



Meet Mike Huckabee: Everything You Need To Know (And Probably Didn't Know) About The 2016 Republican Presidential Candidate

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May 23, 2015

Name: Michael Dale "[Mike](#)" Huckabee

Party: Republican

Declared as a candidate: May 5, 2015 in Hope, Arkansas

What he does now: Huckabee, 59, was a talk show host on Fox News Channel until resigning in January to begin preparations for his presidential bid. He is also the author of several books with his latest, "God, Guns, Grits, and Gravy," published in early 2015.

Early political life: Huckabee was governor of Arkansas from 1996-2007. He was promoted from lieutenant governor in July 1996 when Democratic Gov. Jim Guy Tucker resigned after a fraud conviction, and finished out Tucker's term. Huckabee then went on to serve two full four-year terms as governor.

What he used to do: A practicing Southern Baptist minister for 12 years, starting in college at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

What happened last time he ran: In 2008, he won the Iowa Republican caucuses but came in second in the [New Hampshire primary](#) behind the eventual GOP nominee -- Sen. [John McCain](#). He lost South Carolina's primary to McCain by three percentage points. Huckabee won seven states by the end of the GOP primary.

In his own words: "I'm not a Republican because I grew up rich. I'm a Republican because I didn't want to spend the rest of my life poor, waiting for the government to rescue me." (2008 Republican National Convention Speech, St. Paul, Minnesota)

Potential baggage: Huckabee has been criticized by fiscal conservatives for raising taxes and increasing spending as governor of Arkansas. By the time he left office, the conservative [Cato Institute](#) slapped him with an "F" grade for failing to adhere to small-government principles. Not even a day into his second [presidential race](#), the Club for Growth, a fiscally conservative political advocacy group, went on the air in Iowa and South Carolina with \$100,000 in ads slamming him for raising taxes in Arkansas.

Family tree: Huckabee and his wife Janet were high school sweethearts at Hope High School. Their first date was at a truck stop where they chowed down on cheeseburgers after Janet's basketball game. They got married the following year -- on May 25, 1974 -- and have three children and four grandchildren.

The other guy from Hope: President [Bill Clinton](#)'s conveniently-named birthplace played an [iconic role](#) in the president's 1992 campaign. Huckabee, who was born in the same Arkansas town nearly nine years after Clinton, kicked off his campaign from his hometown with plans to go "from Hope to higher ground" (which also happens to be the title of his [2007 book on leadership](#)). But unlike Clinton, Huckabee actually grew up in Hope. (The 42nd president spent his formative years in Hot Springs, Arkansas).

Also known as: The man of the "moral majority." In 2008, Huckabee was the presidential choice for many voters in the influential religious bloc of the GOP. (Nearly six in 10 Iowa caucus-goers in 2012 identified themselves as evangelical Christians.) Given the size of the 2016 Republican field, Huckabee could have more competition in courting evangelical voters in the primary from the likes of Rick Santorum, Louisiana Gov. [Bobby Jindal](#), and Wisconsin Gov. [Scott Walker](#).

Why he has a beef with [Beyonce](#): He took a shot at pop royalty in his most recent book when he called Beyonce's song lyrics "obnoxious and toxic mental poison," slammed rapper Jay-Z for "exploiting his wife as a sex object," and suggested Beyonce's dancing is "best left for the privacy of the bedroom." In [an interview](#) with ABC's [Martha Raddatz](#) on "This Week," Huckabee stood by his criticism but pointed out that he also called Beyonce a "wonderful talent."