**What’s wrong with Major League Baseball**

[**https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/opinion/baseball-nationalize.html**](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/opinion/baseball-nationalize.html)

Main ideas:

* Look at the growing financials of the sport
  + <https://blogs.fangraphs.com/how-to-make-750-million-cash-free/>
  + Braves and Blue Jays Finances
    - Braves:
      * <https://blogs.fangraphs.com/the-braves-made-some-money-in-2021/>
      * Revenue: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/196635/revenue-of-the-atlanta-braves-since-2006/>
      * Gate Receipts: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/294158/atlanta-braves-gate-receipts/>
      * Franchise value<https://www.statista.com/statistics/194602/mlb-franchise-value-of-the-atlanta-braves-since-2006/>
    - Blue Jays:
      * Revenue: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/196690/revenue-of-the-toronto-blue-jays-since-2006/>
      * Gate Receipts: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/294166/toronto-blue-jays-gate-receipts/>
      * Franchise Value<https://www.statista.com/statistics/194642/mlb-franchise-value-of-the-toronto-blue-jays-since-2006/>
  + League finances
  + WS viewership
    - <https://www.statista.com/statistics/235678/world-series-tv-viewership-in-the-united-states/#:~:text=MLB%20World%20Series%20TV%20viewership%20in%20the%20U.S.%202000%2D2021&text=The%20statistic%20shows%20the%20average,average%20of%2011.75%20million%20viewers>
  + Payrolls (All player money is guaranteed)
    - <https://legacy.baseballprospectus.com/compensation/>
      * Payroll by year, average salary per player on team, average salary by position
    - <https://www.fangraphs.com/roster-resource/payroll/diamondbacks?season=2019>
      * 2019-2022 payroll and more
  + No team has ever been sold for a loss
  + Look at tv contracts
    - <https://blogs.fangraphs.com/lets-update-the-estimated-local-tv-revenue-for-mlb-teams/>
  + Compare and contrast market size and revenue
    - <https://censusreporter.org/>
    - <https://list.fandom.com/wiki/List_of_Major_League_Baseball_teams_by_population#cite_note-uscen-2>
    - <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045221>
    - <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/toronto-at-a-glance/>
    - In order of metro size

| Team | Metro Area/Population | Home City Population |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Yankees | New York-Newark-Jersey City: 19,261,570 | Bronx: 1,472,654 |
| Mets | New York-Newark-Jersey City: 19,261,570 | Queens: 2,405,464 |
| Dodgers | Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim: 13,211,027 | Los Angeles: 3,898,747 |
| Angels | Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim: 13,211,027 | Anaheim: 346,824 |
| Cubs | Chicago-Naperville-Elgin: 9,478,801 | Chicago: 2,746,388 |
| White Sox | Chicago-Naperville-Elgin: 9,478,801 | Chicago: 2,746,388 |
| Rangers | Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington: 7,451,858 | Arlington: 394,266 |
| Phillies | Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington: 6,092,403 | Philadelphia: 1,603,797 |
| Astros | Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land: 6,979,613 | Houston: 2,304,580 |
| Blue Jays | Toronto Region: 6,341,935 | Toronto: 2,956,024 |
| Marlins | Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach: 6,129,858 | Miami: 442,241 |
| Nationals | Washington-Arlington-Alexandria: 6,250,309 | Washington D.C.: 689,545 |
| Braves | Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Alpharetta: 5,947,008 | Atlanta: 498,715 |
| Red Sox | Boston-Cambridge-Newton: 4,854,808 | Boston: 675,647 |
| Tigers | Detroit-Warren-Dearborn: 4,317,384 | Detroit: 639,111 |
| Diamondbacks | Phoenix-Mesa-Chandler: 4,860,338 | Phoenix: 1,608,139 |
| Athletics | San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley: 4,709,220 | Oakland: 440,646 |
| Giants | San Francisco-Oakland-Berkeley: 4,709,220 | San Francisco: 873,965 |
| Mariners | Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue: 3,928,498 | Seattle: 737,015 |
| Twins | Minneapolis-St.Paul-Bloomington: 3,605,450 | Minneapolis: 429,954 |
| Padres | San Diego-Chula Vista-Carlsbad: 3,323,970 | San Diego: 1,386,932 |
| Cardinals | St. Louis-St. Charles-Farmington: 2,806,349 | St. Louis: 301,578 |
| Rays | Tampa-St.Petersburg-Clearwater: 3,152,928 | St. Petersburg: 258,308 |
| Orioles | Baltimore-Columbia-Towson: 2,800,427 | Baltimore: 585,708 |
| Rockies | Denver-Aurora-Lakewood: 2,928,437 | Denver: 715,522 |
| Pirates | Pittsburgh-New Castle-Weirton: 2,324,447 | Pittsburgh: 302,971 |
| Reds | Cincinnati-Wilmington-Maysville: 2,214,265 | Cincinnati: 309,317 |
| Indians | Cleveland-Akron-Canton: 2,053,137 | Cleveland: 372,624 |
| Royals | Kansas City-Overland Park-Kansas City (MO-KS): 2,144,129 | Kansas City: 508,090 |
| Brewers | Milwaukee-Waukesha: 1,576,525 | Milwaukee: 577,222 |

