

Moment Joe Biden completely loses his train of thought answering a question 12 minutes into the debate... as Trump says: 'I really don't know what he just said'

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President [Joe Biden](#) suffered repeated senior moments in Thursday night's debate, struggling to find his words as he talked about various policy issues and giving [Donald Trump](#) an opening to go straight on the attack.

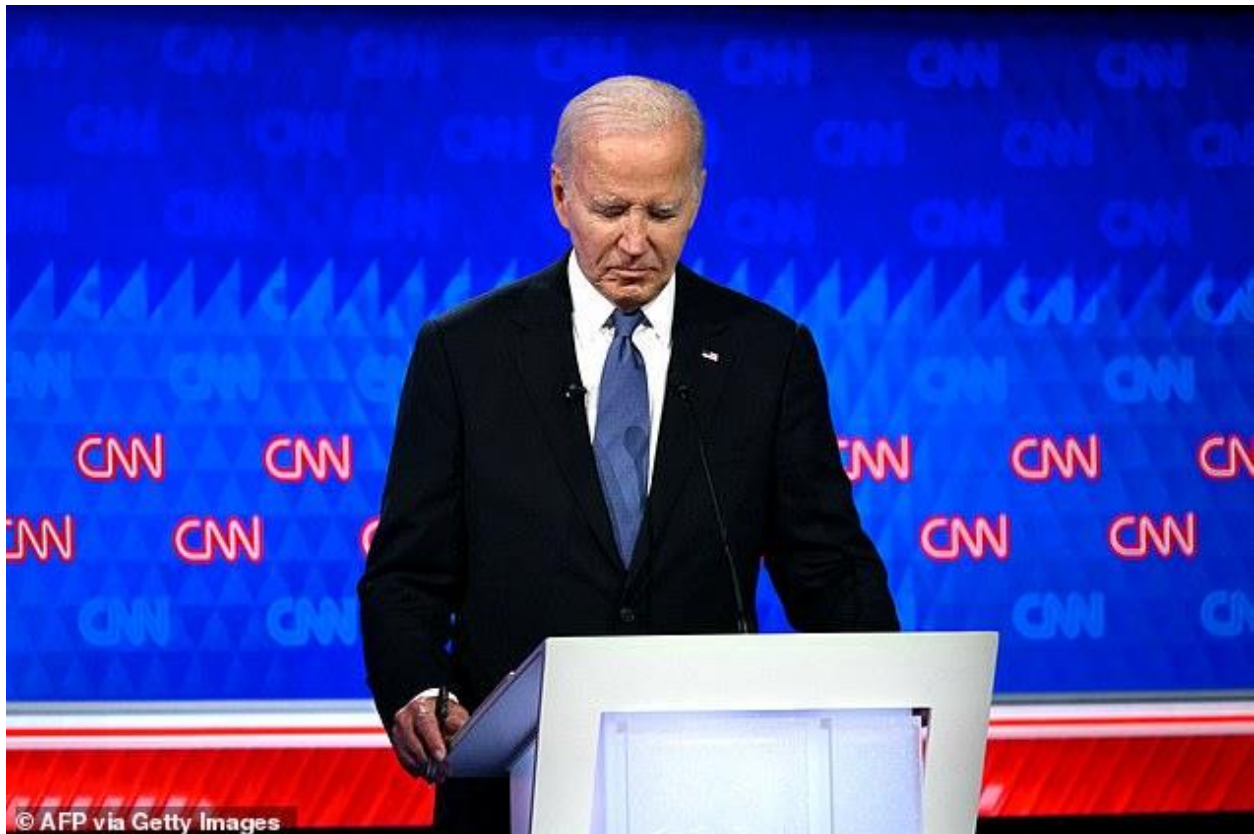
His first mistake came within 12 minutes of his showdown with Trump and then they continued throughout the night as he fumbled when talking about the number of billionaires in America and the situation on the border.

Trump didn't wait long to slam Biden, 81, on the fumbles.

'I really don't know what he said at the end of that sentence. I don't think he knows what he said either,' the former president noted.

Biden, sounding hoarse and clearing his throat, struggled to find his words, stammering and excusing himself as he struggled to make himself understood at multiple points. He is reported to have a cold.

It was a terrible start for the president, who needs to overcome voters' concerns that he is too old for a second term.



President Joe Biden fumbled for words in the debate

Biden struggled to make up ground as the 90-minute debate continued. He tried to hit Trump on the report the former president called dead American soldiers 'suckers and losers' and on his felony conviction in New York.

But Biden has been using those attack lines for months and Trump appeared to be ready for them, barely blinking as he hit back at them, attacking Biden's son Hunter's felony conviction and repeated his argument he is the victim of political persecution.

