

Wimbledon

Wimbledon is an international, **professional** tennis tournament that occurs annually around the end of June and through the first few weeks of July. Wimbledon is one of four world-famous tennis competitions called the Grand Slams. The other three are the French Open, the US Open and the Australian Open.

History



Considered by many to be the oldest tennis tournament worldwide, Wimbledon was first held in 1877 at the All England Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club in Wimbledon, London. During this first competition, 22 men competed and around 200 people watched the final match. Today, around 128 players participate in Wimbledon and over 50 million people watch various matches on their screens or by attending the competition in person.

Currently, along with the men's and women's **singles** matches, there are men's **doubles**, women's doubles and mixed doubles, wheelchair and junior events.

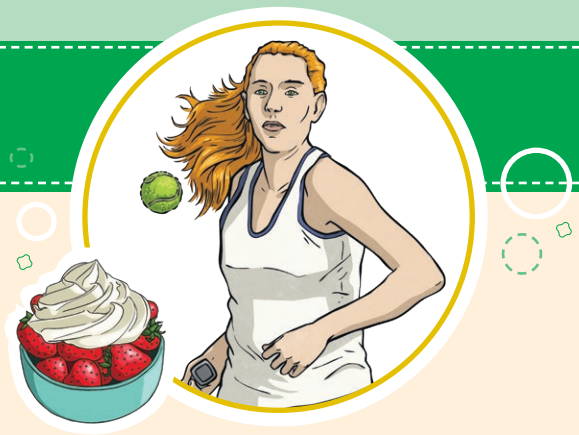
Did You Know...?

The first women's championship took place in 1884.

Prize Money



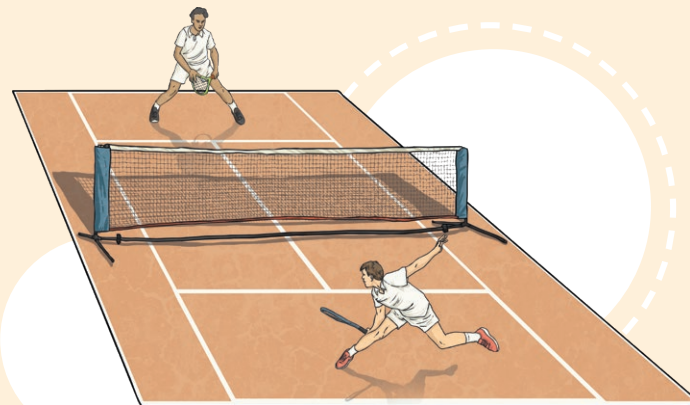
In 1968, Wimbledon began awarding its winners prize money. Before 1968, only **amateur** players were allowed to play at Wimbledon. The players who win the competition are sometimes given an award that can be worth millions of pounds! For many years, men were awarded more prize money than women. In 2007, Wimbledon began to award equal amounts of prize money to both the men's and women's champions.



Fun Facts About Wimbledon

1. Clothing Requirements

Players are required to wear mostly white clothing. If they do not comply with this rule, referees can ask them to change their clothes.



2. Yellow Balls

Originally, white tennis balls were used for Wimbledon matches. However, that was changed when it was realised that TV viewers couldn't see them! In 1986, the balls were changed to yellow.