* Look at the diversity of the player population
  + Mainly the decline of African Americans
    - <https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/29756333/mlb-diverse-hiring-practices-quite-match-stated-commitments-social-change>
    - <https://sabr.org/bioproj/topic/baseball-demographics-1947-2016/>
      * This has the demographic percentages for a long period and those percentages are weighted by WAR which shows even more
    - <https://www.si.com/mlb/2020/07/17/preston-wilson-baseball-black-lives-matter>
  + The issue with marketing players to the youth
    - <https://www.si.com/mlb/2018/07/24/mike-trout-marketing>
    - Mike Trout is one of the best players to ever step on the field and he is not a household name. My mom knows who Lebron, Messi, Tiger Woods, and Tom Brady are
  + Less and less youth baseball players
    - Specifically African Americans
* Problems with the sport
  + Non-physical
    - Blackouts
      * Basically you can’t watch every local team on tv unless you have the local broadcasters channel, it's a nationally televised game or you are physically not in the region of that team.
      * I know, it's incredibly silly and really hampers a fan's ability to believe in the sport as a sport and not just a money grab now.
    - Boring free agency
      * Last few years are skewed because of some gigantic contracts but otherwise, it's one deal and then 50 deals that are a few million dollars.
      * There have been a good amount of giant contracts in the past few years and especially this past offseason there was a lot of money spent. But with most sports, there are only so many starts and there aren’t that many guys primed to really get paid in these coming off-seasons.
    - Denying minor leaguers livable wages and support
      * Housing: <https://theathletic.com/3095638/2022/01/27/mlbs-minor-league-housing-policy-has-potential-problems-advocacy-group-says/>

<https://theathletic.com/news/mlb-to-require-teams-to-provide-housing-for-minor-league-players-in-22-source/IMdYa9V7r7BU/>

* + - * Wages: <https://theathletic.com/3130271/2022/02/15/we-are-making-pennies-for-many-minor-leaguers-unpaid-offseasons-prove-more-grueling-than-the-actual-seasons/>

<https://theathletic.com/2750280/2021/08/05/cockroaches-car-camping-poverty-wages-why-are-minor-leaguers-living-in-squalor/>

<https://theathletic.com/3188098/2022/03/15/judge-rules-minor-league-players-are-mlb-employees-throughout-year-and-are-owed-damages/>

