

Fenway Facts

What are the dimensions of Fenway Park?

Fenway Park measures 310 feet (94.5 meters) down the left field line; 379 feet (115.5 meters) in left center field; 390 feet (118.9 meters) in center field; 420 feet (128 meters) in deep center field; 380 feet (115.8 meters) in deep right field; and 302 feet (92 meters) down the right field line.

The left field wall -- also known as the Green Monster -- measures 37 feet (11.3 meters) high, with the screen above the wall extending 23 feet (7 meters). The center field wall is 17 feet (5.2 meters) high, the bullpen fences measure five feet (1.5 meters) and the right field fence is 3 to 5 feet (0.9 to 1.5 meters) high.

When did Fenway Park open?

Opening Day for Fenway Park was April 20, 1912. The Red Sox defeated the New York Highlanders (later named the Yankees) 7-6 in 11 innings before 27,000 fans. Tris Speaker drove in the winning run.

Fenway Park was actually due to open two days earlier, on April 18; however, there were two postponements due to rain.

Of course, the opening of Fenway Park was pushed off the front pages of Boston newspapers by news of the Titanic sinking. Navin Field (later known as Tiger Stadium) in Detroit opened the same day as Fenway Park.

Where did the Red Sox play before Fenway Park?

Prior to 1912, the Red Sox played their home games at the Huntington Avenue Grounds, now part of Northeastern University.

The Huntington Avenue Baseball Grounds, an all-wooden structure, had a seating capacity of 9,000. The Boston games in the first World Series in 1903 were played there. The first game at the Huntington Grounds was played on May 8, 1901 in front of an overflow crowd of 11,500 fans as hurler Cy Young pitched the Boston team to a 12-4 win over the Philadelphia Athletics.

What other teams have played in Fenway Park?

Besides the Red Sox, several other teams have played in Fenway Park.

In 1914, while Braves Field was under construction, the "Miracle Boston Braves" played their World Series games in Fenway. The Braves swept the favored Philadelphia A's in four games.

The Boston Patriots — now the New England Patriots — were fall occupants from 1963-68 before eventually ending up in Foxboro. The Patriots, however, were not the first pro football team in Fenway. The Boston Redskins played four years here before heading to Washington in 1937. The Boston Yanks played here from 1944-48 prior to traveling to New York, Dallas, Baltimore (where they became the Colts) and now Indianapolis.

Collegiately, Boston College teams mostly of the Frank Leahy era, and Boston University with stellar quarterback Harry Agganis (later a promising Red Sox first baseman who died during the 1955 season) also played home games in Fenway Park.

Why the name "Fenway"?

Constructed for the 1912 season, the new ballpark was named by then Red Sox owner John I. Taylor because it was built in an area of Boston known as the Fens. As Taylor said, "It's in that section of Boston, isn't it? Then call it Fenway Park."

Taylor, by the way, was also the person who changed the club's name from the Pilgrims to the

Red Sox in 1907.

What's the largest crowd ever to attend a game in Fenway Park?

The biggest baseball crowd at Fenway ever was 47,627 for a Yankees doubleheader on September 22, 1935.

Previous to that, 46,995 fans attended a Detroit Tigers doubleheader on August 19, 1934. One week earlier, on August 12, 1934, a crowd of 46,766 said goodbye to Babe Ruth at a Yankees doubleheader. (The Babe actually did not retire after the 1934 season, but played one more year with the Boston Braves.)

Those crowds will never be equaled under Fenway's current dimensions. After World War II, more stringent fire laws and league rules prohibited the overcrowding that was so common in the 1930s. The current capacity of Fenway Park is 36,108 for night games and 35,692 for day games.

What was Duffy's Cliff?

From 1912 to 1933, there was a 10-foot-high mound that formed an incline in front of the left field wall at Fenway park, extending from the left-field foul pole to the centerfield flag pole. As a result of the mound, a left fielder in Fenway Park had to play the entire territory running uphill. Boston's first star left fielder, Duffy Lewis, mastered the skill so well that the area became known as Duffy's Cliff.

In 1934, Red Sox owner Tom Yawkey arranged to flatten the ground in left field so that Duffy's Cliff no longer existed and became part of the lore of Fenway Park.

Is the manual scoreboard still used?

