

# Tour de France

The Tour de France is the world's most famous (and arguably the hardest) cycling race. It takes place every year and lasts for three weeks, covering more than 3,500km.

## History of the Race

During the late 19th century, cycling became a very popular hobby for many people. As time went on, organised bike racing was introduced and professional cycling became very big in France.

On 6th July 1903, 60 cyclists set off. They covered 2,428km in a circular route, through six stages. Eighteen days later, 21 of the original 60 cyclists made it back to the finish line in Paris. The winner was Maurice Garin and Le Tour de France was born. The race has taken place every year since then, except during war time. As the tour became more and more popular, the course was made longer and challenging mountain climbs were introduced.



## The Route and Race Today

Each year, the tour begins in a different country. The route of the race also changes every year, but usually finishes at the Champs-Élysées in Paris. Every day is a new stage of the race and winners of each stage are awarded with different coloured jerseys. The white jersey is given to the best rider under 26 years of age, the red polka dot jersey is for the best climber who is called the 'King of the Mountains', the green jersey is awarded to the best sprinter and the yellow jersey is for the leader of the race. The overall winner of the Tour de France is the cyclist that has ridden the full route in the quickest time.

Bradley Wiggins became the first British rider to win the Tour de France in 2012, which was followed by a second British winner, Chris Froome, in 2013.

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# Questions About Tour de France

Answer questions in full sentences.

1. When was the first ever Tour de France?

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2. How many cyclists made it to the finish line of the first race?

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3. What is the nickname given to the winner of the red polka dot jersey?

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4. What do the green and white jerseys mean?

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5. Why do you think different coloured jerseys are given to the winners of each stage?

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# Questions About Tour de France

Answer questions in full sentences.

## Answers

1. When was the first ever Tour de France?

**The first ever race began on 6th July 1903.**

2. How many cyclists made it to the finish line of the first race?

**21 of the original 60 cyclists made it back to the finish line.**

3. What is the nickname given to the winner of the red polka dot jersey?

**The winner of the red polka dot jersey is known as the 'King of the Mountains'.**

4. What do the green and white jerseys mean?

**At the end of every stage, the white jersey is given to the best rider under 26 years of age and the green jersey is awarded to the best sprinter.**

5. Why do you think different coloured jerseys are given to the winners of each stage?

**Own answers may include:**

- **To acknowledge the achievements of the best cyclists at the end of each stage.**
- **To help spectators (or cyclists) to identify the race leader, best sprinter, best climber or best rider under 26.**