May 2022

Hartsfield Planning

The **top 10** sporting events coming to the UK in summer 2022

It's fair to say that the UK is addicted to sport.

Other countries can obsess over a single sport – cricket in India, football in Brazil and ice hockey in Canada all come to mind – but it's hard to think of another nation that can pack out stadiums and arenas for such a diverse range of sporting events.

You only have to think back to the 2012 Olympics in London, when pretty much every event was sold out, to realise that British people will watch anything sports-related.

We attract a stream of international events to our shores, because organisers know that tickets will sell, and books will be balanced.

The coming summer of sport

Around this time every year, we tend to look ahead at the coming "summer of sport" and try to pick out the potential highlights and the events we should really make a point of watching.

After two years of events being affected by the Covid pandemic to some extent or another, there's more of an excited air of anticipation than usual.

In this guide, you can read about the top 10 events due to take place in the UK between now and September.

For each of the 10, you'll find an outline of the event, what to expect, the dates, venues and a competitor to watch. There are spectating tips, and a link to the official website for more information.

So, on your marks, get set – let's go!

A word about tickets

Throughout this guide you'll find details of tickets for all the events listed.

It's worth bearing in mind that the long-term popularity of certain events means some can sell out months in advance.

If there's a particular event you want to watch that is sold out this year, we'd recommend watching it on TV, and then making plans in advance for 2023.

Apart from the Commonwealth Games and Women's Euros, all events here are annual occurrences, so there's always next year to plan for if you can't get to watch this year's event live.

Ticket tip

Get on the mailing list for events. This will mean you'll receive a prompt when tickets are available. You may get early access and even an "early bird" discount.

1. The Derby

Staged on the Epsom Downs in Surrey, The Derby is one of the highlights of the UK flat-racing season.

This year is the 243rd running of the race – making it by far the oldest of all the events we've listed here.

The length of the race itself is relatively short – under a mile and a half – so it doesn't last long, but the atmosphere and noise of the massive crowd as the runners sweep round Tattenham Corner and down the long home stretch towards the winning post is extraordinary.

Dates

The Derby meeting used to be held in the middle of the week but is now staged over two days – Friday and Saturday – in June.

The dates this year are 3 and 4 June.

Spectator guide

The size of the crowd and wide-open spaces of the Downs make for a fairground atmosphere outside the main enclosures nearer the main stand.

Tickets start from as little as £20, and for that you'll get to watch a series of top-quality races before the main race. Check out the Derby website for more information.

Jockey to watch

Adam Kirby won his first Derby last year on Adayar, so will be looking to become the first jockey since Kieran Fallon in 2003/04 to ride two consecutive winners.

2. The Lord's Test

Lord's cricket ground bathed in sunshine with a full house watching the game is one of the archetypal images of an English summer.

If we're being accurate, we should refer to this event in the plural as, this summer, Lord's hosts not one Test match but two. It's traditional for all touring teams to play at the home of cricket so, with both New Zealand and South Africa touring England, both will play Tests there.

Quick tip

If you're going, get there early. You'll avoid the big queues to get in and will have the chance to watch the players practice while you soak up the atmosphere.

Dates

England play New Zealand at Lord's from 2 to 6 June and then South Africa from 17 to 21 August.

Spectator guide

Tickets for the first four days are often in short supply and can sell out quickly. So, if you're thinking of going, don't delay.

Because not every Test match lasts five days, tickets for the final day are rarely sold out in advance.

The Lord's website has more ticket information.

As with most sporting events, food and drink in the venue itself can be pricey. However, picnicking is encouraged in the areas behind the pavilion and at the Nursery End of the ground.

Unlike every other Test match ground in the world, you're allowed to take your own (limited) supply of alcohol in with you.

Player to watch

Ben Stokes has been England's talisman for several years, peaking in the summer of 2019 as he helped England to win the World Cup. He also played one of the all-time legendary innings at Headingley against Australia.

Stokes remains one of the best all-rounders in the world – a compelling performer with both bat and ball.

3. Royal Ascot

Spread over a week in the middle of June, the Royal Ascot meeting is one of the big highlights of the horse racing calendar.

The quality of racing means that top trainers send their best horses there. Proximity to London guarantees big crowds, with a long tradition of getting dressed up to look the part.

The “royal” soubriquet comes from the fact that royalty have made a point of visiting, given that Ascot is just down the road from Windsor Castle and the royals’ long-term affinity with horse racing.

