

SUPERMAN

THE MAN OF STEEL

FIRST APPEARANCE ACTION COMICS #1 (June 1938)
STATUS Hero **REAL NAME** Kal-El; Clark Joseph Kent (adoptive name)
OCCUPATION Super hero; (as Clark Kent) journalist **BASE** Metropolis
HEIGHT 6ft 3in **WEIGHT** 235 lbs **EYES** Blue **HAIR** Black
SPECIAL POWERS/ABILITIES Kal-El's powers were latent until his teenage years. His kryptonian physiology absorbs immense energy from Earth's yellow sun, enabling him to fly at incredible speeds, and endowing him with superstrength, invulnerability (his only weaknesses are green kryptonite radiation and magic), ultra-acute hearing, freezing breath, immense lung capacity and a range of vision including X-ray vision (he can see through anything except lead) and heat vision.

SUPERMAN, THE LAST SON OF KRYPTON, represents the very best in humanity. His native world of Krypton, a giant planet orbiting a dying red sun, was doomed by the radioactive elements at its core and exploded many years ago, but not before scientist Jor-El and his wife Lara rocketed their son to safety, hoping against hope that his spacecraft would find him a new home in the vast reaches of the universe. Their gamble paid off in ways that have enormously benefited humanity.



THE SOLE SURVIVOR

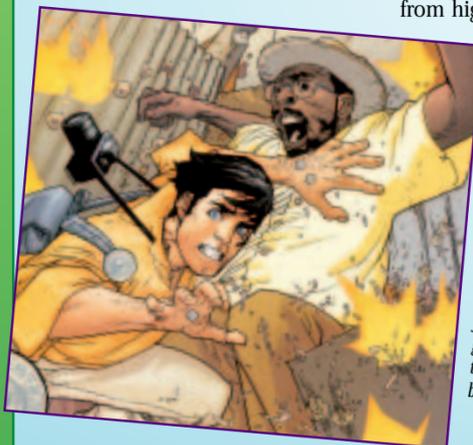
Kal-El's ship traveled many light-years until it crashed in a remote field in Kansas, where it—and its infant cargo—were found by farmers Jonathan and Martha Kent. Raising him as if he was their own son, the Kents named the boy Clark Joseph and watched in amazement as

his unique abilities began to manifest over the years. Clark's body was a veritable solar battery. He absorbed the sun's energy and in turn it gave him great strength, invulnerability, heightened senses and the ability to defy gravity. Fearing that various governments or factions would claim Clark as their own, the Kents encouraged the boy to act as "normal" as possible and to keep his powers and origin secret. Upon graduating high school, Clark left Smallville behind for a far greater stage.

SMALLVILLE DAYS

Kal-El's ship traveled countless light-years until it crashed in a remote field near Smallville, Kansas, where it and its infant cargo were found by farmers Jonathan and Martha Kent. Raising him as their own, the kind-hearted Kents named the boy Clark Joseph and watched in amazement as, little by little, his unique abilities began to manifest themselves. Clark's body proved to be a veritable solar battery. He absorbed the sun's energy, which gave him incredible strength, invulnerability, heightened senses, and the ability to fly. Fearing that various governments or factions would claim Clark as their own, the Kents encouraged the boy to act as "normal" as possible and to keep his powers a secret. After graduating from high school, Clark left the little

town of Smallville to begin a seven-year exploration of the globe, eager to find some purpose for his amazing abilities as he searched for a suitably heroic role in life.



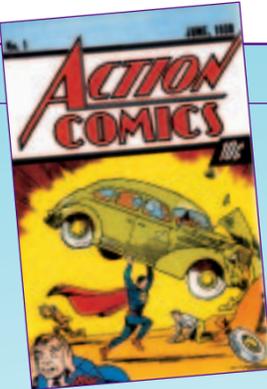
AFRICAN ADVENTURE Before Clark Kent made his name in Metropolis, he traveled the world on an eight-year personal journey of discovery. Eager to try out his growing superpowers, he headed for some of the world's troublespots, helping to resolve a bloody intertribal conflict in Africa.

SUPERMAN'S COSTUME

In time, however, Clark realized that he'd made a mistake by ignoring his alien heritage in favor of his human upbringing. Once he acknowledged that there was a place in this world not only for Clark Kent but for Kal-El, Clark used materials from his spacecraft to create a costume signifying and reflecting his Kryptonian roots—one he could wear openly whenever he wasn't disguising himself as a mild-mannered journalist.



FIRST ISSUE *The Man of Steel* first flexed his muscles on the cover of Action Comics #1.



LIFESAVER! Superman's first costumed adventure saw him saving Jimmy Olsen and Lois Lane from certain death.



LOIS LANE As time went by, Clark Kent became a celebrated reporter and fell in love with Lois. She got over her crush on the Man of Steel, realizing what a good catch Clark was. Marriage soon beckoned.



THE MILD-MANNERED REPORTER

Sporting horn-rimmed spectacles and wearing oversized clothes to disguise his physique, Clark Kent came to Metropolis and was interviewed by *Daily Planet* editor Perry White for a reporter post. Clark worked with young photographer Jimmy Olsen and star reporter Lois Lane. It was she who, glimpsing the Kryptonian crest on the costume of the city's amazing flying man, first called him "Superman." Clark began his dual life as a journalist and crime fighter.

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW AGE

Superman's arrival signaled a new era for costumed heroes. As more and more appeared around the world, so did super-powered villains, ranging from the alien BRAINIAC to the crazed TOYMAN. Superman's exploits inspired millions, so the world was stunned when the behemoth DOOMSDAY killed him in battle. Fortunately, Superman was returned to life by Kryptonian technology. He has since allowed a handful of heroes—SUPERBOY, SUPERGIRL and STEEL—to share the S-shield that is a symbol from his homeland.



AN EVERLASTING INSPIRATION

Superman has had to contend with scheme after malicious scheme to discredit or destroy him. Virtually all of them have been engineered by Lex Luthor, first through his LexCorp business and then as U.S. President. Alone and with the JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA, Superman has become a symbol for truth and justice across the world. In the 31st century, the legacy of Superman led many people to become adherents of a secular belief called "The Spirit of the Last Son," which sees the Man of Steel as a model for mature, altruistic living. RG



KEY STORYLINES

- **SUPERMAN #75 (JANUARY 1993):** Superman dies defeating Doomsday, an alien genetic experiment designed to be the ultimate killing machine in the "The Death of Superman!"
- **ACTION COMICS #689 (SEPTEMBER 1993):** The Man of Steel returns from the dead.
- **SUPERMAN #171 (AUGUST 2001):** Superman begins a tumultuous defence of Earth and the Universe against the might of Imperixus and the Our Worlds at War storyline commences.
- **SUPERMAN BIRTHRIGHT #1 (SEPTEMBER 2003):** Superman's origins from his escape from Krypton to him becoming the world-renowned Man of Steel is thoroughly redefined and expanded.