**Frida Kahlo**

**The Name Behind the Face**

Magdalena Carmen Frida Kahlo y Calderón (6 July 1907 – 13 July 1954), usually known as Frida Kahlo, is thought to be one of Mexico’s most famous painters. She was known for her [surreal](https://kids.kiddle.co/Surrealism) and very personal artwork. She is celebrated for being a true, and very fiery, feminist.

**Growing Up**

Frida was born in Coyoacán, Mexico. The daughter of Matilde and Guillermo Kahlo, Frida and her three sisters grew up in the bustling, colourful Mexico City. When she was only 6 years of age Frida developed polio which left her disabled, although this did not get in the way of her dreams and aspirations. In addition to this, some people think that she may have had Spina Bifida (a birth defect affecting the development of part of the [spine](https://kids.kiddle.co/Spine)). Against all odds, Kahlo continued to thrive and decided to study medicine in the hope of becoming a doctor.

**A Sudden Tragedy**

At the age of 18, when her adult life had just begun, Frida was involved in a horrific traffic accident leaving her badly injured. As a result, she had periods of severe, crippling pain for the rest of her life! Her father, a German photographer, encouraged Frida to do lots of sports to help her recover. She played football, went swimming, and even did wrestling, which was very unusual at that time for a girl. After the unfortunate event, Kahlo no longer continued her medical studies but took up a vastly different hobby instead.

**Road to Recovery**

Despite the great pain she was in, Frida’s accident led her to finding her true passion: painting. Following the accident, Frida was bed-bound in a full-body cast for 3 months. Encouraged by her parents, she was given a special easel and her first set of paints. A year later, her first self-portrait was finally complete!

Frida began to use ideas about things that had happened to her, once saying ‘I paint myself because I am often alone, and I am the subject I know best’. Often Frida’s paintings are shocking, as they show pain and the harsh lives of women, who were treated incredibly unfairly at the time.

**Becoming an Artist**

Unbelievably, fifty-five of her 143 paintings are of herself. Frida was also [influenced](https://kids.kiddle.co/Influence) by native Mexican culture, and her artwork is known for its’ bright, bold colours. After her paintings began to attract attention, a famous Mexican artist, Diego Rivera, took an interest in her work. Later, this creative pair went on to marry one another, as Frida’s work became widely known throughout the USA and beyond.

**Later Life**

After a successful career, Frida tragically died at the young age of 47, although her artwork continues to live on. Since her death, the Frida Kahlo museum was opened in Mexico City, and her personal belongings are still on display in the ‘Blue House’ where she was born. Amazingly, this is one of the most popular museums in America! Sadly, we have been left with many questions about the meaning of her masterpieces, although this has not stopped Frida becoming one of the most well-known female artists of all time.