

Wimbledon

Wimbledon is played on grass and is the oldest tennis tournament in the world. Many popular and skilled players want to win the grand prize.

Rich History



'The Championships, Wimbledon' is famous for serving strawberries and cream and was the first tennis tournament to ever take place. In fact, players have been hitting balls at Wimbledon since 1877! In that time, there have been many brilliant players who have won the grand prize.

Money, Money, Money

The players get a lot of prize money for winning Wimbledon. In recent years, the winner of the men's and women's singles titles have received over £2 million.

Playing the Game

The matches at Wimbledon are very different to how tennis was played when it was invented in France in the 12th century. To begin with, a ball was hit with the palm of the hand. These days, Wimbledon players strike the ball with a racquet and this can be really fast. The record speed for a serve at Wimbledon (when players throw the ball in the air and hit it from above their head), is 238 kilometres per hour. This is about the same speed as an average helicopter.

Here are five more fun facts about Wimbledon:



1. **Players must wear white.**

Umpires can ask a player to change if they're not wearing white. In 2013, the Wimbledon champion was told to change his shoes because they had orange soles!

2. **The balls can't be white!**

To begin with, Wimbledon matches were played with white tennis balls. However, that was changed when TV viewers complained that they couldn't see them! In 1986, the balls were changed to yellow.

3. The tennis balls are kept in the fridge!

New balls are used all the time in a tennis match. To make sure they are in perfect condition, they are stored in fridges! Over **54,000** balls are used during Wimbledon each year.

4. It's not easy being a ballboy or ballgirl.

Ballgirls and ballboys kneel at the side of the court and grab any loose tennis balls which come near them during a game. Ballboys and ballgirls often come from local London schools and, if picked, have to pass written and fitness tests before being given the job.

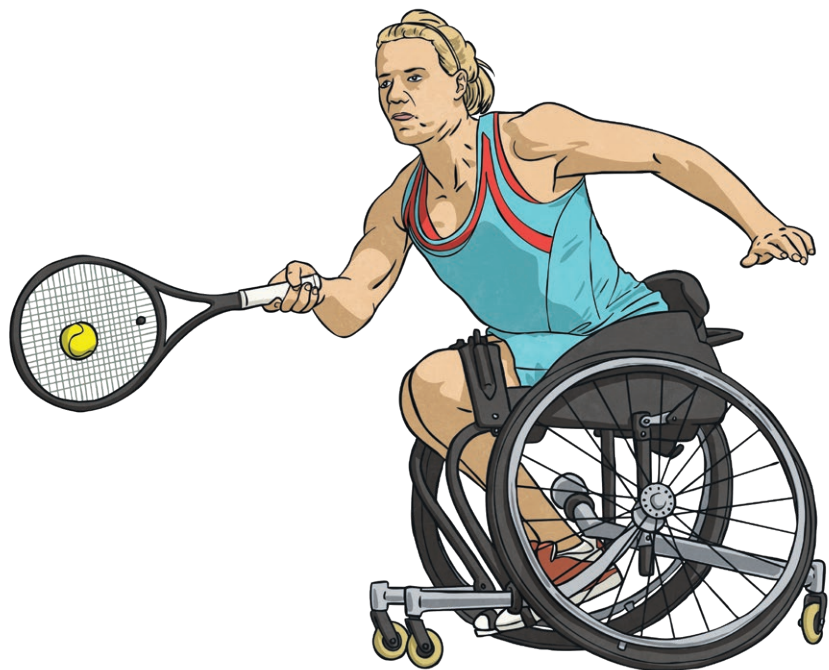
5. Matches aren't always quick.

Usually, matches are finished within a few hours. However, in 2010, a match spanned over an incredible three days! The total time on court was 11 hours and five minutes.

When Does It All Start?

Qualifying starts in June but the main matches at Wimbledon begin in July.

There are many titles to be won in the two weeks that Wimbledon lasts. Along with the men's and women's singles matches, there are men's doubles, women's doubles and mixed doubles, alongside wheelchair and junior events.



Questions

1. What is the full name of the Wimbledon tournament?

2. Which statements are true? Tick **two**.

- ☐ Wimbledon began in 1877.
- ☐ The only food at Wimbledon is strawberries and cream.
- ☐ Wimbledon is the oldest tennis tournament in the world.
- ☐ Wimbledon is the only tennis tournament in the world.

3. Why was the Wimbledon champion told to change his shoes?

4. Which of these would you find at Wimbledon? Tick **two**.

- ☐ yellow balls
- ☐ referees
- ☐ shuttlecocks
- ☐ ballboys and ballgirls

5. Number these to show the order that they appear in the text. The first one has been done for you.

- ☐ In 2010, a match spanned over an incredible three days!
- ☐ There have been many brilliant players who have won the grand prize.
- ☐ To begin with, Wimbledon matches were played with white tennis balls.
- ☐ The players get a lot of prize money for winning Wimbledon.
- ☐ There are many titles to be won in the few weeks that Wimbledon lasts for.