Absolutely! Fenway Park has one of the last hand-operated scoreboards in the Major Leagues in the left-field wall. Green and red lights are used to signal balls, strikes, and outs.

Each scoreboard number used to indicate runs and hits measures 16 inches by 16 inches and weighs three pounds. The numbers used for errors, innings, and pitcher's numbers measure 12 inches by 16 inches, and weigh two pounds each.

Whereas all other ballgame scores used to be displayed on the manual scoreboard, only scores from other American League games are posted there now during Red Sox games. That change to the scoreboard occurred in 1975, when the wall was remodeled and when Fenway Park's first electronic scoreboard was installed. Scores from ongoing National League games are now displayed on the electronic scoreboards around Fenway Park.

Behind the manual scoreboard is a room where the walls are covered with signatures of players who have played at Fenway Park over the years. Also, the initials TAY and JRY — for Tom Yawkey and Jean Yawkey — appear in Morse code in two vertical stripes on the scoreboard.

What is the meaning of that seat painted red in the bleachers?

The seat in the right field bleachers is painted red to mark the spot where the longest measurable home run ever hit inside Fenway Park landed. Ted Williams hit the home run on June 9, 1946 off Fred Hutchinson of the Detroit Tigers. The blast was measured at 502 feet. Legend says that the ball crashed through the straw hat of the man sitting in the seat — Section 42, Row 37, Seat 21.

What is Pesky's Pole?

Even though Pesky's Pole was dubbed that in the 1950s, the phrase really didn't become popular until the late 1980s or early 1990s. According to former Red Sox star Johnny Pesky, it was Sox pitcher Mel Parnell who coined the term, after Pesky hit a home run just beyond Fenway Park's right-field foul pole. That home run — one of only six homers Pesky ever hit at Fenway Park — won the game for Parnell.

Did you know...?

No player has ever hit a home run over the right-field roof at Fenway Park.

The screen behind Fenway's home plate that protects fans and allows foul balls to roll back down onto the field was the first of its kind in the Major Leagues.

The padding at the bottom of both left- and center-field walls at Fenway Park was installed after the 1975 World Series. In Game 6, Sox outfielder Fred Lynn crashed into the then-concrete wall in center trying to make a catch, and then lay on the field for several minutes.

In 1945, a throw by Athletics outfielder Hal Peck hit a pigeon flying over Fenway Park. The ball then deflected to the A's second baseman, who tagged out Boston's Skeeter Newsome trying to stretch his hit into a double. The pigeon flew away, minus a few feathers but otherwise unharmed. Another pigeon was not so lucky in 1974. Willie Horton hit a foul ball into the air at Fenway Park, hitting a low-flying pigeon. The pigeon fell from the sky — dead — and landed in front of home plate.

Fenway Milestones

- **April 20, 1912:** Fenway Park officially opens. After two rainouts, the Red Sox defeat the New York Highlanders (now the New York Yankees) 7-6 in 11 innings in the first professional baseball game played at Fenway Park. The first game ever played at Fenway Park actually occurred on April 9, when the Red Sox beat Harvard University, 2-0.
- **May 8, 1926:** The first Fenway fire occurs. The bleachers along the left-field foul line burn down and are not replaced, giving fielders the chance to snare foul flies behind the third base grandstand.
- **1931:** The Red Sox players first wear numbers on their uniforms. Since then, the Red Sox have retired five uniform numbers: Ted Williams' No. 9 and Joe Cronin's No. 4 officially retired May 29, 1984; Bobby Doerr's No. 1 retired May 21, 1988; Carl Yastrzemski's No. 8 retired August 6, 1989; and Carlton Fisk's No. 27 retired September 4, 2000. Major League Baseball retired the No. 42 of Jackie Robinson.
- **July 3, 1932:** The Red Sox play the team's first Sunday game at Fenway, a 13-2 loss to the Yankees. Sunday baseball was approved in Boston three years earlier, but not at Fenway due to its proximity to a church. The Red Sox then played their Sunday games at Braves Field on Commonwealth Avenue until the law was changed. The first Red Sox Sunday game actually played in Boston was a 7-3 loss to Philadelphia at Braves Field on April 28, 1929 (the Braves game of April 21 was rained out) before 22,000 fans.
- **January 5, 1934:** The second Fenway fire occurs. A four-alarm, four-hour blaze virtually destroys the construction underway to refurbish the park by new owner Thomas A. Yawkey.
- **April 17, 1934:** A newly rebuilt Fenway Park opens. The Washington Senators, led by shortstop-manager Joe Cronin beat the Red Sox, 6-5 in 11 innings.
- **Biggest baseball crowds at Fenway:** 47,627 for a Yankees doubleheader on **September 22, 1935**...46,995 for a Detroit Tigers doubleheader on August 19, 1934...And — a week earlier — 46,766 to say goodbye to Babe Ruth at a Yankees doubleheader on August 12, 1934. Those crowds will never be equaled under Fenway's current dimensions. More stringent fire laws and league rules after World War II prohibited overcrowding that was permitted in the Thirties.
- **1936:** A 23-1/2-foot tall screen is installed above the left field wall to protect the windows of buildings on Lansdowne Street, the road on the other side of the left field wall.

