David Green was born on September 7, 1953 in Jacksonville, North Carolina. He attended Richlands High School from 1968-1971, where he played football (halfback), basketball (point guard) and ran track (high and low hurdles and the 220). He is one of three players to have their jersey retired at the school.

During Green's senior year, Richlands would win their first every football title and Co-Champions of the East Central 2A Conference with a record of 8-3 overall record and a 5-1 conference record to tie Jones Senior. Richlands beat Jones Senior 19-6 during the season to capture the opportunity to go to the playoffs.

Green received the 1969 East Central All-Conference award selected by the coaches. Green was selected to the All-Conference team in 1969 with four other teammates. Green was awarded honorable mention by *Coach and Athlete* magazine in 1971. Green gained over 1,300 yards rushing, an additional 500 yards in receptions and almost 500 yards in kick-off and punt returns. Coach Doug Swain stated "he ranks as one of the best, if not the best, all-around players I have ever coached."

After high school, Green spent about two and a half years in the US Navy receiving an honorable discharge as an E-3. He continued his football career by going to Chowan Junior College in 1974 as a running back. He carried the ball 93 times for a total of 418 yards/4.5 yards per carry, scoring four touchdowns. He was inducted to the Chowan Hall of Fame on November 7, 1992. He then attended the Edinboro University in Pennsylvania playing football in the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference in 1975 and 1976. He was named Honorable Mention All-American by the Associated Press and to the Conference all-star team. He was inducted to the Edinboro Hall of Fame in 1988 with a career of 19 games played and an average 104 rushing yards per game.

Green went on to play for the Montreal Alouette from 1978-1980 in the Canadian Football League. He played in 35 games for Montreal and appeared in two Grey Cups. During his career with Montreal he rushed for 2,551 yards and scored 18 touchdowns. His best year was in 1979, when he rushed 287 times for 1,678 yards. That year he also had nine games where he rushed for at least 100 yards. He had his career best game in 1979 against Ottawa where he rushed for 29 times for 212 yards. He received the CFL's Most Outstanding Player Award and was selected to the All-Star team in 1979. He was also selected All-East Division All-Star in 1980. In the 67th Grey Cup, Green led all players with 142 yards rushing in a tough 19-7 loss to Edmonton. He was selected Grey Cup Most Valuable Player for his performance.

In the off-season, he worked with handicapped children with cerebral palsy in Erie, Pennsylvania. He also enjoyed speaking to groups of students and parents. In 1981 he was traded to Hamilton Tiger-Cats and then in 1982 he made the roster with the Cleveland Browns of the National Football League where he played in nine games and returned one kickoff 13 yards.