Dates and venue

Ascot racecourse is in Berkshire, about 50 minutes on the train from the centre of London.

The meeting takes place between 14 and 18 June.

Spectator guide

As with the Derby, you’ll pay more to get closer to the enclosures closer to the parade ring and the winning post. Bear in mind that the closer you get, the smarter you’ll be expected to dress.

If you’re happy just to soak up the atmosphere and enjoy the racing you’re never far from a bar and a bookmaker everywhere on the course.

The official website has more information.

Jockey to watch

It’s too early to know which horses are likely to be on show and attracting punters’ money.

The 2021 champion jockey, Oisin Murphy, has ridden over 200 times at Ascot with 24 winners, so knows the course and conditions well.

4. Wimbledon

Wimbledon is one of the few sporting events that is instantly recognisable by the name of the location in which it takes place.

For the sake of completeness, we can say that the venue is actually called the "All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club". The Wimbledon Championship itself is one of the four grand slam tennis events and, as such, attracts the best players in the world to London SW19 every summer.

There's an air of old-style tradition at the event which could prove stifling, but the tennis authorities have done a good job in mixing tradition with modernity to make the event a "must attend" – and not just for tennis fans.

Quick tip

If you hang around outside the main courts in the late afternoon, you can often find that someone leaving for the day will give you their ticket. You'll then have the chance to catch a couple of hours of top play. Centre Court under lights has been known to end after 9pm.

Player to watch

After her extraordinary victory at the US Open, Emma Raducanu will carry most of the British hopes for a home win – especially as Andy Murray's fine career seems to be coming to an end.

Her form seems to have tailed off in the last couple of months, but who would bet against her with the backing of a home crowd?

Dates and venue

Wimbledon takes place over a fortnight from 27 June to 10 July.

Wimbledon itself is in south-west London about 15 minutes by train from the middle of the city.

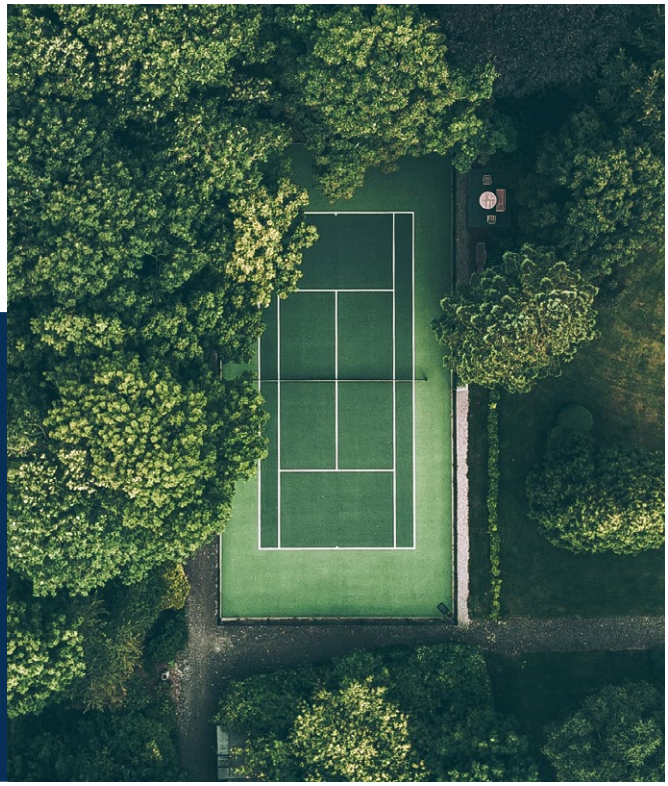
Spectator guide

Tickets for the two main courts are usually only available through an annual ballot held over the preceding winter.

Ground entry tickets can be purchased in advance. These give you access to the venue and all the outside courts. You're free to move from court to court as you please during the day.

There's also a popular tradition of being able to queue for ground entry tickets in the morning, so it's possible to plan a visit at short notice.

The Wimbledon website is a good source of ticket and event information.



5. The British Grand Prix at Silverstone

The British Grand Prix is held in July each year at the Silverstone circuit in front of a crowd of 150,000 people.

The first Grand Prix was held there in 1948 and it's one of the most competitive and popular circuits in the Grand Prix season.

Lewis Hamilton clearly likes it, having won a record eight Grand Prix held there.