Glitches and fumbles

It was Biden's struggle to find answers that will leave a lasting impression on voters, who have repeatedly questioned the 81-year-old's stamina and mental capacities.

At multiple times in the night, in several answers on different topics, Biden fumbled.

'Childcare, elder care, making sure that we continue to strengthen our health care - able to make every single solitary person eligible for what I've been able to deal with. The covid - excuse me - with dealing with everything we have to do with what if we finally beat Medicare,' he said when was asked about his economic record.

Moderator Jake Tapper stepped in, telling him 'thank you' and turning to Donald Trump to let him speak.

Trump addressed Biden's policy argument but didn't hammer him on the vocal fumbles as he has done in the past. The former president has repeatedly called Biden 'Sleepy Joe' and mocked him as feeble and mentally addled.

'He did beat Medicaid - beat it to death,' Trump said in his response. 'He's destroying Medicare because all of these people are coming in.'

Biden kept fumbling in his next answers as he spoke about abortion rights and women's health.



‘There was a young woman murdered...he went to the funeral. The idea she was murdered by an immigrant, they talk about that. A lot of young women get raped by in-laws, spouses, brothers. It's ridiculous and they do nothing about it.’

And he fumbled in his claims about the wealthy in America. ‘We have a thousand trillionaires in America’ and then switched to ‘billionaires.’

Biden touted his efforts to secure a bipartisan border deal that fell apart in Congress when asked about his attempts to secure the U.S.-Mexico border.

‘We had significant increase in number of asylum officers significantly. By the way the Border Patrol been endorsed me, endorsed my position. In addition to that we find ourselves in a situation where when he was president he was taking separating babies from their mothers put him in cages,’ Biden said.

That is when Trump finally struck back at Biden’s fumbling.

‘I really don’t know what he said at the end of that sentence. I don’t think he knows what he said either,’ the former president noted.

'Suckers and losers'

The two men got into a heated attack when it came to talking about the military.

Biden slammed Trump for reports the former president called dead American soldiers 'suckers' and 'losers.'

'My son was not a loser, was not a sucker. You're the sucker you're the loser,' Biden said.

'They made it up,' Trump replied. 'We had 19 people that said I didn't say it.'

He then called on Biden to apologize to him.

'He made up the suckers and losers so he should apologize to be right now.'

Biden hit back hard.

'The idea I have to apologize to you for anything,' he said.

Both men struggled with the debate rules they agreed to that saw their microphones muted when it was not their turn to talk. Each of them, at points, tried to speak only to find themselves unable to be heard.



Donald Trump commented 'I don't know what he said' in reference to Biden's fumbles

The Economy

Biden attacked Trump from the start as he was asked to defend his economic record, hitting him on his suggestion that Americans inject themselves with bleach during COVID.

He said Trump left him an 'economy that was in freefall - the pandemic was so badly handled, many people were dying.'

'By the time he left are things that are in chaos literally chaos. And so we put things back together,' he said.

Trump hit back, arguing he left a strong economy until covid hit and then spent funds to keep the country from spiralling into a depression.

'Everything was rocking good,' he said.

'The only jobs he created are for illegal immigrants and bounce-back jobs that are bounced back from the covid. He has not done a good job. He's done a poor job - inflation's killing our country. It is absolutely killing us,' he said.

The two men did not shake hands after they entered the stage, Biden arriving first and then Trump. They simply stood at their podiums, starting straight ahead.



Donald Trump and Joe Biden at the first presidential debate



A presidential motorcade in Atlanta

The Rules

It is the first of two debates the two presidential candidates agreed to.

The two men are on stage with only a pad, pencil and a bottle of water, without the assist of the teleprompter and will not be allowed to chat with aides during commercial breaks.

The microphones are muted automatically when it is not their turn to speak.

There is no audience in the room - just the debate's two moderators.

First lady [Jill Biden](#) is the only member of the president's family there. She is watching the debate from a holding room and will stop by a debate watch party with Biden after the event concludes.

Each man came into the debate with a different set of expectations.

For the 81-year-old Biden, it comes down to his health and fitness. He needs to be energetic and on point with his talking points. Republicans have successfully used his age to raise questions about his mental capabilities. And Biden looks as if he's aged, walking with a gait and moving stiffly.

The president, who likes briefing binders and practice sessions, spent the week holed up at Camp David preparing for the debate with close aides. His appearance at the debate is the first time he was seen in public since June 20th.

He will try to throw Trump off with attack lines designed to sting the former president on a personal level. Biden will also focus on reminding voters of some of Trump's more extreme policies.

Trump, meanwhile, eschewed formal practice sessions. He tried out new attack lines at various campaign rallies but otherwise kept a low profile.

The question remains which Trump will show up at the debate: the loud, talkative, disruptive one who can devolve into rants or a more restrained Trump, who will stay focused during the 90 minutes on stage.