

KENTUCKY DERBY 2018

MAY 4TH
Kentucky Oaks

MAY 5TH
Kentucky Derby

MAY 7TH-9TH
Endeavor Louisville ISP

The first Kentucky Derby was held in 1875 in front of a crowd of a mere 10,000. Today, it draws over 150,000 people to the city of Louisville for one of the biggest, greatest, and most historic sporting events in America. Due to the size of the event, if you are hoping to attend the Derby pre-ISP, you'll need to start planning sooner rather than later. We've put together this guide to help you out.

WHAT IS KENTUCKY OAKS?

The day before the Kentucky Derby is Kentucky Oaks, the top race in the US for three-year-old female horses. The Kentucky Oaks race is just as historic as the Derby, having also been established in 1875. Spectators are encouraged to wear pink at the Oaks in support of breast cancer and other women's health issues.

WHAT IS THE KENTUCKY DERBY?

The Kentucky Derby is one of the longest running sporting events in America. This one and one-quarter mile long race for three-year-old Thoroughbred horses is often called the "Most Exciting Two Minutes in Sports." The day features 14 races, with the Kentucky Derby being the 12th race. Throughout the day, spectators wager on different horses while sipping mint juleps and sporting their biggest hats and best preppy, pastel Derby attire. It's truly a bucket list kind of event that you don't want to miss!



MORE DETAILS

WHEN TO ARRIVE

People typically arrive the Thursday or Friday before the Derby.

WHERE TO STAY

Lodging can fill up fast, so book soon! Some downtown hotel options include:

- [The Galt House](#) (This is the official hotel of the Kentucky Derby)
- [21c](#)
- [Aloft](#)
- [Marriot](#)
- [The Brown Hotel](#)
- [The Seelbach](#)
- [The Omni](#)

HOW TO GET AROUND

Shuttles will be running between Churchill Downs and downtown all day for about \$30. Shuttles will also be running from Papa John's Cardinal Stadium and from the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center. If you have a car, offsite parking with an accompanying shuttle service is available for a price. With such a large mass of people all migrating towards the same place, Ubers and Lyfts will likely be more scarce and expensive. Plan accordingly!

BUYING TICKETS

Tickets are sold online. The lowest-cost option is a [general admissions](#) ticket, which grants you access to the infield. Reserved seats, boxes, and packages are available [here](#). Tickets are non-refundable, non-replaceable, and non-transferable, so make sure you have your ticket with you on-hand as you enter Churchill Downs on May 5th.

DERBY DAY

Gates open at 8 am with the first race starting at 10 am. The first bets can be placed 30 minutes prior to the first race. Races run all day, with the main event and championship race—THE Kentucky Derby—at 6:36 pm. Throughout the day, mint juleps and other events will be plenty. [Click here](#) to check out a complete schedule for the day.

WHAT TO WEAR

Kentucky Derby fashion is almost as iconic as the race itself. Women often opt for floral or pastel spring-style dresses accessorized with large hats. Men usually wear pastel or funky patterned suits finished with a tie or bowtie and sometimes topped with a hat. Look to the pictures on the front for some inspiration.