

Making Everything Easier!™

2nd Edition

Cricket

FOR
DUMMIES[®]
A Wiley Brand

Learn to:

- Understand the laws of cricket
- Talk tactics and strategy
- Get to grips with the history of the game
- Follow every format – from Twenty20 to Tests
- Get involved and participate

Julian Knight

Author, journalist and cricket enthusiast



Get More and Do More at Dummies.com®



Start with **FREE** Cheat Sheets

Cheat Sheets include

- Checklists
- Charts
- Common Instructions
- And Other Good Stuff!

To access the Cheat Sheet created specifically for this book, go to
www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/cricketuk

Get Smart at Dummies.com

Dummies.com makes your life easier with 1,000s of answers on everything from removing wallpaper to using the latest version of Windows.

Check out our

- Videos
- Illustrated Articles
- Step-by-Step Instructions

Plus, each month you can win valuable prizes by entering our Dummies.com sweepstakes. *

Want a weekly dose of Dummies? Sign up for Newsletters on

- Digital Photography
- Microsoft Windows & Office
- Personal Finance & Investing
- Health & Wellness
- Computing, iPods & Cell Phones
- eBay
- Internet
- Food, Home & Garden

Find out "HOW" at Dummies.com



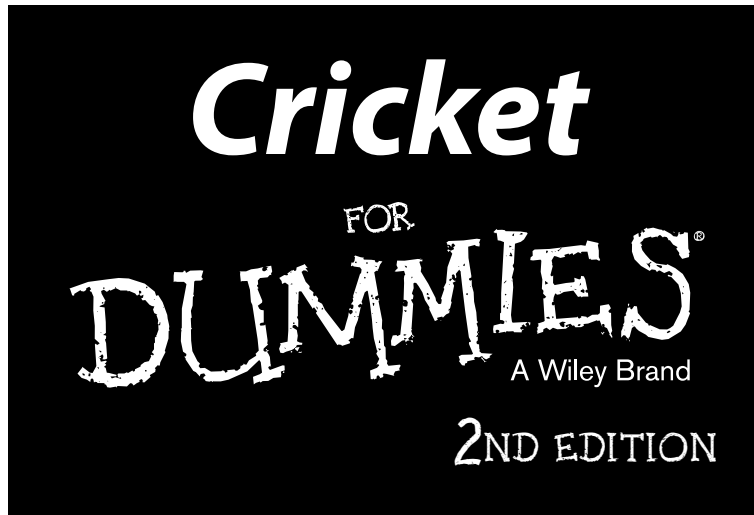
*Sweepstakes not currently available in all countries; visit Dummies.com for official rules.

Cricket

FOR
DUMMIES®

A Wiley Brand

2ND EDITION



by Julian Knight

FOR
DUMMIES[®]
A Wiley Brand

Cricket For Dummies®, 2nd Edition

Published by: **John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.**, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, www.wiley.com

This edition first published 2013

© 2013 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, Chichester, West Sussex.

Registered office

John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8SQ, United Kingdom

For details of our global editorial offices, for customer services and for information about how to apply for permission to reuse the copyright material in this book please see our website at www.wiley.com.

The right of the author to be identified as the author of this work has been asserted in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, except as permitted by the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Wiley publishes in a variety of print and electronic formats and by print-on-demand. Some material included with standard print versions of this book may not be included in e-books or in print-on-demand. If this book refers to media such as a CD or DVD that is not included in the version you purchased, you may download this material at <http://booksupport.wiley.com>. For more information about Wiley products, visit www.wiley.com.

Designations used by companies to distinguish their products are often claimed as trademarks. All brand names and product names used in this book are trade names, service marks, trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective owners. The publisher is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY: WHILE THE PUBLISHER AND AUTHOR HAVE USED THEIR BEST EFFORTS IN PREPARING THIS BOOK, THEY MAKE NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES WITH THE RESPECT TO THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS BOOK AND SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIM ANY IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. IT IS SOLD ON THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE PUBLISHER IS NOT ENGAGED IN RENDERING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AND NEITHER THE PUBLISHER NOR THE AUTHOR SHALL BE LIABLE FOR DAMAGES ARISING HEREFROM. IF PROFESSIONAL ADVICE OR OTHER EXPERT ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED, THE SERVICES OF A COMPETENT PROFESSIONAL SHOULD BE SOUGHT.

