

Evolution of Professional Baseball Leagues
The Original Baseball Teams and Cities
Baseball's Rapid Expansion Beginning in 1960

Chapter 7

Timeline for the development of baseball's professional leagues

- In 1869, the first professional baseball team was formed. The team was named the Cincinnati Red Stockings. Harry Wright was paid \$1200 to manage the team. At this point baseball was transformed from an amateur to a professional game.
- In 1871, the National Association of Professional Baseball Players was formed. The charter members were the Boston Red Stockings, Chicago White Stockings, Cleveland Forest Cities, Fort Wayne Kekiongas, New York Mutuals, Philadelphia Athletics, Rockford Forest Cities, Washington Nationals, and the Washington Olympics. *The fee was \$10 to join.* Gambling and bribery infiltrated the league and the league dissolved in 1875.
- The National League was formed in 1876 and consisted of eight teams with each team playing 70 games. William Hulbert, a business was responsible for its formation. Many of the players came from the defunct National Association League.
- In 1881, a rival league, called the American Association, was formed. Player raids between the two leagues weakened both leagues. The new league reduced the ticket prices to 25 cents from 50 cents charged by the National League. The new league also scheduled Sunday games to increase attendance.
- In 1883, the two leagues formed a pact that guaranteed protection of player contracts.
- In 1891, the American Association folded. The 25 cents ticket prices could not support the league.
- In 1900, the American League was formed out of the Western Association, a minor league formed in 1894. The American League consisted of eight teams. Since the National League was formed first, it is often called the "Senior Circuit"; while the American League is called the "Junior Circuit".
- From 1904 to 1960 both leagues remained at eight teams and each team played 154

games. Babe Ruth hit 60 home runs in 1927 in 154 games.

- The eight original National League teams created in 1876 were: (1) Chicago, (2) Hartford, (3) St. Louis, (4) Boston, (5) Louisville, (6) Mutual (located in Brooklyn), (7) Athletic (located in Philadelphia), and (8) Cincinnati.
- The eight original American League teams created in 1901 were: (1) Baltimore, (2) Buffalo, (3) Chicago, (4) Cleveland, (5) Detroit, (6) Milwaukee, (7) Philadelphia, and (8) Washington.
- In 1961 and 1962 both leagues expanded to ten-team leagues and each team played 162 games. In 1961, Roger Maris of the New York Yankees broke Babe Ruth's home run record by hitting 61 home runs. This led to the controversy of who was the home run king. Many baseball people said there should be an asterisk next to the home run record of Maris.
- In 1969, there were 12 teams in each league and the sport experienced a major shift in its post-season process after both the American and National Leagues were reorganized into two divisions, the East and West. As a result, the winners in each division were now required to play each other in a best-of-five Championship Series to determine who would advance to represent their respective league in the coveted World Series. In 1985, the format was changed to a best-of-seven contest where it has remained to this day.
- In 1977, the American League expanded to 14 teams and in 1993 the National League expanded to 14 teams. The three-divisional format was introduced in 1994 with the addition of the Central Division in each league. The "wild-card" champions, the second place team with the best record, qualified along with the three divisional champions for the new divisional series. Each league had a best-of-five Divisional Series. Because of the baseball strike in 1994, the first Divisional Series was played in 1995. The winners went on to a best-of-seven League Championship Series (LCS). The two winners then competed in the best-of-seven World Series. The final expansion occurred in 1998 when the Major Leagues expanded to 30 teams. The 162-game schedule was left the same and the playoff schedule remained the same.

Timeline for Major League Teams since 1960

1960	Teams in NL	Teams in AL
16 Teams	Atlanta Braves	Baltimore Orioles
	Chicago Cubs	Boston Red Sox
	Cincinnati Reds	Chicago White Sox
	Los Angeles Dodgers	Cleveland Indians
	Philadelphia Phillies	Detroit Tigers
	Pittsburgh Pirates	Minnesota Twins
	San Francisco Giants	New York Yankees
	St. Louis Cardinals	Oakland Athletics
Totals	8	8

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Baseball's Expansion

The first expansion since 1904

1961		
Two Additions		⁽¹⁾ Los Angeles Angels
		⁽²⁾ Washington Senators
Totals	8	10

1962		
Two Additions	⁽³⁾ Houston Colt 45s	
	New York Mets	
Totals	10	10

1969		
Four Additions	⁽⁶⁾ Montreal Expos	Kansas City Royals
	San Diego Padres	⁽⁴⁾ Seattle Pilots
Totals	12	12

1977		
Two Additions		Toronto Blue Jays

		Seattle Mariners	
Totals	12		14
1993			
Two Additions		Colorado Rockies	
		Florida Marlins	
Totals	14		14
1998			
Two Additions		Arizona Diamondbacks	Tampa Bay Devil Rays
		⁽⁵⁾ Milwaukee Brewers	
Totals	16		14

- (1) Los Angeles Angels became California Angels (1966) and Anaheim Angels (1997).
- (2) Washington Senators became Texas Rangers (1972).
- (3) Houston Colts became Houston Astros (1965).
- (4) Seattle Pilots became Milwaukee Brewers (1970).
- (5) Milwaukee Brewers switched leagues (1998).
- (6) Montreal Expos became Washington Nationals (2005).

Best and Worst First Year Expansion Records by Percentage

Best	Won	Lost	Percentage
1961 Los Angeles Angels	70	91	.435
Worst			
1962 New York Mets	40	120	.250