3. Refrigerated Tennis Balls

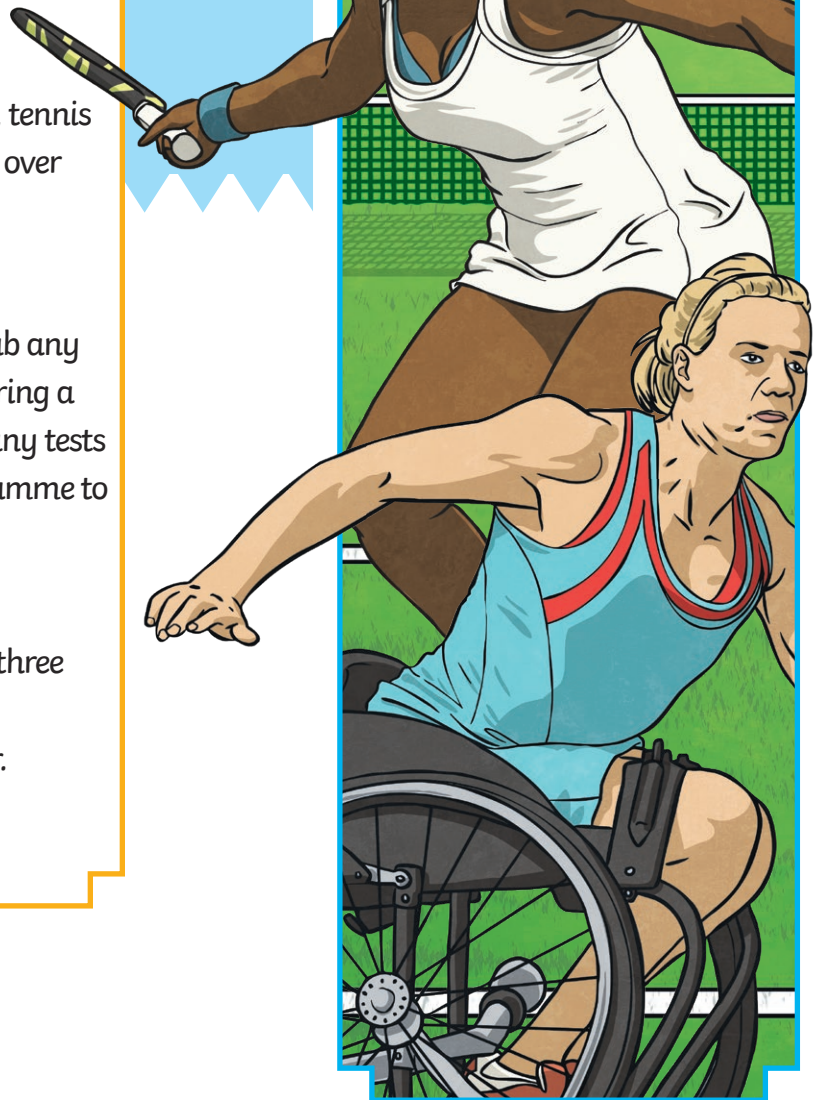
To make sure they are in perfect condition, tennis balls are kept in refrigerators! On average, over 54,000 balls are used during Wimbledon.

4. Ball Boys and Girls (BBGs)

BBGs kneel at the side of the court and grab any loose tennis balls that come near them during a game. Surprisingly, BBGs have to pass many tests and take part in a difficult training programme to be selected for the job.

5. The Longest Match

In 2010, a match lasted over an amazing three days! The two players spent 11 hours and 5 minutes hitting balls to one another.



Glossary

amateur: In sport, an athlete who participates as a hobby and not as a career.

doubles: When two tennis players compete as a team.

professional: Doing something as a paid job and not just a hobby.

singles: When a tennis player competes against another tennis player by themselves.

Questions

1. How many people watched the first Wimbledon final? Tick one.

- 22
- 128
- 200
- 50 million

2. How long did the longest match last? Tick one.

- 22 hours and 5 minutes
- 11 hours and 5 minutes
- 54 minutes
- 128 minutes

3. What are the other three Grand Slams called? Tick one.

- American Open, German Open, Australian Open
- US Open, German Open, Australian Open
- US Open, French Open, Canadian Open
- US Open, French Open, Australian Open

4. Draw four lines and match each year to its event.

1877

the first women's
championship took place

1884

Wimbledon began to offer prize money

1968

the first Wimbledon
tournament took place

2007

Wimbledon offered men and women
equal amounts of prize money

5. Look at the first paragraph.
Find and copy one word that means the same as 'happens'.

6. Fill in the missing words.

The players who win the _____ are sometimes given an award that can be worth _____ of pounds!

7. Would you like to go and see a Wimbledon match in person? Explain your answer.

8. Which section of the text is your favourite part? Explain your answer.