For general information on our other products and services, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at (001) 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

For technical support, please visit www.wiley.com/techsupport.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-1-118-48032-8 (paperback); ISBN 978-1-118-48035-9 (ebk);

ISBN 978-1-118-48036-6 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-118-48034-2 (ebk)

Printed in Great Britain by TJ International, Padstow.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



Contents at a Glance

<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Part I: Getting Started with Cricket</i>	7
Chapter 1: Taking In the Joy of Cricket	9
Chapter 2: Getting to Grips with the Basics	21
Chapter 3: From 20 Overs to 5 Days: The Many Formats of Cricket	47
Chapter 4: Grabbing the Right Gear: Cricket Equipment.....	67
<i>Part II: Playing the Game</i>	83
Chapter 5: Honing Your Batting Skills.....	85
Chapter 6: Making It Big as a Bowler.....	115
Chapter 7: Fielding Made Easy.....	141
Chapter 8: Talking Tactics: Captaining a Cricket Team.....	163
Chapter 9: Talented Training and Cricket Coaching.....	187
<i>Part III: Welcome to Planet Cricket</i>	205
Chapter 10: Grasping the Global Rivalries	207
Chapter 11: Taking in Big International Tournaments	229
Chapter 12: The Domestic Cricket Scene.....	249
Chapter 13: Becoming a Cricket Fan	267
<i>Part IV: The Part of Tens</i>	289
Chapter 14: Ten Greatest Ever Cricketers	291
Chapter 15: Ten Most Memorable Cricket Matches	297
Chapter 16: Ten Mind-boggling Cricket Feats	305
<i>Index</i>	311

Table of Contents

.....

<i>Introduction</i>	1
About This Book	1
How to Use This book	2
Conventions Used in This Book	2
Foolish Assumptions	2
How This Book Is Organised	3
Part I: Getting Started	3
Part II: Playing the Game	3
Part III: Welcome to Planet Cricket	4
Part IV: The Part of Tens	4
Icons Used in This Book	4
Where to Go from Here	5

Part 1: Getting Started with Cricket

Chapter 1: Taking In the Joy of Cricket	9
Glancing at Cricket's Global Appeal	9
Gauging the Difference: Amateur and Professional Cricket	10
Understanding the great divide: Amateurs and professionals	11
Getting involved in the amateur game	13
Exploring the Strange World of Cricket Speak	14
Looking at Batsman Against Bowler	15
Understanding That Cricket is a Dangerous Game	15
Taking in the Dark Side: Cricket Frustrations	16
Scorebooks, Scoreboards and Scorecards	17
Equipping Yourself as a Fan	17
Showing off your cricket knowledge	18
Coaching and cricket tactics	18
Getting to Grips with the Laws of the Game	18
Gauging the Importance of the Umpire	19
Chapter 2: Getting to Grips with the Basics	21
Introducing the Players	21
Remembering Cricket Helpers	22
Taking in the Field of Play	23
Understanding the importance of the pitch	24
Taking in the creases	26
Changing ends explained	28
Protecting the pitch	29
Talking Stumps and Bails	30

Umpiring: The Men in White Coats	30
Making the big calls	31
Working together as a team.....	31
Respecting the umpire	32
Looking at umpiring signals	32
Embracing new technology: The Decision Review System	34
Protecting the umpires: Decision review system safeguards	36
Understanding the Scoring System	37
Understanding runs and boundaries.....	37
Totting up the extras.....	38
Incurring penalty runs.....	38
Keeping count: The role of the scorer	39
Dismissing the Batsmen.....	41
Comprehending the LBW law.....	42
Understanding retirements	44
Looking at Breaks in Play	44
Going off the field for rain.....	45
Going off the field for bad light	45