6. Imagine you are a tennis player at Wimbledon. Explain how it would make you feel. Include lots of detail.

7. Join the number to the correct fact:

11

The number of balls used during Wimbledon each year.

1877

The amount of pounds award for winning Wimbledon.

54,000

The number of hours the longest Wimbledon match lasted for.

over 2 million

The year Wimbledon began.

8. Imagine it is a sunny day and you are watching a match at Wimbledon. Describe the scene as best as you can. Think about what you can see, hear and smell.

Answers

1. What is the full name of the Wimbledon tournament?

The full name of the Wimbledon tournaments is The Championships, Wimbledon.

2. Which statements are true? Tick **two**.

Wimbledon began in 1877.

- ☐ The only food at Wimbledon is strawberries and cream.
- ☐ **Wimbledon is the oldest tennis tournament in the world.**
- ☐ Wimbledon is the only tennis tournament in the world.

3. Why was the Wimbledon champion told to change his shoes?

The Wimbledon champion was told to change his shoes because they had orange soles and players have to wear white.

4. Which of these would you find at Wimbledon? Tick **two**.

- ☐ **yellow balls**
- ☐ referees
- ☐ shuttlecocks
- ☐ **ballboys and ballgirls**

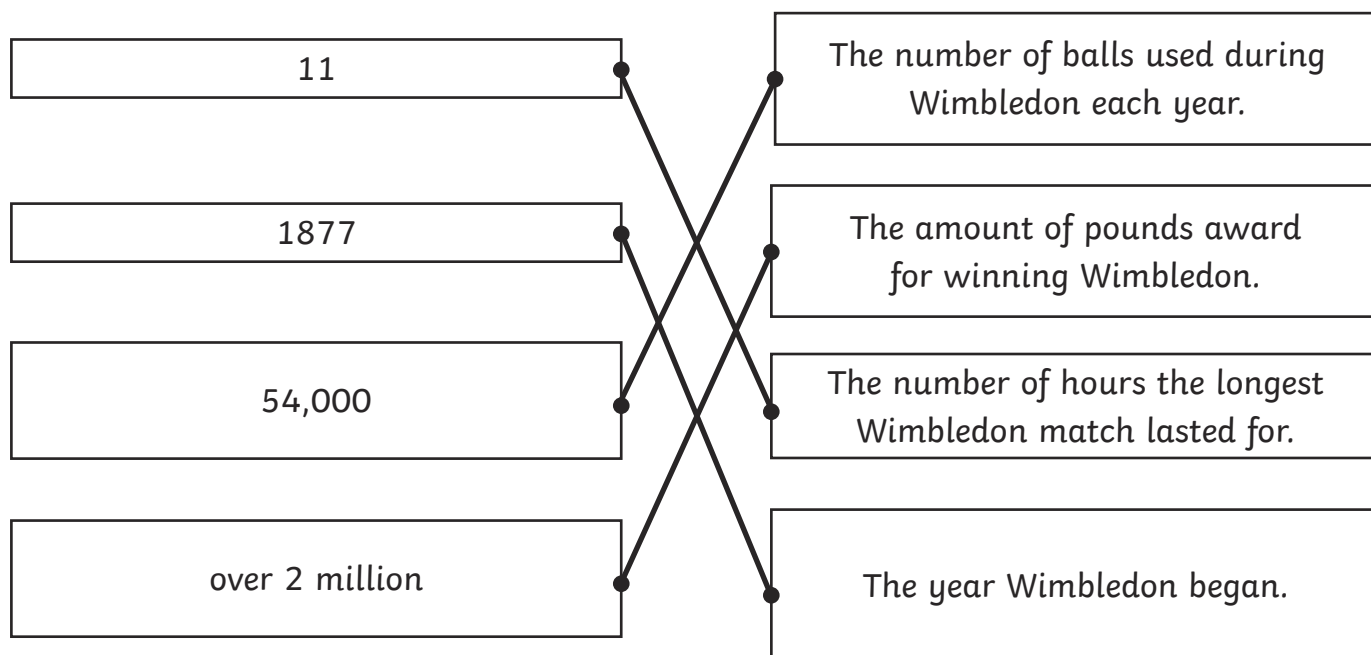
5. Number these to show the order that they appear in the text. The first one has been done for you.

- 4** In 2010, a match spanned over an incredible three days!
- 1** There have been many brilliant players who have won the grand prize.
- 3** To begin with, Wimbledon matches were played with white tennis balls.
- 2** The players get a lot of prize money for winning Wimbledon.
- 5** There are many titles to be won in the few weeks that Wimbledon lasts for.

6. Imagine you were a tennis player at Wimbledon. Explain how it would make you feel. Include lots of detail.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I would be really nervous but proud to be taking part in such an historic event. It's the oldest tennis tournament in the world so I would be really keen and excited to play.

7. Join the number to the correct fact:



8. Imagine it is a sunny day and you are watching a match at Wimbledon. Describe the scene as best as you can. Think about what you can see, hear and smell.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I can hear the thumping of balls being hit and I can see players running backwards and forwards across the court. There is the smell of strawberries and cut grass in the air.