- **July 13, 1939:** The first road night game is played by the Red Sox in Cleveland. The Red Sox win 6-5 in 10 innings; the winning pitcher was Joe Heving.
- **1940:** Bullpens are constructed in front of the bleachers, replacing the old bullpen areas in the outfield foul territory beyond the dugouts.
- **1946:** Ted Williams hits a monumental 502-foot home run to right field off Detroit right hander Fred Hutchinson on June 9. The ball lands on top of the straw hat of Joseph A. Boucher, 56, a construction engineer from Albany, NY who is sitting in section 42, row 37, seat 21. "The sun was right in our eyes," he said. "All we could do was duck. I'm glad I didn't stand up. They say it bounced a dozen rows higher, but after it hit my head, I was no longer interested." At that time the bleachers were real bleachers and not individual seats.
- **1947:** Arc lights are installed at Fenway Park, making the Red Sox the third last team among the then 16 major league clubs to do so. The Red Sox defeat the White Sox, 5-3, in Fenway's first night game on June 13, with Dave Ferriss getting the win. Green paint replaces advertisements covering the left field wall, giving rise to the nickname "The Green Monster" — no more Calvert owl ("Be wise"), Gem Blades ("Avoid 5 o'clock shadow"), Lifebuoy ("The Red Sox use it") and Vimms ("Get that Vimms feeling").
- **May 12, 1948:** Red Sox games are first televised at Fenway on WBZ-TV.
- **Oct. 4, 1948:** The first playoff game in American League history takes place at Fenway. Cleveland rookie left-hander Gene Bearden beats the Red Sox 8-3; shortstop-manager Lou Boudreau lead the Indians with two home runs and two singles. The defeat prevented the only cross-town World Series in Boston history. Cleveland beat the Boston Braves four games to two in the World Series.
- **Oct. 21, 1975:** The first World Series night game occurs at Fenway Park. The memorable Game 6, delayed three days by rain, lasts four hours and one minute, and ends with Carlton Fisk's dramatic home run off Pat Darcy to lead off the last of the 12th. The Red Sox tie the game at 6-6 in the last of the eighth on Bernie Carbo's three-run, pinch-hit home run with two outs.
- **1976:** Fenway Park gets its first message board in center field. The board installation is part of a construction project that includes a rebuilding of the left field wall as well as a new enclosed press box.
- **Oct. 2, 1978:** The second playoff game in American League history also occurs at Fenway Park. The Red Sox win their last eight games of the regular season to tie the Yankees for first place in the East. The infamous Bucky Dent, two-out, three-run fly ball home run into the left-field net puts New York ahead to stay in the seventh inning. The Red Sox leave two men on in the ninth inning and lose 5-4.
- **1982-83:** The private suites are built atop the left- and right-field stands.
- **1987-88:** A color videoboard with a black and white message board is installed in center field. The playing area is completely resodded. In addition, a new function facility ("Diamond at Fenway") and souvenir shop ("The Lansdowne Shop") are constructed.
- **1988-89:** The Red Sox add 610 stadium club seats ("The 600 Club") above the grandstand behind home plate, the site of the former press box. New broadcast booths and a press box are installed atop The 600 Club.
- **1989-90:** Massive renovations are made to the Red Sox ticket office.
- **1990-91:** A new weight room and a multi-purpose room are constructed in the area of the Red Sox clubhouse.
- **1991-92:** The Red Sox install portable enclosures for bullpen benches during cold weather, in addition to making complete renovations to both dugouts.
- **1992:** A metal awning roof is installed above left- and right-field roof box seats.
- **1993:** Organized tours of Fenway Park begin.
- **1993-94:** A three-year restroom renovation is completed.
- **1995:** The Red Sox install energy efficient lighting, heating/cooling and control systems throughout facility via a Boston Edison Company energy conservation program.
- **March 19, 1997:** The Sox unveil a 25-foot Coca-Cola contour bottle design atop the left-field wall light tower signifying the Red Sox' and Coca-Cola's partnership and their

