

Badminton – History and Facts

- 1. Badminton claims to be the second most-popular participation sport in the world. Only football beats it.**
2. It's officially the fastest racquet sport in the world. The shuttle is smashed around the court at speeds of up to 200mph - the same speed as Eurostar!
- 3. Its Olympic debut was in 1992 in Barcelona. Since 1992 Asian players have won 42 of the 46 Olympic medals.**
4. 1.1bn people watched the first Olympic badminton tournament on TV.
- 5. Simon Archer and Jo Goode won Britain's first Olympic medal in Sydney 2000 - a bronze in the mixed doubles. Gail Emms and Nathan Robertson went one better in Athens winning silver medal in the same event.**
6. During an average top-level match ten shuttles are used with players hitting it roughly 400 times each. It's a tiring business - they can travel several miles around the court!
- 7. The record for the shortest match? Six minutes. Ra Kyung-min (South Korea) and Julia Mann (England) hold the record. Peter Rasmussen (Denmark) and Sun Jun (China) hold the record for the longest match - 124 minutes.**
8. In Malaysia and Indonesia, crowds of up to 15,000 people regularly fill the stands to cheer on their heroes.
- 9. The International Badminton Federation was established in 1934 and now has 148 member countries including England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.**
10. Celebrity fans include snooker player Mark Williams and golfers Pádraig Harrington and Nick Faldo. You can even buy Barbie a racquet and shuttles.
- 11. The Chinese originally played a version of badminton called Ti Zian Ji. They didn't use racquets though, they used their feet.**
12. The Duke of Beaufort held parties at his estate, Badminton House in 1873. His guests were invited to play a game with shuttlecocks - and so the official game of badminton was born.
- 13. The origin of the shuttlecock is a bit hazy. One theory is that writing feathers were stuck in corks when they weren't used. During quiet moments the 'pen' store would be thrown, or whacked, around.**
14. Olympic shuttles are made of 16 bird feathers, string and very strong glue. The Kansas City Museum is home to the world's largest shuttlecock - 48 times bigger than normal.
- 15. While most players choose synthetic strings, some still use gut made from the dried stomach lining of animals such as cows or cats.**
16. A shuttlecock travels faster than a formula 1 car!!