

Hometown Teams Exhibition Description

Our love of sports begins in our hometowns. We play them on ball fields and sandlots, on courts and on ice, in parks and playgrounds, even in the street. From pick-up games to organized leagues, millions of Americans of all ages play sports. Win or lose, we yearn to compete and play another day.

If we're not playing sports, we're watching them. We sit in the stands and root for the local high school team, or gather on the sideline and cheer on our sons and daughters as they take their first swing or score their first goal.

Hometown sports are more than just games—they shape our lives and unite us and celebrate who we are as Americans.

- Americans today have a wider selection of sports to play and watch than ever before. What has occurred in our hometowns is nothing less than an American sports explosion.
- The essential qualities of sports – competition, fair play, and the zeal to win – embody the American spirit.
- Hometown teams represent the community, instill pride in it, and create a bond that is passed from one generation to the next.
- High school football and basketball games generate hometown passion and loyalty. Little League baseball games teach youngsters the fundamentals of fair play. Adult softball and bowling leagues keep us connected to the games we enjoyed in our youth. On a broader level, university and professional teams stir our support and make lifelong, dedicated fans out of many of us.
- Our connection to sports spans generations. It all begins in our hometowns at an early age. We put balls in the hands of infants and register our sons and daughters for development leagues and clinics. Later, they play on town teams. Many young athletes will go on to play high school and even college sports.
- As older adults, we might move to the grandstand, but our desire to remain fit and competitive keep us engaged in sports beyond the role of spectator. For much of our lives, sports and hometown teams play a big role in defining who we are.

No part of American culture so colorfully and passionately celebrates American ideals as does sports.