

= The Million Second Quiz =

The Million Second Quiz is an American game show hosted by Ryan Seacrest and broadcast by NBC . The series aired from September 9 to September 19 , 2013 . For a titular million seconds (11 days , 13 hours , 46 minutes , and 40 seconds) , contestants attempted to maintain control of a " money chair " by winning trivia matches against other contestants , earning money for every second they occupied the chair . The top four scoring contestants were sequestered together until either they dropped from the top four and were replaced by another contestant or the million seconds were up at which point they were awarded the money they had accumulated and then had to compete in a stepladder playoff for the top prize of \$ 2 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 .

Executive produced by Stephen Lambert , Eli Holzman , and David Hurwitz , The Million Second Quiz was positioned as a live , multi @-@ platform television event , which Lambert dubbed " the Olympics of quiz " , that would help to promote NBC 's lineup for the 2013 ? 14 television season . The series was cross @-@ promoted through a number of NBCUniversal properties , and NBC broadcast a live prime time show for each night of the competition (except for September 15 , due to Sunday Night Football) and a two @-@ hour finale . Additionally , through a mobile app , viewers could play the game against others and potentially earn a chance to appear as a contestant during the prime time episodes . Outside of the prime time episodes , the program was also webcast throughout the competition by means of the Million Second Quiz app and NBC.com.

Critics argued that the confusing format of The Million Second Quiz along with its lack of drama and technical issues with the show 's app during the first days of the series , caused viewers to lose interest in watching it on air . Although peaking at 6 @. @ 52 million viewers for its premiere , ratings steadily dropped during the show 's run before rising again near the finale .

= = Development = =

The concept of The Million Second Quiz was intended to make the show a " national event " ; while pitching the format to NBC , creator Stephen Lambert compared the game to a tennis match and called it " the Olympics of quiz . " To promote the series , NBC relied on a cross @-@ platform promotional strategy similar to what it had used in the past for The Voice ; including appearances by host Ryan Seacrest on other NBC programs , such as the network 's NFL pre @-@ game show , Football Night in America. to support the show , and tie @-@ in advertisements for programs airing across other NBCUniversal properties (such as USA Network) . The program itself also served as a vehicle for promoting NBC 's then @-@ upcoming lineup for the 2013 @-@ 14 television season .

NBC wanted the game 's prime time portions aired live from an outdoor location in Manhattan with the city skyline for background . Production designer Anton Goss , who also designed the set for NBC 's The Voice , came up with a three @-@ story bent @-@ steel structure in the shape of a giant hourglass laced with lights and containing the custom @-@ made Money Chair - " ... on a rooftop with the city behind us ... we have to do something significant ... It 's like we 're building our own little skyscraper . " Because of the 18 @, @ 000 lb weight of the hourglass structure in addition to bleachers full of audience members during show times , the building 's rooftop required shoring so that the second floor could help carry the large loads . Geiger Engineers provided the structural engineering for the hourglass and other rooftop structures as well as the required rooftop shoring .

= = Gameplay = =

The quiz was set in an hourglass @-@ shaped structure located on a roof in midtown Manhattan . An indoor set in the same building was also constructed for use during the non @-@ prime time portions of the game and for any inclement weather situations , as occurred on Day 4 . Contestants played in a quiz competition that ran 24 hours a day for 1 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 seconds , or about eleven and a half days .

At any given time , one contestant sat in the " Money Chair " and accumulated money while at the same time defending his / her position against a series of challengers in head @-@ to @-@ head

quiz bouts . These bouts lasted a set number of seconds with both contestants using keypads to lock in their still @-@ secret answers within five seconds of hearing each question . Winnings were accumulated at a constant rate of \$ 10 per second spent in the chair , even when bouts were not being played and during the prime time commercial breaks . Contestants in the chair earned money until they were defeated by a challenger , who replaced the occupant on the chair . Only the four contestants with the highest total winnings got to keep their money once the countdown clock ran out of time .

= = = Prime time bouts = = =

During prime time , there are three bouts : the " Challenger " bout , the " Line Jumper " bout , and the " Winner 's Defense " bout . Questions start at one point each , with the value increasing by one every 100 seconds . At any time , either contestant may choose to " double " instead of answering ; doing so doubles that question 's value and forces the opponent to act . A doubled opponent may either answer or " double back , " quadrupling the point value and forcing the original contestant to answer . If a doubled or doubled @-@ back contestant answers incorrectly or fails to act within five seconds , the points are awarded to his / her opponent . Contestants may double as often as they wish during a bout .

At the end of the bout , the contestant with the higher score wins and either retains the Money Chair or replaces its current occupant . If the bout ends in a tie score , a tiebreaker question is asked ; the contestant who locks in the correct answer first is the winner . If both of them miss , the contestant who has accumulated more money wins the bout . If a question is in play when the clock runs out , it is completed under the normal rules .