Chapter 3: From 20 Overs to 5 Days: The Many Formats of Cricket . . . 47

Looking at an Innings	48
Throwing the second innings into the mix.....	49
Taking extra time to complete two innings.....	50
Taking a Closer Look at Test Cricket	51
Taking it slowly: Test and first class tactics.....	52
Taking a Peek at English First Class Cricket	54
Ensuring a result: One-day cricket.....	54
Gauging the differences between one-day, test and first class matches	55
Understanding the one-day trade-off	57
Day-night one-day cricket	57
Crash, Bang, Wallop: Twenty20 Is Born.....	58
Bringing in the Big Bucks: The Indian Premier League.....	60
Signing up the talent: The IPL player auction	60
Looking at the teams of the Indian Premier League.....	61
Aping the IPL: The Big Bash in Australia	62
Maths Geniuses Required: The Duckworth/Lewis Formula.....	62
Getting into Hot Water: Breaking Cricket Rules	64

Chapter 4: Grabbing the Right Gear: Cricket Equipment. 67

Getting It Together: The Essentials	67
The furniture: Understanding what the club supplies	68
Taking a peek at the cricket ball	68
Getting Personal: Choosing a Bat	69
Pricing up a cricket bat	70
Deciding on the right bat	70
Buying a bat or having it made	72
Preparing the bat for play.....	73

Getting the Right Protection	74
Using your head: Wearing a helmet.....	75
Protecting your hands and arms	75
Looking after the rest of you	76
Guarding your legs from injury.....	77
Getting Kitted Out Top-To-Toe	78
Being whiter than white.....	78
Taking care of your feet	79
Choosing a Kit-Bag.....	79
Kitting Out a Youngster for the Game.....	81

***Part 11: Playing the Game* 83**

Chapter 5: Honing Your Batting Skills 85

Understanding What It Takes to be Good at Batting	86
Starting Out in the Middle	87
Taking guard.....	87
Gripping stuff.....	88
Listening to the umpire.....	90
Setting the sight screens.....	90
Facing up to the bowler: Stance.....	91
Executing the shot: Backlift	92
Judging 'Line and Length'	93
Looking at the line of the ball.....	93
Looking at the length of the delivery	94
Standing up to seam and swing bowling.....	95
Playing spin bowling.....	96
Pulling Up the Drawbridge: Defensive Shots.....	97
Playing a front-foot defensive shot.....	97
Playing a back-foot defensive shot	98
Expanding Your Horizons: Playing Aggressive Shots	99
Cover drive	100
Straight drive.....	101
Leg glance	101
The pull shot	102
The sweep.....	103
The cut shot.....	104
Taking wrist movements into account.....	106
Taking Control in the Middle	106
Getting off the mark.....	106
Getting your eye in	106
Judging a run	107
Putting your foot on the accelerator	108
Reaching personal landmarks	108



Preparing to Do Battle	109
Remembering practice makes perfect	109
Exercising for successful batting	110
Taking care of the mental side	110
Choosing a Batting Role.....	111
Dividing up the batting order	112

Chapter 6: Making It Big as a Bowler 115

Looking at the Object of Bowling	115
Getting to Grips with Bowling Basics.....	116
Getting started	116
The run-up	117
The action	119
The follow through	121
Examining the line and length of the delivery.....	122
Choosing between over or round the wicket	124
Checking Out the Different Bowling Types	125
Understanding the Importance of the Ball's Seam.....	127
Mastering Seam Bowling.....	127
The leg cutter	128
The off cutter.....	128
Swinging Your Way to Success	129
Putting swing under the microscope	129
Turning things on their head: Reverse swing	131
Taking It to the Batsmen: Spin Bowling	132
Understanding the types of spin bowler.....	133
Looking at finger spin bowling.....	134
Focusing on wrist spin bowling	136
Focusing On What You're Good At.....	138
Bowling with Your Brain.....	138
Teaming up with the captain.....	138
Remembering to bowl to the field	139
Winning with patience.....	139
Thinking clearly	139
Being Fit for the Task	140

Chapter 7: Fielding Made Easy 141

Catching On to Why Fielding Matters	141
Understanding Fielding Positions.....	142
Close catching fielding positions	144
Run-saving fielding positions	146
Preparing Properly for Fielding	148

Getting Out on the Grass	150
Taking the perfect catch	150
Collecting the ball	153
Throwing the ball	154
Making it Big as a Wicket-keeper	155
Finding your stance	156
Getting into the right line	157
Gloving the ball	158
Standing back . . . standing up	158
Taking throws from the outfield	160

