

Sports

Sports fans cheer for a variety of professional, semi-pro and collegiate sports teams 12 months out of the year.

- Professional football returned to Houston in 2002 when the Houston Texans, the National Football League's 32nd and final franchise, took the field. The team's home is the new 71,500-seat Reliant Stadium, the world's first retractable-roof NFL stadium. Reliant Stadium hosted Super Bowl XXXVIII on February 1, 2004.
- Houston is also home to Major League Baseball (MLB) team the Houston Astros, the 2005 National League Champions. Home games are played in Minute Maid Park, which opened March 2000. The retractable-roof stadium seats 40,950. Houston hosted the MLB All-Star Game on July 13, 2004.
- The two-time world-champion Houston Rockets of the National Basketball Association (NBA) bring basketball to Toyota Center, a \$202 million basketball/hockey arena in downtown Houston. The Houston Rockets began the 2003/2004 NBA season in that new facility, which hosted the 2006 NBA All-Star Game.
- The Houston Dynamo soccer team — 2006 and 2007 MLS Cup Champions — plays its home matches in Robertson Stadium on the campus of the University of Houston. A new \$80 million stadium will be completed by the 2012 MLS season which will house 22,000 fans.
- Houston is also host to Energy, 2000-2002 champions of the Women's Professional Football League.
- Other professional sports teams in Houston include the Houston Aeros, 2003 American Hockey League champions; the Houston Takers of the American Basketball Association; and the Bay Area Toros of the Continental Baseball League.
- Houston's racing facilities include Sam Houston Race Park, a Class 1 thoroughbred/quarter horse race track, which opened April 1994, and Gulf Greyhound Park, a dog race track, which opened November 1992.
- Houston's collegiate teams — Houston Baptist University, Rice University, Texas Southern University, Prairie View A&M and University of Houston — round out the local sports options, competing in most major sports. Rice won the baseball College World Series in 2003 and the C-USA baseball Championship in 2006. University of Houston was the C-USA football champion in 2006.
- Houston reigns as a city for major sporting events after hosting the 2004 Major League Baseball All-Star Game, Super Bowl XXXVIII, 2005 World Series, the 2005 Big 12 Football Championship, the 2006 NBA All-Star Game, the Tennis Masters Cup in 2003 and 2004, the 2010 MLS All-Star game, as well as the annual Shell Houston Open. Houston sports fans are looking forward to the 2011 NCAA Men's Final Four and 2011 Senior Games (Senior Olympics).