The " Challenger " bout features a person who has successfully completed an on @-@ site tryout process . The " Line Jumper " bout of each episode features a contestant who has achieved a sufficiently high score on the official Million Second Quiz app , allowing him / her to skip the tryouts and advance directly onto the show .

At any given time , the four contestants who have accumulated the most money in their bouts live in " Winners ' Row , " an area of living quarters set up next to the hourglass . They are at risk of being displaced if someone else out @-@ scores them . During a " Winner 's Defense " bout , the current " Power Player " chooses one of the four Winners ' Row occupants (including himself / herself) to face off against the current Money Chair occupant . The winner claims the loser 's entire winnings in addition to his / her own and takes / keeps the Money Chair , while the loser is eliminated . In episode 1 , the Power Player was the contestant with the most winnings ; starting with episode 2 , it was the contestant who had the highest number of correct answers from playing along in Winners ' Row that day . Contestants who are defeated in the Winner 's Defense bouts lose all winnings they have accumulated . All other defeated contestants , including those displaced from Winners ' Row by being out @-@ scored , may try out again for a chance to win their way back into the Money Chair .

= = = Non @-@ prime time bouts = = =

Outside of the one @-@ hour television segments , bouts last 500 seconds . Every question is worth one point ; no doubling is allowed . Four bouts are played per hour , with a five @-@ minute pause after each of the first three . The fourth bout is followed by an 11 @-@ minute break , in which the contestant may eat , drink , or use the restroom as necessary . Money continues to accumulate during the five @-@ minute pauses , but not during the 11 @-@ minute break .

However , in the only international version (the Chinese version) , the prize money only accumulate during the bouts . Once the contestant is eliminated in any moment , they can walk away with a tenth of their prize money that accumulated so far .

= = = Finals = = =

Once the countdown clock reaches zero , the four contestants with the highest totals throughout the game keep all of their credited winnings and compete in a series of three elimination bouts ; the fourth and third @-@ place winners face off in a 400 @-@ second bout , the victor of bout # 1 faces the second @-@ place winner (400 seconds) , and the victor of bout # 2 faces the first @-@ place winner (500 seconds) . The victor of bout # 3 receives an additional \$ 2 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 (in Chinese version , ¥ 1 @, @ 000 @, @ 000) .

In the season finale , Andrew Kravis defeated Brandon Saunders to win the grand prize , for an overall total of \$ 2 @, @ 326 @, @ 346 . Seacrest then announced that Kravis 's winnings would be increased to \$ 2 @, @ 600 @, @ 000 ; this made him the all @-@ time biggest regular @-@ season winner on a single American game show , surpassing Ken Jennings 's \$ 2 @, @ 522 @, @ 700 run on Jeopardy ! in 2004 .

= = Broadcast history = =

The Million Second Quiz premiered on September 9 , 2013 ; however , the non @-@ primetime quiz began a day earlier at 7 : 17 AM EDT . The first episode started with 867 @, @ 826 seconds remaining . The show ran for ten episodes before it concluded on September 19 , 2013 .

= = = Ratings = = =

= = = Reception = = =

The Million Second Quiz generally received negative reviews from television critics and the public alike , and ratings went down over time : its premiere and finale were seen by 6 @. @ 5 and 4 @. @ 95 million viewers respectively , but fell lower in between .

The New York Times ' Mike Hale believed that the general failure of the series was a result of its unclear format , the " banal " subject matter of many of its questions (citing examples which ranged from American history , to the name of Kim Kardashian 's cat) , the fact that second screen interactions with game shows were not a new concept , and that the show and its interactive components were not " convergent " enough ? beyond the small chance users received to appear on the show , arguing that " the one authentic way for the public to engage with Million Second Quiz was resolutely old school : coming to Times Square and standing on the sidewalk . "

Writing for The A.V. Club , Sonia Saraiya felt that The Million Second Quiz , in contrast to other major reality shows such as Big Brother , was a " hyped show about hype " that lacked substance , and was designed primarily to be a vehicle for social media interaction , product placement , and self @-@ promotion for NBC 's programming and personalities . Saraiya wrote that " there might be more to say about the show , but it almost doesn 't matter . Inane as it is , it 's not mean @-@ spirited , just bizarre . And the show is so deeply flawed and so universally unpopular that it is not going to remain in anyone 's memory for long . But the real story here isn 't about the show , it 's about the network . In this wildly expensive failure , it ? s possible to see so many of NBC 's flaws , all in the same package . " However , she did praise the show 's production for featuring contestants who were " friendly " and " relatable , " rather than " chosen for their reprehensibility . "

= = International version = =

China 's Hunan TV adapted this show , which was entitled " ????? " , presented by Kevin Tsai . The show premiered on September 30 , 2015 , and ran for eight days constantly as the special transmission for the National Day holiday . SNH48 and four other local female presenters would co @-@ present the show live along with Kevin at non @-@ primetime . The winner of the first season was Shen Jiaxin , with the grand total of RMB 1 @, @ 135 @, @ 000 (US \$ 178 @, @ 574 or ? 158 @, @ 648) pre @-@ tax .