

Tennis timeline

Ten key moments

Prior to the nineteenth century, real tennis was played by aristocrats. The late nineteenth-century saw tennis develop from Sphairistike into lawn tennis for the middle classes, with an amateur code in place until the second half of the twentieth century

1873

Major Walter Wingfield invented the game Sphairistike (from the Greek word for 'ball game')

1875

Henry Cavendish Jones convinced the All England Club to replace a croquet court with a lawn tennis court

1877

The first World Tennis Championship in the men's singles event was held at Worple Road, Wimbledon

1884

Maud Watson won the first Wimbledon women's singles competition

1887

Charlotte 'Lottie' Dod won the first of her five Wimbledon women's singles titles, and challenged dress codes to allow for increased movement

1889

The All England Croquet Club changed its name to the All England Tennis and Croquet Club

1967

Wimbledon was shown on colour television for the first time on the BBC

1968

Although there were a number of 'professional tours' and tournaments where players could earn money from tennis as early as the 1920s, it was not until 1968 that the Open era began and professionals were allowed to compete with amateurs in the four tennis majors in the USA, France, England and Australia

2007

The Women's Tennis Association (WTA) successfully campaigned for equal prize money, with £700,000 given to both male and female singles winners.

Hawk-Eye introduced, with players given the right to challenge umpire decisions

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