Dates and venue

The Grand Prix is on Sunday 3 July.

There are two days of practice beforehand during which drivers' laps are timed to decide their place on the grid for the race itself.

Silverstone is just off the M1 in Northamptonshire, so it is easily accessible from London and the Midlands.

Spectator guide

Tickets do tend to sell out quickly so if you're unsuccessful for this year, it's worth planning ahead for next year's event. Keep an eye on the Silverstone website for ticket and event information.

As with golf, watching on TV means you'll catch all the best moments, although you won't get an idea of the speed the cars are moving at – which is one of the biggest eye-openers if you're there in person.

Driver to watch

Many experts now rate Lewis Hamilton as the best driver Formula 1 has ever seen. His epic dual for the title with Max Verstappen in 2021 has just added to his legendary status – even though the Dutchman ultimately defeated him.

By the time the drivers meet on the Silverstone track, the 2022 championship will have started taking shape and the two of them could well be going toe-to-toe for vital points again.

6. The UEFA Women's Euros

The Women's Euros usually take place every four years but, because of the Covid pandemic, it's five years since hosts Holland beat Denmark 4-2 to win the 2017 tournament.

The delay means the tournament has a clear run from a publicity and coverage point of view as the only major football tournament taking place this summer – which will massively boost the women's game across the continent.

16 teams will compete over a 25-day period, with the final at Wembley on the last day of July.

Dates and venues

The tournament starts with the first game at Old Trafford on 6 July and ends with the final on 31 July.

As well as Old Trafford and Wembley there are eight other venues spread around the country:

- Brighton & Hove Albion FC
- Brentford FC
- Manchester City Academy
- Milton Keynes Dons FC
- Rotherham United FC
- Sheffield United FC
- Southampton FC
- Wigan & Leigh (Leigh Sports Village)

The tournament website has full details of matches and tickets.

Spectator guide

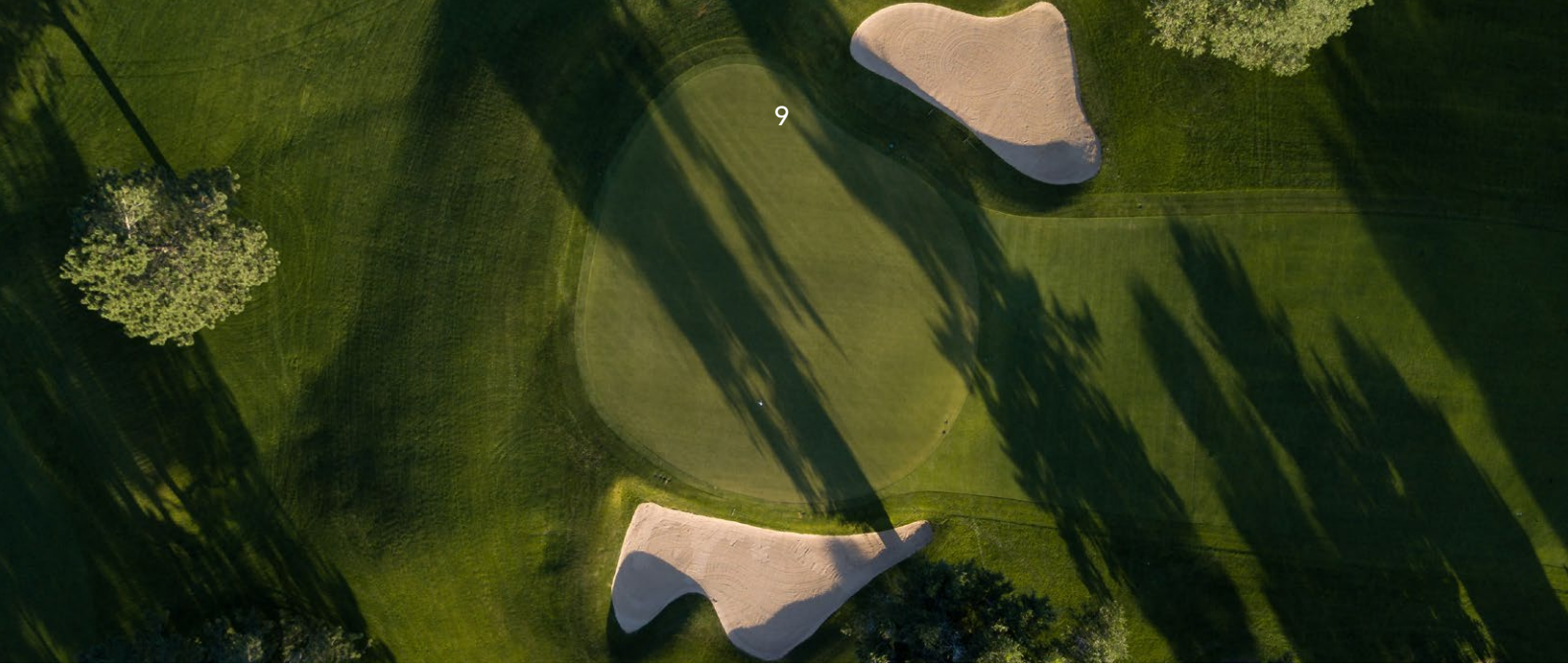
At the time of writing tickets are available for all the games, including the final.

