

# Sport Badminton History:

Games employing [shuttlecocks](#) have been played for centuries across [Eurasia](#),<sup>[a]</sup> but the modern game of badminton developed in the mid-19th century among the expatriate officers of [British India](#) as a variant of the earlier game of [battledore and shuttlecock](#). ("Battledore" was an older term for "racquet".)<sup>[4]</sup> Its exact origin remains obscure. The name derives from the [Duke of Beaufort's Badminton House](#) in [Gloucestershire](#),<sup>[5]</sup> but why or when remains unclear. As early as 1860, a London toy dealer named [Isaac Spratt](#) published a booklet entitled *Badminton Battledore – A New Game*, but no copy is known to have survived.<sup>[6]</sup> An 1863 article in *The Cornhill Magazine* describes badminton as "battledore and shuttlecock played with sides, across a string suspended some five feet from the ground".<sup>[7]</sup>

The game originally developed in [India](#) among the British expatriates,<sup>[8]</sup> where it was very popular by the 1870s.<sup>[6]</sup> [Ball badminton](#), a form of the game played with a wool ball instead of a shuttlecock, was being played in [Thanjavur](#) as early as the 1850s<sup>[9]</sup> and was at first played interchangeably with badminton by the British, the woollen ball being preferred in windy or wet weather.

Early on, the game was also known as **Poona** or **Poonah** after the garrison town of [Poona](#),<sup>[8][10]</sup> where it was particularly popular and where the first rules for the game were drawn up in 1873.<sup>[6][7][b]</sup> By 1875, officers returning home had started a badminton club in [Folkestone](#). Initially, the sport was played with sides ranging from 1 to 4 players, but it was quickly established that games between two or four competitors worked the best.<sup>[4]</sup> The shuttlecocks were coated with [India rubber](#) and, in outdoor play, sometimes weighted with [lead](#).<sup>[4]</sup> Although the depth of the net was of no consequence, it was preferred that it should reach the ground.<sup>[4]</sup>

The sport was played under the Pune rules until 1887, when J. H. E. Hart of the [Bath](#) Badminton Club drew up revised regulations.<sup>[5]</sup> In 1890, Hart and Bagnel Wild again revised the rules.<sup>[6]</sup> The [Badminton Association](#) of England (BAE) published these rules in 1893 and officially launched the sport at a house called "Dunbar"<sup>[c]</sup> in [Portsmouth](#) on 13 September.<sup>[12]</sup> The BAE started the first badminton competition, the [All England Open Badminton Championships](#) for gentlemen's doubles, ladies' doubles, and mixed doubles, in 1899.<sup>[5]</sup> Singles competitions were added in 1900 and an [England–Ireland](#) championship match appeared in 1904