

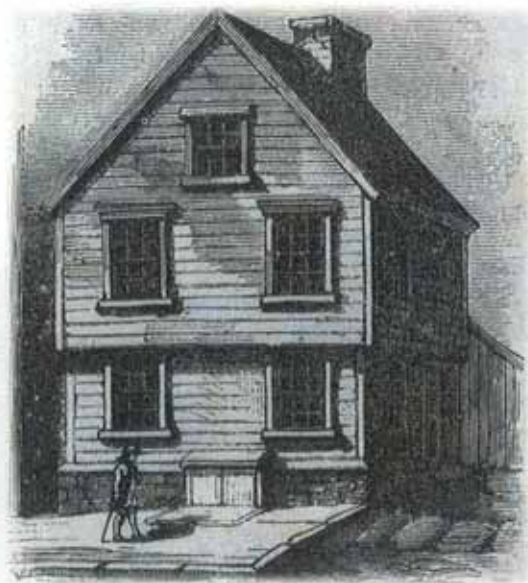
# Young Ben Franklin



Ben was born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1706. His father, Josiah, was born in England and settled in Boston, where he became a **chandler**. Josiah lived in a four-room house on Milk Street. Ben's family had 17 children and Ben was the fifteenth child.

Ben attended only two years of school but became a self-educated man by reading all kinds of books. He had a tremendous desire to learn and read every book he could find on many different subjects. Throughout his life he constantly read books to improve himself.

Since Ben lived near Boston Harbor, he became an excellent swimmer at a young age. To swim faster, Ben invented swimming paddles for his hands and feet. To swim faster still, he attached a kite to himself and the kite used the wind to blow Ben across the water with greater speed.



*Ben Franklin was born in this house on Milk Street in Boston, Massachusetts.*



*Ben hated soap and candle making.*

After showing a strong dislike for his father's profession of being a soap and candle maker, Josiah tried to find a different trade for Ben. Ben tried bricklaying, cabinet making, and roof work but he disliked all of these trades. So Ben became a printing apprentice to his brother James.

James was an early supporter for a **free press** in America, but he was a harsh master who discouraged Ben from writing and publishing. Finally, at age 17, Ben secretly escaped to New York.

Because of lack of work in New York, Ben ended up in Philadelphia. He arrived in Philadelphia with only a small amount of money. Hungry, Ben went to a bakery and bought three large rolls. He stuffed one roll into his mouth and carried the others under each arm. As he walked, he passed a girl who laughed when she saw Ben eating and carrying his rolls. Ben did not know it then, but the laughing girl was Deborah Read. One day she would become his wife. After Ben ate one roll, he gave the other two rolls to people who seemed hungry. Then he quickly found a printing job in his new city.

*Did You Know...*

Josiah Franklin hoped Ben would become a minister. When he saw that Ben did not like to pray, he decided that Ben should learn a trade.