They aren't expensive and concessionary prices are available for family groups and children.

Player to watch

Semi-finalists last time the tournament was held, twice runners-up England have an excellent chance of a first victory on home turf.

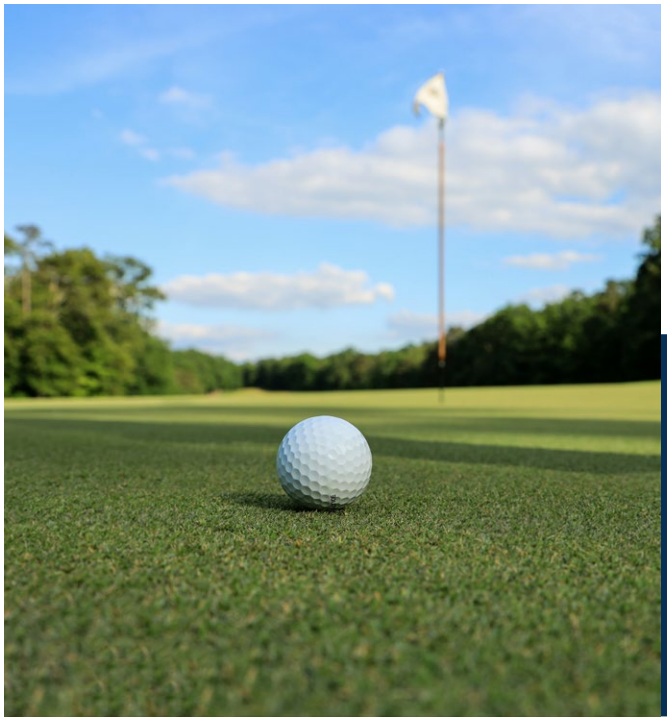
Lucy Bronze will be at the heart of the team. One of the top defenders in the world, the Manchester City player is one of several world-class stars in the England team.



7. The British Open golf championship

The British Open is one of the top events in the golf calendar. A special highlight this year is that it's the 150th staging of the event, which will attract all the world's top players to compete for the Claret Jug.

To add more history to the occasion, this year's event will be held at St Andrews in Scotland, long thought of as golf's spiritual home.



Dates and venue

The 2022 Open will be held over four days, from 14 to 17 July, with two days of practice rounds beforehand.

St Andrews is on the east coast of Scotland, north of Edinburgh. As well as hosting several golf courses it's also the site of the British Golf Museum.

Spectator guide

According to the Open website, all tickets for the four days are sold out.

Although nothing beats being at an event like the Open in person, golf lends itself to the flexibility of TV coverage. Watching at home you get to see all the ongoing highlights rather than just following one group or pairing around the course.

Player to watch

Rory McIlroy's form has dropped off recently having been the best player in the world up to 2019. But he's still one of the most watchable players and has a good chance of winning his second Open championship, having previously won at Hoylake in 2014.

8. The Hundred

From a cricket perspective the Hundred is very much the new kid on the block.

It debuted last summer and proved to be massively popular, especially with family groups and children.

The successful launch was driven by it being the first live cricket shown on terrestrial TV for many years, and the decision by the organisers give equal prominence to the men's and women's tournaments.

Quick tip

Most of the games will be played as part of double-headers with a women's and men's game held on the same day. One ticket will cover you for both games.

Players to watch

Liam Livingstone was one of the stand-out stars of last year's event. His extraordinary hitting took his side – Birmingham Phoenix – to the final last year.