Chapter 8: Talking Tactics: Captaining a Cricket Team 163

Understanding the Role of the Captain	163
Selecting the Right Team	165
Calling Heads or Tails . . . the Toss of the Coin	167
Captaining the Team in the Field	168
Deciding on the new ball bowlers	169
Choosing when to change the bowlers	169
Handling bowlers with care	170
Setting the field	171
Enforcing the follow-on	176
Batting Tactics	177
Drawing up the batting order	178
Declaring the innings	179
Looking At One-Day Captaincy	182
Organising the bowling	182
Understanding one-day fielding restrictions	183

Chapter 9: Talented Training and Cricket Coaching 187

Improving Your Fitness and Cricket Skills	187
Getting Match Fit	188
Honing Your Technique in the Nets	190
Giving your batting a boost	191
Taking Giant Steps Forward with Your Bowling	192
Looking at Fielding Drills	195
Explaining Stretching	196
Warming up	196
Looking at stretching exercises	197
Coaching Kids to Play Cricket	198
Encouraging all-round ability	199
Understanding coaching qualifications	200
Getting your son or daughter involved	202
Taking it to another level: Colt cricket	203

Part III: Welcome to Planet Cricket 205**Chapter 10: Grasping the Global Rivalries207**

Exploring the History of Cricket	208
From earliest times to test cricket.....	208
The ‘Golden Age’	208
The Bradman years	209
Steady as she goes	210
Calypso cricket.....	211
The ‘New Golden Age’	211
Jockeying for position: the 2010’s.....	212
Looking at the Test-Playing Nations	212
England and Australia	212
South Africa	213
India	214
Pakistan.....	215
The West Indies.....	216
New Zealand	217
Sri Lanka.....	217
Zimbabwe.....	218
Bangladesh	218
Cricket’s second division.....	219
Taking in the Cathedrals of Cricket.....	221
Lords, England	221
The Oval, England.....	221
Melbourne Cricket Ground, Melbourne, Australia	222
Sydney Cricket Ground, Sydney, Australia.....	222
Newlands, Cape Town, South Africa	223
Sabina Park, Kingston, Jamaica.....	223
Troubling Times for Test Cricket	224
Understanding the Zimbabwe controversy.....	224
Struggling Bangladesh.....	224
Falling popularity in Asia	225
Who Runs World Cricket?.....	225
Breaking the Hoodoo: England’s Renaissance.....	226

Chapter 11: Taking in Big International Tournaments 229

Raking over the Ashes	229
Understanding what makes the Ashes unique.....	230
Understanding the secrets of Australian success	231
Australia’s Ashes heroes.....	232
England’s Ashes heroes	233
Developing Rivalries around the Globe.....	234
Pakistan v India: Asia’s ‘Ashes’	234
The clash of the titans: West Indies v Australia.....	234
Southern hemisphere rivalry: South Africa v Australia.....	235
Crossing the final frontier: India v Australia	235