- commitment to the fans, community and Jimmy Fund through the "Monster Refreshment" program. The program ensures ticket price savings for fans and significant contributions to the Jimmy Fund for each Red Sox home run hit over the left-field wall or one that hits the Coke bottle. In 1997 the Red Sox hit two home runs off the Coke bottle: Wil Cordero Apr. 13 vs. Seattle and Tim Lincecum May 11 vs. Texas.
- **May 1997:** The batting cage beneath the center field bleachers undergo a complete renovation.
 - **March 1999:** Red Sox and visitors' clubhouse improvements are completed.
 - **July 13, 1999:** The 70th Major League Baseball All-Star Game is held at Fenway Park. Baseball fans everywhere thrill to the presentation of MLB's All-Century Team, with the ultimate finale being an appearance by Red Sox great Ted Williams on the field. In a spontaneous gesture, all of the players and coaches on the field surround Williams to show their respect and appreciation for everything he means to baseball. Sox pitcher and American League starting pitcher Pedro Martinez is named the Most Valuable Player for his pitching performance as the AL defeats the National League, 4-1. Pedro becomes the first pitcher in All-Star history to strike out the game's first three batters. Of the six batters Pedro faces during his two-inning stint, five — Barry Larkin, Larry Walker, Sammy Sosa, Mark McGwire, and Jeff Bagwell — struck out.
 - **April 2002:** Two rows of "dugout" seats (on the infield side of both dugouts to backstop) were added. A media interview room was constructed adjacent to Red Sox clubhouse. The family room was converted to a players lounge, and a new, expanded family lounge was built.
 - **July 2002:** Green Monster signage was added atop the left field wall.
 - **September 2002:** Yawkey Way and the Gate A concourse expansion opened with concessions, restrooms and fan-friendly attractions for all ages.
 - **April 2003:** Green Monster seats debuted above the left field wall. Two rows of additional seats and new camera pits were constructed on the outfield end of Red Sox and visitors dugouts. Two new rows of seats behind the plate and a new backstop were added. A new manual out-of-town scoreboard and advertising panels were installed on the left field wall. The Legends Suite debuted in Suite R-1, giving groups of fans the chance to watch a game with a Red Sox great. The Hall of Fame/.406 Club was refurbished and decorated. Yawkey Way officially opened after a one-month trial in September of 2002. The SmarTix program was launched.
 - **July/August 2003:** Big Concourse with restrooms (including family restroom), concessions, customer service booth, portable turnstiles and picnic areas opened in right field. New ticket booths opened at Gates B and C. Gate D food court/expanded concessions on lower concourse opened. ARAMARK commissary moved to old Laundry Building area.
 - **September 6-7, 2003:** Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band performed a pair of sold-out concerts at Fenway Park.
 - **April 9, 2004:** New seating on the right field roof debuted.
 - **April 16, 2004:** Red Sox legends Johnny Pesky and Bobby Doerr joined Mayor Thomas M. Menino in unveiling a new statue of Ted Williams outside of Gate B.
 - **September 10 and 12, 2004:** Jimmy Buffett and the Coral Reefer Band packed Fenway for a pair of sold-out concerts.
 - **October 8, 2004:** David Ortiz crushed a two-run homer off Jarrod Washburn with two outs in the the bottom of the 10th, giving the Red Sox an 8-6 win over the Angels and a sweep of the best-of-five AL Division Series.
 - **August 21 and 23, 2005:** The Rolling Stones rocked Fenway Park with a pair of sold-out shows.
 - **2006:** Heeding the request of fans, the Red Sox removed the glass that had separated the .406 Club from the ambiance and atmosphere of Fenway, creating the new EMC Club and the State Street Pavilion in time for Opening Day, 2006. In the process, the club added 1,300 seats, standing room, additional concession stands and restrooms, while widening concourses and creating more room for fans.