Musk could buy Finland (GDP of US\$252 billion), solve world hunger (purportedly US\$6 billion), and still have enough to buy an NHL franchise team (around \$934 million).

But Musk wasn't always this rich, nor was he always the face of the EV revolution. In fact, it wasn't that long ago that Musk was selling computer parts from his college dorm room in Ontario and cutting logs with a chainsaw in Vancouver.

So, how did this uber-wealthy entrepreneur make money before **Tesla**? According to his biography, *Elon Musk: Tesla, SpaceX, and the Quest for a Fantastic Future*, here are just eight odd jobs Musk took.

### 1. Video game producer

Once upon a time in South Africa, Musk made a PC video game. An odd mix between *Space Invaders* and *Asteroids*, the game's objective was to destroy an alien freighter, which carried hydrogen bombs. Musk was only 12 years old when he made the game, and he supposedly earned \$500 from the sale.

### 2. Farmer

Musk left South Africa (and apparently his video game ambitions) in 1988 and arrived at his cousin's homestead in Waldeck, Saskatchewan, where he grew vegetables and shoveled grain bins.

### 3. Lumberjack

After farming, Musk moved to Vancouver, where he took a job as a lumberjack. According to the biography, he learned how to operate a chainsaw and cut logs.

## 4. Boiler room scrubber

This is probably the oddest job Elon Musk has ever worked: cleaning the boiler room of a lumber mill. Apparently, Musk had to “shimmy through” a small tunnel, remove sand and residue with a shovel, then shimmy back to toss it in a wheelbarrow. Musk made \$18 an hour, and after a week, he was only one of two workers left from a starting crew of 30.

## 5. Nova Scotia intern

Musk’s overconfidence can certainly border brashness. And, in one famous instance, he was certainly a bit more brazen than normal: along with his brother Kimbal, Elon Musk cold-called Peter Nicholson, then a top executive at the **Bank of Nova Scotia**. Surprisingly, Nicholson picked up the phone, agreed to meet the brothers, and gave Musk a summer internship, which earned him \$14 an hour.

## 6. Computer and hardware salesperson

While studying at Queens University in Ontario, Musk created a fairly lucrative side gig: selling computers. Apparently, Musk could build anything from gaming computers to simple word processors.

## 7. Nightclub operator (sort of)

In 1992, Musk transferred to the University of Pennsylvania, where he and a friend bought a 10-bedroom house off campus. During the week, the two would study, but once the weekend came, they would convert the house into a nightclub. According to Musk, he could earn an entire month’s rent in just one night.

## 8. Zip2 seller

After all this work, from cutting logs to cleaning the boiler room, Musk finally become a millionaire in 1999, when the PC company Compaq bought Musk’s company Zip2. Supposedly, the deal came out to \$307 million, with Musk taking \$22 million.

### CATEGORY

1. Personal Finance

### PARTNER-FEEDS

1. Business Insider
2. Koyfin
3. Msn

4. Newscred
5. Quote Media
6. Sharewise
7. Smart News

#### **PP NOTIFY USER**

1. kduncombe
2. sporrello

#### **Category**

1. Personal Finance

#### **Date**

2025/06/28

#### **Date Created**

2022/01/27

#### **Author**

sporrello

default watermark

default watermark