Beating England is Everyone’s Goal 236

Competing for the World Cup 237

 Growing out of humble beginnings..... 237

 Taking off in Australia 238

 Stumbling in England and South Africa..... 238

 Shaming of the world cup: West Indies 2007..... 238

 Fighting back: India 2011..... 239

 Examining how the World Cup works 239

Looking at Other One-Day International Tournaments 241

 The Asia Cup 241

 The Australian Tri-series 242

 The NatWest series..... 242

 Putting bums on seats: the ICC Twenty twenty world cup 243

Checking Out the World’s Leading Cricketers 243

 The great batsmen 244

 The great all rounders..... 245

 The great bowlers 246

Chapter 12: The Domestic Cricket Scene 249

Laying Bare the English County Cricket Scene..... 249

 Understanding different county cricket formats 250

 Explaining the County Championship..... 251

 Gauging how counties are run 259

The Minor Counties..... 259

Losing Cricket’s Stuffy Image: Introducing One-Day Cricket 260

 The Pro40 League 261

 The Twenty20 Cup..... 261

 Putting on a party: One-day razzmatazz 262

Coming Up Trumps: English Women’s Cricket..... 265

 Looking at competitions for women..... 265

 Getting involved in women’s cricket 266

Chapter 13: Becoming a Cricket Fan. 267

Watching International Cricket Live 267

 Grabbing yourself a ticket 269

 Counting the cost of rising ticket prices..... 271

 Going on an overseas tour..... 271

Becoming a County Member 272

Hob-Nobbing with Cricket’s Elite: Joining the MCC 274

Enjoying Your Day at the Cricket 275

 Understanding the times of play in test matches 275

 Understanding the times of play in a one-day international 276

 Observing proper etiquette..... 277

 Deciding what to take with you to the cricket 278

 Partying on the terraces 279

Being an Armchair Fan.....	279
Following cricket on the radio	279
Keeping up with cricket through the newspapers	280
Experiencing Grass Roots Cricket	281
Getting to Grips with the Statistics	281
Reading a scorecard	282
Working out a batting average.....	285
Working out a bowling average.....	286
Telling good from bad players using statistics.....	286

***Part IV: The Part of Tens*..... 289**

Chapter 14: Ten Greatest Ever Cricketers 291

Sir Donald Bradman, Australia.....	291
Sir Jack Hobbs, England.....	292
Sachin Tendulkar, India	292
Sir Gary Sobers, West Indies	293
Imran Khan, Pakistan	293
Sir Richard Hadlee, New Zealand	294
Adam Gilchrist, Australia	294
Dennis Lillee, Australia	295
Malcolm Marshall, West Indies.....	295
Shane Warne, Australia.....	296

Chapter 15: Ten Most Memorable Cricket Matches 297

England v Australia: Third Test Match, Headingley, 1981.....	298
Australia v England: Centenary Test, Melbourne, 1977.....	298
Australia v West Indies: First Test, Brisbane, 1960.....	299
England v Australia: Test Match, The Oval, 1882.....	299
India v Australia: Test Match, Kolkata, 2002.....	300
England v Australia: Test Match, Edgbaston, 2005	301
South Africa v Australia: World Cup Semifinal, Edgbaston, 1999.....	301
England v India: NatWest Trophy Final, Lords, 2002.....	302
South Africa v Australia: One-Day International Match, Johannesburg, 2006.....	302
Surrey v Glamorgan: One-Day Match, The Oval, 2002.....	303

Chapter 16: Ten Mind-boggling Cricket Feats 305

Brian Lara's Record High Scores	305
Jim Laker's Destruction of Australia.....	306
Australia's 16-Test Winning Streak.....	306
Sir Jack Hobbs: The Ultimate Golden Oldie	306
Ian Botham's Miracle Ashes Triumph.....	307

Australia's Backs to the Wall Triumph at Adelaide 308
Sir Donald Bradman's Colossal Batting Average 308
Denis Compton of Arsenal and England Fame 309
Kapil Dev Flays Zimbabwe for 175 309
Wilfred Rhodes: Never Ending Career 310

Index **311**

Introduction

Welcome to the fascinating world of cricket, a sport loved around the globe by millions of die-hard fans.

To the casual observer cricket can appear complex and at times, well, just plain bizarre. What other sport is there which involves people dressing all in white and then throwing themselves around a muddy, grassy field? But those in the know treasure the game as simply the supreme test of brains and brawn.

I've written this book so that newcomers to cricket can get to know the game quickly, without feeling overwhelmed or intimidated. I also explain the history of the game and show you how to get out there and play. In double quick time you'll be appreciating fully the great game of cricket, whether as a player or a spectator.

About This book

This book provides you with everything you need to know about the sport of cricket. All the information you need to get started as a player or become an A1 fan is here between the pages of this book. But the good news is that you don't have to read this book from cover to cover. You can easily just dip into those chapters that catch your interest. Perhaps you'll be watching a game of cricket on television or listening to radio coverage and you'd like to know more about a particular aspect of the game and its history then just turn to the chapter which does the job.

If you're keen to get playing cricket there is lots in this book for you. It has chapters dedicated to developing batting, bowling and fielding techniques as well as explaining the tactical nuances of cricket captaincy. In addition, there is a chapter on training which is essential reading for anyone looking to develop their playing technique and all round physical conditioning.

If playing the game isn't for you, – and you'd rather be a fan, this book has an enormous amount to offer. The domestic and international cricket scene is laid out in full for you and there is a whole chapter dedicated to showing you how to get to watch big match cricket.

Whatever draws you to the sport, *Cricket For Dummies* will have something for you.

