BLOOMSBURY INTERNATIONAL

# A summer of sport in England 


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Cricket was first played as far back as the 1550s by school boys in the southeast of England. The game has different formats, but what the players need to do is the same in all cases.

There are two teams of 11 players. The rules, regulations and processes involved are, to be honest, a little bit hard to explain, but there are some things which are interesting about cricket.

- It is the national sport of India,
 Pakistan, and many Caribbean countries. In India and Pakistan, cricket players are admired in the same way as footballers are in Western European countries.
- The games can last from 90 minutes to 5 days.
- A game which lasts 5 days can still end in a draw (in other words, there is no winner or loser).
- The 5-day game is stopped twice on each day so the players can eat lunch and have tea.
- The 5-day game has players from both teams dressed in white. The one-day game has players dressed in what look like pyjamas (don't ask!)
- Going to watch a game of cricket has more to do with drinking alcohol, messing around and/or sleeping in the sun than watching the game.
- The weather can have a terrible effect on the game, often meaning the people watching the game sit in the rain waiting for the game to start.
- There are a lot of strange words for describing where the players stand including 'long leg', 'backward square point' and 'silly mid-off'. These words mean something to cricket players and nothing at all to the rest of us. They do sound odd though.
- BBC radio has a long-running programme called Test Match Special which provides commentary on the international cricket matches that England play. This programme is very popular with cricket fans and the stories are usually very funny.

Cricket is popular all over England and Wales. Games can be seen in towns and villages throughout the summer months. You do not need to be incredibly fit to play cricket and it would be possible to get involved if you are interested. And if the weather is nice, it is a good way to relax on a lazy sunny Sunday afternoon.

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The game of tennis started back in the 12th century. The modern game started sometime around 1860. The game of tennis originally started in France, which explains where a lot of the language of tennis comes from. There are many traditions and odd things about tennis.


- The scoring system does not go up in a logical way. 15, 30, 40 and then you win the game. How many points do you need to win the game? I have no idea. The final number is never mentioned.
- When both players are on 40 the score is deuce (pronounced like 'juice'). The player who wins the next point has 'advantage' and can win the game on the following point. Why the scoring system never gets past 40 is a mystery.
- If you have no points, your score is 'love' not zero or nil.
- There are four 'Grand Slam' tournaments and they are played on different types of ground.
- In the UK, Wimbledon happens in June and July. This usually means the weather will be very, very hot or very, very wet.
- A roof was put on the main court at Wimbledon so that games could be played even when it rains.
- The traditional food eaten at Wimbledon is strawberries and cream. According to the Wikipedia page for Wimbledon, in 2017, fans consumed $34,000 \mathrm{~kg}$ of English strawberries and 10,000 litres of cream.
- It is possible to get a ticket to watch the tennis by sleeping outside the venue, overnight. This is surprisingly popular.

- The longest game of tennis at Wimbledon was in 2010, between John Isner of the USA and Nicolas Mahut of France. It lasted 11 hours and 5 minutes over three days. John Isner won the match. He lost the next match in 74 minutes, mainly because he was so tired from the previous days' play.
- At the end of Wimbledon, the players have a special dinner together. At this dinner, it is tradition for the winner of the men's competition to dance with the winner of the women's competition.


Tennis is a very enjoyable game to watch and it is also enjoyable to play. Unlike cricket, the games don't usually last for days. You can play in parks across the UK and it is a good way to get fit. And if you don't want to play, sit back and enjoy the strawberries.

