

NEWCASTLE
St James' Park | Capacity: 52,409
SA Tour: 4, 5, 6

MANCHESTER
The Manchester City Stadium |
Capacity: 47,800

BIRMINGHAM
Villa Park | Capacity: 42,785
SA Tour: 5

GLOUCESTER
Kingsholm Stadium | Capacity:
16,115

CARDIFF
Millennium Stadium | Capacity:
74,154

EXETER
Sandy Park | Capacity: 12,300

LEEDS
Elland Road | Capacity: 37,914

LEICESTER
The Leicester City Stadium |
Capacity: 32,312

MILTON KEYNES
Stadium MK | Capacity: 30,717

LONDON
Twickenham Stadium | Capacity:
81,605
Wembley Stadium | Capacity: 90,256
Olympic Stadium | Cap: 54,000
SA Tours: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12

BRIGHTON
Brighton Community Stadium |
Capacity: 30,750





American Express Community Stadium, Brighton and Hove

This magnificent addition to the Sussex landscape is situated in Falmer – a short hop on the train from Brighton and Hove. Constructed at a cost of £93m, the ground has won plaudits for its semi-circular stand roofs and tubular supporting steelwork from both fans of sport and architecture. And there are plans to make it even better too: capacity will be steadily increased to over 27,000 by the middle of 2014, and could be increased to above 30,000 by the time the Rugby World Cup rolls around.

Address: Village Way, Brighton, BN1 9B 9B

Capacity: 30,750



Elland Road, Leeds

Elland Road's famously feisty old-school atmosphere makes it perfect for the passion and noise of a Rugby Union World Cup fixture. The code has been played here before, if only once, in 1992, over 14,000 turned up to watch the South African national side, who had just been readmitted to the international game. And while it may retain its historic charm, the venue has great views, and may undergo further developments between 2014 and 2015.

Address: Elland Road, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS11 0ES

Capacity: 37,914



Kingsholm Stadium, Gloucester

Gloucester's ground has an enviable history when it comes to international rugby. Kingsholm hosted its first test match way back in 1900, when Billy Bancroft led Wales to a 13-3 victory over England. Kingsholm didn't host another international for 91 years and when it did, 12,000 fans watched world champions New Zealand score eight tries as they cruised past the USA 46-6 in RWC 1991 thanks to a hat-trick from full back Terry Wright. It was later the venue for a 2000 Rugby League World Cup match between New Zealand and Lebanon. Home to Aviva Premiership side Gloucester, Kingsholm is widely regarded as having the nosiest crowd in the league, largely due to the boisterous inhabitants of The Shed stand. In 2007 The Shed was redeveloped, increasing the total capacity of the stadium to 16,500.

Address: Kingsholm Road, Kingsholm, Gloucester, GL1 3AX

Capacity: 16,115



Leicester City Stadium, Leicester

Like Midlands counterpart Pride Park, the Leicester City Stadium replaced a decaying old ground with a state-of-the-art all-seater facility. It has seen significant oval ball action already: Leicester Tigers have played six matches here, including a 2005 Heineken Cup semi-final, which they lost to Toulouse, and a 2006 quarter-final in the same tournament, which saw them defeated by Bath. The jinx was broken by a win over Llanelli in a European Cup semi in 2007, and they've since got revenge over Bath on the ground, too. In 2006, to celebrate the centenary of Springbok overseas tours, the stadium hosted a World XV v South Africa contest. The Springboks took the honours 32-7.

Address: Filbert Way, Leicester, LE2 7FL

Capacity: 32,312



Manchester City Stadium, Manchester

As the centrepiece of Manchester's successful bid to stage the Commonwealth Games, the stadium came to life in the summer of 2002. The City of Manchester Stadium had rugby at its heart early on. In the Sevens final at the Games, New Zealand defeated Fiji to claim gold. Among the champions that day were All Blacks Mils Muliaina, Bruce Reihana and skipper Eric Rush. Manchester City Football Club moved in the following year, dramatically winning the English Premier League at the ground in May 2012. The capacity can be increased to 60,000 for concerts and, thanks to pioneering smart card technology, 1,200 people can enter the ground every minute. The City of Manchester Stadium has also hosted international rugby league and the super league's Magic Weekend event in 2012. It will do so again this year and in 2014.

Address: Manchester, M11 3FF

Capacity: 47,800



Millennium Stadium, Cardiff

The Welsh national stadium may not be that old, but it has already sealed a place in rugby history. The foundations of this atmospheric ground have been shaken to the core twice as Wales secured Six Nation Grand Slam victories here in 2005 and 2012. Situated a stone's throw from Cardiff Central Station, it is the second largest sports venue in the world with a fully retractable roof. Built to replace the Arms Park, it opened with rugby (Wales beating South Africa) before becoming the primary host venue for Rugby World Cup 1999, with Australia overhauling France in the final. Since then, its turf has held Test matches as well as Celtic League and Heineken Cup ties.

Address: Westgate Street, Cardiff, CF10 1NS

Capacity: 74,154



Olympic Stadium Newham, London

The newest and third largest stadium in England enjoyed a spectacular start to life as a sports venue, when "Queen Elizabeth II" parachuted in from a helicopter. A worldwide audience of 900 million saw the Queen, and her stunt double, help to open the London 2012 Olympic Games. As a centrepiece of the Olympic Park in London's East end, the stadium hosted athletics, and the Olympic and Paralympic ceremonies. Built for a cost of around £500m, the stadium has lighting pads on every seat, allowing complex light shows to be displayed around the ground. Set to host major athletics events in 2013 and 2017, following RWC 2015, final work will be carried out to prepare the stadium for its long term tenants, West Ham FC and UK Athletics.

