



How to...

SPORTY SCULPTURES

Four 18-foot birdies are located on the lawn of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri.



Give badminton a try

Check out this fun, fast-paced game you can play nearly anywhere.

Badminton is one of the most popular sports in the world, played by more than 300 million people globally, with its popularity growing in the US. Here's how you can get in on the excitement.

Understand the game

Badminton is played one-on-one or two-on-two. Players use a long-handled racket with an oval-shaped head with tightly woven strings. It's like a tennis racket but much lighter weight. Instead of a ball, you hit a "shuttlecock," often called a birdie, over the net to your opponent, and they hit it back to you. You keep the volley going until one of you can't return the birdie—it may fall to the ground or go out of bounds, or you might accidentally hit the net with your racket. Those all result in a point for your opponent. You play the game until one of you reaches 21 points.

Build confidence and coordination

Badminton experts say the game increases hand-eye coordination and builds your ability to stay focused. When you're first learning, don't worry too much about the rules as long as you're getting practice. For example, if playing to 21 points feels too long, modify the points

down to 15 or even 11 per game. "What's great about badminton is that new players show improvement pretty quickly," said Jason Simone, physical education teacher at William E. Cottle Elementary School in Eastchester, New York. "Once kids start getting a few volleys back and forth over the net, you hear all the 'Ooh!' and 'Oh!' moments, and their confidence really starts to grow."

Commit to practicing

Some local recreation centers host open play sessions for badminton. Contact your rec center to find out. If your center doesn't have dedicated badminton time, ask if they could add it to their schedule or if you could reserve an hour in the gym or on the tennis court to play with a partner two to three times a week.

Enjoy it all summer and beyond

Badminton is considered a lifetime game, which means that once you learn, you can keep playing as you get older. People gravitate toward it because it's not intimidating. So don't be surprised if everyone from your college-age cousin to your great-aunt wants to play with you. A bonus: Playing with more experienced players will help make you a stronger player too!



Bye-bye, birdie!

History of a sport



The game of badminton has origins as far back as 200 BCE in ancient China, Greece, and India. In the mid-1800s, British officers brought it to England from India. The Duke of Beaufort played it on the grounds of his home, called Badminton House, and that's how the game got its name.

Badminton made its debut at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, Germany, as a demonstration sport. It was officially made an Olympic sport at the 1992 Games in Barcelona, Spain. It will be played at the Galen Center on the campus of the University of Southern California at the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 2028.