* + - Holding prospects down in the minors to manipulate service time (Use Kris Bryant as an example)
      * Explain what service time manipulation is
      * <https://theathletic.com/1579879/2020/02/03/after-kris-bryant-loses-landmark-grievance-players-may-push-to-change-service-time-system/>
      * <https://theathletic.com/837222/2019/02/25/its-awful-kris-bryant-on-how-baseballs-service-time-rule-needs-to-change/>
      * <https://theathletic.com/1325167/2019/10/26/what-kris-bryants-service-time-grievance-means-for-the-cubs-the-union-and-major-league-baseball/>
      * <https://theathletic.com/520885/2018/09/13/stark-is-there-a-way-to-fix-baseballs-service-time-mess/>
      * <https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/33761266/the-end-mlb-service-manipulation-how-kris-bryant-paved-way-next-kris-bryant>
    - The draft doesn’t draw nearly as much attention as NBA or NFL, only semi-avid fans watch the first few rounds if not just 1st and nerds like me watch more.
    - College baseball doesn’t attract nearly as much attention as basketball or football does. College baseball prospects aren’t close to household names like the top football and basketball players end up being.
    - On top of that high school, players can be drafted and they are even harder to know about so if an average person watches the 2021 draft and sees Jackson Jobe get drafted they won't know who the hell he is.
  + Physical
    - Unwritten rules
      * <https://www.mlb.com/news/the-unwritten-rules-of-baseball>
      * Unwritten rules are basically rules that aren’t in the rule book but oldheads from when Babe Ruth was playing followed them. In a lot of people's minds, they are gentleman rules and some are good but most are outright stupid.
      * In 2020 when the Padres were playing the Rangers, Fernando Tatis Jr. was up to bat and the count was 3-0. His third base coach gave him the sign to take a pitch to see if he could get a walk, but he ignored that. The bases were loaded and it was the 8th inning, Tatis’s team the Padres were up by 7 runs already. The pitcher threw a fastball to try and get a strike and Tatis launched a mammoth grand slam. The next Rangers pitcher to come in threw at Manny Machado which led to him and the Rangers manager getting suspended. The manager even complained after the game during the press conference. Even the Padres manager was upset with Tatis. Simply put this is stupid, out of all sports a lead in baseball is the least safe.
      * List of silly rules.
        + When up by a large margin you aren't allowed to steal bases, swing at 3-0 pitches, or run up the score in general.
        + When losing by a large margin don’t steal bases or strut (pimp) a home run.
        + You can’t swing at a pitcher's first pitch during the at-bat if he just gave up back-to-back home runs.
        + Don't show up to your opponent in general. (bat flips, slow homer trots, screaming after striking a guy out, etc.)
        + Pitchers shouldn’t show up their fielders. (Get visually upset about an error or bad throw/play) (This one is ok)
        + It's ok to throw at hitters if there is bad blood or if they broke another unwritten rule.
        + Pitchers that are pulled mid-inning have to stay in the dugout till the end of the inning. (This one is ok)
        + Never step on the pitcher's mound unless you are going out there to pitch. (This one is ok)
        + Don’t walk in front of the catcher when coming up to bat, go behind the umpire and the catcher to your batter's box. (This one is ok)
        + Never talk about a no-hitter or perfect game when it's happening or you will jinx it. (This one is ok)
        + Don’t bunt during a no-hitter.
        + Don’t be the 1st or 3rd out at the third base.
        + Don’t try to interfere with a fielder when trying to catch a ball. (This one is ok)
        + The center fielder gets priority over balls hit in the gaps. <https://www.nbcsports.com/chicago/video/luis-robert-steals-jimenez-catch-eloys-face-says-it-all>
        + Don’t rub the area where you got hit by a pitch. (Macho thing)
        + If you're an adult and you catch a ball you should give it to a nearby kid. (this one is ok) (home run is more of an exception)
  + OOTP 23
    - Option 1: Make a custom league and see what you can change
    - Option 2: Make individual historical leagues for the 70s, 80s, 90s, 20s, and 2010s
  + Decline of athleticism
    - “The shift has got to be cut down,” Lindor told [Sports Illustrated](https://www.si.com/mlb/2021/03/12/new-york-mets-francisco-lindor-daily-cover). “Let me do me. Let me make the crazy play. Let me be like, ‘OK, he’s going to pull the ball. I can’t be on that side of the base.’ So as the pitch goes, I run on the other side of the base—*pow!*—and make the play.”
    - Players aren’t necessarily losing athleticism but the game is forcing it out. Things like the shift decrease impressive defense and good baserunning. Fewer balls in play decrease defensive plays and opportunities for good baserunning. The decline of stealing bases has really hurt a population of players that are really only used for their athleticism.
    - This has appeared to force some athleticism out of the sport, you can see more and more overweight and somewhat out-of-shape players that play.
    - Guys like Nelson Cruz, he’s not that big but he can barely play the field, all he does is hit. Bartolo Colon and Prince Fielder are other examples.
    - Find shift percentage over the years
  + Decline of balls in play
    - Look at three true outcomes
    - Major power increase
      * Look at ISO over the years
      * Slugging
      * HRs
    - The drastic shifts
    - Strategy
  + Lack of stealing
    - Stolen bases per season or percentage over the years
    - Part of the change in baseball
    - Known to be injury-causing
    - Not as valuable as people thought to
      * Find a way to show the value of a stolen base
    - Only really used in situational settings
      * Trying to get rid of a double play opportunity
      * Late in the game and need a run
  + Pitchers stuff has outgrown hitters
    - Everyone throws 97+ MPH now
      * See if you can find average fastball velocity over the years
      * Literally almost every pitcher throws hard now
    - A tried and true starter doesn’t really exist anymore, only hard openers (Guys that only really throw 5 innings a start instead of when almost all starters could easily go out and throw 7-8 or more)
      * Compare total starter innings over the years if possible