He's one of the most entertaining batters in short-form cricket. Even if you're sitting a long way from the action don't turn away, as one of his hits could easily end up in your lap!

Just 16 at the start of last year's tournament, Alice Capsey introduced herself to the cricketing public by scoring an accomplished 50 in the first game of the tournament at Lord's.

Many cricket experts are predicting a great future for the all-rounder from Sussex.

Dates and venues

This year's Hundred starts on Wednesday 3 August and ends exactly a month later, with both finals being staged at Lord's cricket ground in London on Saturday 3 September.

The group games are staged at eight cricket grounds around the country. As well as Lord's, the host grounds are:

- The Kia Oval, South London
- Headingley, Leeds
- Emirates Old Trafford, Manchester
- Trent Bridge, Nottingham
- The Ageas Bowl, Southampton
- Edgbaston, Birmingham
- Sophia Gardens, Cardiff

Spectator guide

The Hundred is a fun day out for all the family. It's loud, fast-moving, and entertaining with a lot of razzmatazz. Finals Day is likely to be sold out quickly, but each of the grounds being used for group games have a decent capacity so tickets should be available.

The Hundred website has information about the matches and tickets.

9. The start of the 2022/23 football season

We're cheating slightly here, because this is not quite a single event but more a series of them.

However, the start of the new football season after the summer break is certainly one of the traditional events of the summer. And with no major men's international tournament this summer there'll be a heightened air of expectation among football fans.

There's also unanimous optimism. Every team – from the Premiership down to non-league level – starts with a clean slate, which all adds to the atmosphere of hope and anticipation.

Dates and venue

Fixtures are not published until the summer break, so at the time of writing we don't know the exact details and dates.

The English season starts in August, with the Scottish season beginning slightly earlier. Both finish later to accommodate the winter World Cup in Qatar.

Spectator guide

You'll need to plan ahead if you're thinking of catching a Premier League match as tickets tend to sell out quickly with season ticket holders getting the lions share.

Further down the ladder, however, tickets are much easier to get hold of and are relatively inexpensive. Tickets to all matches are available through the home team website.

Player to watch

After a tricky first season for Manchester City, England forward Jack Grealish has much to do to justify his £100 million price tag. However, team-mate Riyad Mahrez came good in season two after joining City for big money, and so the expectations for the former Aston Villa forward are high.

10. The Commonwealth Games in Birmingham

The Commonwealth Games are open to all countries in the Commonwealth of Nations.

They were first staged in 1930, when they were known as the "British Empire Games", going through various name changes before the current title was adopted in 1978.

Birmingham will be only the third English city to host the event, after London in 1934 and Manchester in 2002.

There will be 19 different sports, attracting world-class competitors from 72 different nations.

Dates

Events start on Thursday 28 July and end on Monday 8 August 2022.

Unlike at the Olympic Games and other major events, para-events are fully integrated into the programme rather than taking place separately.

Spectator guide

The range of events and the number of rounds means that you're likely to get a ticket for something you want to watch. The Birmingham 2022 website has plenty of information about the events and tickets.

Apart from for the top finals, ticket prices aren't overly high, so it could well be an opportunity for a family day out, or to watch top-quality athletes in a sport you've never seen live before.

Athlete to watch

One of the big stories from the Tokyo Olympics was Dina Asher-Smith being injured and unable to add an Olympic title to her list of achievements.

She's expected to be fully fit this year, however, and looking to complete a rare treble of gold medals in the World, European, and Commonwealth events in the same year.

If your goals are to sit back and enjoy world-class sporting events, having the right financial plan is vital.

Perhaps you'd even like to head further afield – to watch a Test in Sydney, the US Masters at Augusta, or the 2024 Euros in Germany?

Whatever your lifestyle goals are, we can help you to meet them. Get in touch to find out how.

0800 612 6633

enquiries@hartsfield.co.uk

Bristol Office

One Temple Quay
Temple Back East
Bristol, BS1 6DZ

01173 634 700

bristol@hartsfield.co.uk

Wiltshire Office

Hartham Park
Corsham
Wiltshire, SN13 0RP

01249 591 530

wiltshire@hartsfield.co.uk

Cheltenham Office

Harley House
29 Cambray Place
Cheltenham, GL50 1JN

01242 388 000

cheltenham@hartsfield.co.uk

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