How to Use This book

Don't be restricted by the order in which the contents of this book appear. Flip through it, maybe starting with Chapter 1 where we explain the basics of the game. The book contains diagrams, drawings and tables to make it easy for you to immediately understand the most important aspects of the game.

You may find that in a discussion of a particular aspect of cricket in one chapter, we refer to another aspect of the game. Whenever this happens we tell you which chapter to turn to for more information about that other aspect. For example, when we talk about fielding positions we will tell you which chapter to turn to for more detailed information on positions.

Conventions Used in This Book

To help you navigate this book, I use the following conventions:

- ✓ *Italic* text is used for emphasis and to highlight new words and terms that we define in the text.
- ✓ **Bold** text is used to indicate key words and phrases in bulleted lists or the action parts of numbered steps.
- ✓ Sidebars are shaded grey boxes containing text that's interesting to know but not necessarily critical to your understanding of the chapter or topic.

Foolish Assumptions

While writing this book, I've made some assumptions about you. First of all, I've assumed you're human. Cricket is played by both men and women, though the men's game grabs the lion's share of the headlines. Throughout this book, for convenience, I have used terms such as 'batsman' and 'fieldsmen', and the associated pronoun 'he', even though I know it won't cover everyone who reads this book.

Don't feel intimidated if you know nothing about cricket. This book will bring you up to speed, fast. Cricket can be a complex game and even some cricketers have difficulty grasping some aspects. But before long – after reading this book – you're going to be transformed into a cricket expert.

- ✔ Why are some cricket matches done with in a single day, while others last five whole days?
- ✔ How does spin bowling work?
- ✔ What does all the jargon mean? What on earth is *bowling a maiden over*, a *new cherry* and a *silly mid-off*?
- ✔ Why are Australia so good at cricket?

This book answers these questions, and many, many more. Our assumption is that you know nothing and we take it from there.

How This Book Is Organised

To make things easier for you, this book is divided into four parts. Each part focuses on an important aspect of the game of cricket.

Part I: Getting Started with Cricket

This part arms you with the basics. The basic rules are explained, as are the pitch, and the roles of individual players. Also I examine the different formats of the game from five-day test matches to quick-fire Twenty20 cricket. I also explain how you can get in on the action and start playing the game. This part ends with handy hints on what you need to kit yourself out with to play cricket.

Part II: Playing the Game

If you want to take up the game, this part is full of must-know tips and explanations. But even if you just want to appreciate the skills of professional players, then this part is a real eye-opener. The first chapter explores batting, from starting out through to how to play aggressive and defensive shots. Bowling is the subject of the next chapter. Read this chapter and you could soon become a batsman's worst nightmare. The art of fielding the ball – catching the ball or stopping the batsmen from scoring runs through athletic stops and accurate throws – used to be overlooked by many cricketers, even some professionals. But nowadays fielding is seen as a key skill and in this part there is a whole chapter dedicated to showing you how to be a top class fielder. Next, captaining a cricket team and the tactical side of the sport are explored. This really is a must-read for would-be players and fans alike. The part ends with a chapter on how to train properly for cricket.

Part III: Welcome to Planet Cricket

This part tells you about all the competitions and tournaments played around the globe. In particular, what makes Test cricket so special – where the best players from around the world square off against each other – is honed in on. Cricket’s greatest contest – The Ashes – is also looked at in depth as are some of the past and present heroes of the game. A light is also shined on other great global rivalries – such as between Pakistan and India. If that wasn’t enough, this part also talks about the cricket scene in the UK, we look at the county championship and one day competitions. This part ends with an indispensable guide to be a cricket fan – where you can see top class cricket in the UK and abroad.

Part IV: The Part of Tens

The part without which no For Dummies book would be complete. This part is packed full of fascinating bits of information that you can store away and draw on whenever you feel like impressing everyone you know at the cricket club. It contains our unique take on the great cricketers and matches which have illuminated the history of cricket.

Icons Used in This Book

To help your navigation through this book keep an eye out for the icons, the little pictures that sit in the margin. They guide you to particular types of information. This list tells you what the icons in this book mean.



This icon highlights tips and snippets of advice that can help you, whether you aim to become a better player or a better spectator.



Paragraphs with this icon attached contain information that is especially useful to remember.