Address: Olympic Park, Stratford, London

Capacity: 54,000



Sandy Park, Exeter

Home to the recently-promoted Aviva Premiership side Exeter Chiefs and their passionate, chanting fans, Sandy Park is fast becoming a bastion of English club rugby. Closer to Cardiff than to London, Exeter is an historic roman city in Devon with a rich history. The earliest records show that Exeter Chiefs played a match as early as 1873. Built to replace the County Ground in 2006, the Chiefs' new home came complete with the planning permission to expand, rising from 8,000 originally to its current size of 10,744. A combination of Exeter's establishment as a top-flight club and Rugby World Cup 2015 will see the capacity double to 20,600 over the next two years. This will make Sandy Park one of the biggest club rugby grounds in England.

Address: Sandy Park Way, Exeter, Devon, EX2 7NN

Capacity: 12,300



Stadium MK, Milton Keynes

The originally named Stadium MK is home to the MK Dons, who changed their name from Wimbledon FC after the club was controversially relocated. The ground has already staged a handful of rugby union games: in 2008, Saracens played Bristol in Milton Keynes, and during the 2010-11 season, Northampton Saints used Stadium MK as a base for their assault on the Heineken Cup knockout stages. The Saints defeated Ulster and Perpignan in front of a massive crowd in the quarter- and semi-finals only to lose out to Leinster in the Millennium Stadium decider. Saints have since returned to face Saracens, and both sides may play future games at the stadium, too. The arena has expanded this year, with a new tier adding 10,000 more seats.

Address: Stadium Way, Milton Keynes, MK1 1ST

Capacity: 30,717



St James' Park, Newcastle Upon Tyne

Hosting its first match in 1880, St James' Park is the oldest football stadium in the North East of England. Outside of London, it is also the second biggest sports ground in England. The stadium itself was built on the site of the city's execution gallows, hence the name of one stand: the Gallowgate End. Home to Newcastle United Football Club since 1892, the stadium has also hosted international and 2012 Olympic football, as well as concerts by artists such as Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen. It is situated at the heart of the city of Newcastle, famed for its passionate locals and bustling nightlife. St James' Park will provide a lively venue for Rugby World Cup 2015.

Address: Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4ST

Capacity: 52,409

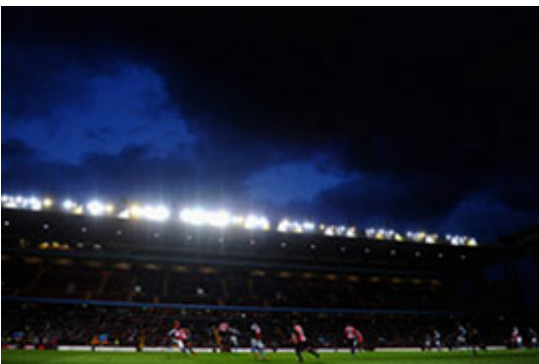


Twickenham Stadium Richmond, London

Twickenham is etched into rugby's DNA. The biggest dedicated rugby ground in the world, it staged its first game between two local sides, Harlequins and Richmond in 1909. More than a century has passed, and with it thousands of great battles and jaw-dropping moments. From England captain Bill Beaumont being lifted off the field after the 1980 Grand Slam, to Phillippe Saint-Andre's incredible try for France in 1991 and Australia beating England in that year's Rugby World Cup Final. Every rugby fan has a Twickenham memory. The home of English rugby, and a Rugby World Cup host in 1991 and 1999, the famous ground has also staged showpiece Rugby League matches, and has rocked to the sound of the Rolling Stones. Expanded to seat 81,605 in 2006, few sports grounds in the world come close.

Address: Whitton Road, Twickenham, TW2 7BA

Capacity: 81,605



Villa Park, Birmingham

Originally built in a Victorian amusement park on the site of a Jacobean stately home, the distinctive brick façade of the Holte End is unmistakable, setting Villa apart from generic grounds. Athletics, cycling, boxing and rugby league have all taken place here over the years, and two rugby union touring sides have also run out onto its famous pitch. Back in 1924, a North Midlands select side were thumped 40-3 by New Zealand, and in 1953, a Midlands County XV were also dismantled, this time 18-3, by a Kiwi outfit including legendary All Blacks Bob Stuart, Richard White and Peter Jones.

Address: Birmingham, B6 6HE

Capacity: 42,785



Wembley Stadium Brent, London

The original Wembley Stadium hosted five of football's European cup finals, the 1966 World Cup Final, the landmark 1985 Live Aid concert, and the opening and closing ceremonies of the 1948 Olympic Games. The symbolic twin towers were demolished in 2003 and re-emerged as an equally iconic Norman Foster-designed masterpiece four years later. The new Wembley Stadium has staged huge concerts, a UEFA Champions League final, Olympic football, NFL matches, both codes of rugby and motor sport. The venue has rugby pedigree, too. Wembley Stadium hosted its first rugby international in 1992, when England defeated a touring Canada side 26-13 while Twickenham underwent redevelopment, but Wales have played the most games here, contesting seven internationals while the Millennium Stadium was being built in the late 1990s.

Address: Wembley, London HA9 0WS

Capacity: 90,256