

## Sherlock Holmes Fun Facts

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Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the writer who created *Sherlock Holmes*, once said, “If in one hundred years I am known only as the man who invented *Sherlock Holmes*, then I will have considered my life a failure.”

- Arthur Conan Doyle was a doctor. He studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh, where he started writing stories on study breaks. When he opened his own doctor’s office after graduating, business wasn’t too good. So guess what? He started writing stories.
- After graduating from medical school, Doyle served as the ship’s doctor on a voyage to West Africa.
- *A Study in Scarlet* – the first story to feature the mystery-solving Sherlock Holmes character – was first published in a Christmas book – *Beeton’s Christmas Annual*, in 1887.
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was athletic, like his character, Sherlock Holmes. He was the goalkeeper for a well-known soccer club, changing his name so he wouldn’t be recognized due to his famous stories. In his late 30s and 40s, he played 10 “first-class” cricket matches for the Marylebone Cricket Club, along with many professionally-paid cricket players. Doyle was elected captain of his golf team at the age of 51.
- What if J.K. Rowling had Harry Potter die in the third book in the series because she wanted to write other books?! That’s what Doyle did six years after Holmes first appeared. In 1893’s story, *The Final Problem*, Sherlock Holmes was killed. Public outcry made Doyle write more stories and bring the detective back to life.
- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle also published poetry, historical novels, a six-volume set on the British in World War I, and more – including a famous 1912 book called *The Lost World* – about dinosaurs and prehistoric animals still alive on an island. He also translated several books into English.
- Doyle was friends with the famous American escape artist and magician, Harry Houdini.
- Like Holmes in real life, Doyle helped free two men who were wrongly charged with murder and other horrible crimes by investigating the cases personally.
- Later in life, Doyle became a Spiritualist who believed he could contact dead family members and friends through a “medium.”



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