You won’t see this icon very often, but, when you do take heed, because it indicates areas which may cause concern.



This icon indicates a technical discussion is under way. You can skip this stuff if you want, because it isn't necessary for an understanding of the basics. If you read it, though, your cricket know-how will be boosted.



This icon highlights the laws of the game, the sort of lingo you'll hear other players, umpires and commentators using, and those intricate little facts that all sports fans love to know about their game.



Every so often I look in-depth at a great player from today or the past or just a quirky cricketing character; the idea is to give you an idea of the big names in the sport.

Where to Go from Here

What direction you take depends on your needs. Take a look at the table of contents because it's very detailed and gives you an excellent overview of the book and the way in which it's structured.

For the beginner, the best place to start is the beginning! But if you want to familiarise yourself with the basics of the game, go to Part I. If you're an aspiring player, Part II is the place for you, while if you want to know more about Test cricket – the ultimate contest in the sport – then go seek out Part III. In short, it's up to you, go enjoy the greatest sport of all!

Part I

Getting Started with Cricket

getting started
with

cricket
cricket



Go to www.dummies.com/extras/cricket for online bonus content.

In this part . . .

- ✔ Getting to know the rules and regulations.
- ✔ Finding your way round the field of play.
- ✔ Understanding the different formats of the game.
- ✔ Kitting yourself out with the right gear.
- ✔ Go to www.dummies.com/extras/cricket for online bonus content, including an extra Part of Tens chapter: 'Ten Great Cricket Controversies'.

Chapter 1

Taking In the Joy of Cricket

In This Chapter

- ▶ Assessing the gulf between pros and amateurs
 - ▶ Looking at the battle between bowler and batsman
 - ▶ Exploring the strange, strange world of cricket speak
 - ▶ Discovering what you need to be a cricket fan
 - ▶ Understanding the role of the umpires
-

Millions of people around the globe follow cricket. For many, cricket is the number one sport, offering a unique blend of physical strength, lightning reflexes, huge skill and tactics galore. In fact, there is a strong case for the game which, first spread by the British empire in the eighteenth and nineteenth century is the world's second most popular sport behind football.

When the best cricketers in the world do battle you won't see anything like it for nail-biting tension and excitement.

Glancing at Cricket's Global Appeal

Cricket has spread around the globe on the back of the British Empire.

Despite the best efforts of cricket's global administrators – the International Cricket Council (ICC) – cricket has never managed the trick of breaking out of this traditional heartland. For example, no Chinese cricket team exists and even the USA team actually consists mostly of expatriate West Indians living in Florida.

But the British Empire – which at its height covered a third of a globe – isn't a bad heartland for a sport. India, Pakistan, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, West Indies, Zimbabwe and Bangladesh all play test cricket (the top echelon of the game: See Chapter 3 for more on test cricket).

Doing a quick bit of maths, that covers about 1.5 billion people – around a fifth of the world’s population. Although not as big as football, this coverage dwarfs some other world sports such as rugby, hockey and international tiddlywinks! And cricket isn’t a minority sport in the countries that play it: Far from it.

In India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, cricket is the number one sport; and in Britain cricket is still one of the major national sports, along with football and rugby.

Buoyed by a recent Ashes triumph, cricket is going through a renaissance in England. Unlike premiership football, cricket has no seven-figure annual salaries or swearing at the officials. And a good thing too, some would say. Hey, being a cricketer or a cricket fan may even be considered hip! One indication of English cricket’s ‘new golden age’ is the news from the English and Welsh Cricket Board (ECB) that big match ticket sales are at an all time high.



National teams compete against each other in both test and one-day international matches. Tests involve each side having two innings and can last up to five days. One-day internationals, as the name suggests, are completed in a single day. Each side gets just one innings which is limited to a set number of overs, say 50 of 20. See Chapter 3 for more on the differences between test and one-day international matches.

Gauging the Difference: Amateur and Professional Cricket

Cricket, like most major sports, is divided between the amateur and the professional game. The amateurs play for fun, the professionals play for pay.

The key differences between amateur and professional cricketers fall into four main areas:

- ✓ **Fitness standards:** Professional cricketers are fitter than amateurs. They are put on special diets and fitness regimes and have an army of coaches to tell them what to do to get the most from their bodies. Even the most committed amateur is unlikely to be able to approach the sheer athleticism of a professional player.
- ✓ **Skill levels:** Professional cricketers are way ahead when it comes to their skill levels. They get to practise most days and dedicate themselves to honing their talents.

- ✓ **Commitment:** Amateurs have jobs and can, usually, only play at weekends. They may only get to train once a week during the cricket season, and perhaps not at all in the winter. For professionals, on the other hand, cricket is what they do for a living. They play matches on most days during the summer and may even travel abroad to play during the winter months.
- ✓ **Match length:** Because the skill levels of professionals are so high, completing some games of cricket in a day can be difficult. Therefore, longer formats of the game have been devised; some games taking anything up to five days to finish. See Chapter 3 for more on match formats. Amateurs only play one-day games, or very occasionally two-day games across weekends.

An estimated 300–400 professional cricketers earn their livings playing in Britain, whereas tens of thousands of amateur players play for fun each weekend during the summer months. Even more play the occasional game of cricket – perhaps they have their cricket bat and clothing stuffed under the stairs, getting everything out when asked to take part in a friendly match at work or the local village cricket club.

The cricket season runs from April to September in Britain. But because cricket is a global sport and other parts of the world have their summers at different times of the year, even when no cricket is being played in Britain – because the weather’s cold and wet – cricket is being played somewhere else in the world. For example, in Australia the cricket season runs from late October through to March.

Understanding the great divide: Amateurs and professionals

Over time, the skill and fitness standards of professional cricketers have raced away from those of amateurs.



A long time ago, when test match cricket had just started to be played, many top players were amateurs. Often they were members of the upper classes who didn’t have to work and had enough spare time on their hands to play cricket. However, back then a lot of sham amateurism went on with top players claiming to be amateur but receiving great big ‘expenses’ payments. See Chapter 17 for more on the sham amateur controversy.

Even in the relatively recent past seeing a few beer bellies among professionals wasn’t unusual – going back to the 1980s, former England captains Mike Gatting and Ian Botham both carried a bit of extra padding around their

midribs! Even the Australians had their fair share of rotund cricketers such as Tasmanian David Boon and mustache wearing Fast bowler Merv Hughes. Nowadays, though, beer bellies are as rare as hen's teeth among professionals: They are athletes. As a result, performance levels in the professional ranks have raced away even farther from amateurs, especially when it comes to fielding. Go to watch any club cricket match and you can bet that before long you'll see a fielder misfield the ball or miss it altogether. Such moments of enjoyable farce are few and far between in the professional ranks.

But not only physical fitness and playing standards mark the growing gulf between professional and amateur. Some of the rules now differ between top-notch-professional and amateur matches.

In part the difference in rules is down to the inevitable march of new technology. In professional cricket matches, broadcast on television, the umpires can call on the help of video replay technology. They do this by requesting that a third umpire, sat on the sidelines, review the video evidence in order to give a decision – usually on whether a batsman has been caught, run-out or stumped. See Chapter 2 for more on the third umpire and modes of dismissal. The third umpire then radios his decision back to the two umpires on the pitch and the decision is given. Under the decision review system (DRS), see chapter two for more on this, a batsman who has been dismissed caught or leg before wicket can call for the third umpire to look again at the video footage and technology such as hawk-eye and hotspot to check that the on-field umpire's decision was correct. Of course in amateur games – where rustling up a cricket ball and two sets of stumps can sometimes be hard enough – you won't find video replays or extra umpires.

Some experts suggest that by adopting such new technology the professional game is in danger of pulling away from the roots of the game. Ultimately, some argue, this could undermine the popularity of the professional game because amateur cricketers – who make up a sizeable proportion of fans at matches – may become unable to relate to the game as played by the professionals. In short, alienation could prove a big turn off.

Other people see no harm in the introduction of new technology as long as it helps the umpires make the right call.



A cricket match involves two teams of 11 players and two on-pitch umpires.

An innings is completed when ten of a team's 11 batsmen have been dismissed by the fielding side. Once the batting team's innings is complete the fielding team takes their turn to bat. Therefore, the fielding team becomes the batting side and the batting side becomes the fielding team. Confused? Well check out Chapter 2 for the full low-down on an innings in cricket.