



Facts and figures about women and girls in sport

Women's participation in sport in the South East of England



There are nine Government Office Regions (GORs) in England. Each GOR has its own particular pattern of physical activity participation. Below are just some of the key statistics from the Active People Survey for women's activity levels for the South East of England.

What does the research show?

•In 2005-06, around 49% of women aged 16 and over in the South East took part in some sport or physical activity in the previous four weeks for at least 30 minutes, compared with 58% of men. (National picture: 45% and 54% respectively.)

•Just 20% of women took part in regular sport and active recreation for at least 30 minutes compared with 25% of men. (National picture: 19% and 24% respectively.)

•Around 64% of women aged 16-24 years did some sport and active recreation for at least 30 minutes in the previous four weeks compared with 82% of men (national picture 60% and 80% respectively). Activity levels reduce only slightly until 45 years of age when the first large drop out occurs, and then continue to drop off. By the age of 85, few women (6%) are involved in any sport and active recreation. (National picture: 6%.)

Table 1: Top ten sports participated in monthly by adults aged 16 and over by gender; South East; 2005-06

Women		Men	
Sport	Percentage of all female respondents	Sport	Percentage of all male respondents
Recreational walking ¹	21.3	Recreational walking ¹	22.4
Swimming - indoors	16.2	Recreational cycling ²	12.5
Visiting the gym	10.6	Football - outdoors	10.8
Recreational cycling ²	6.5	Visiting the gym	10.5
Swimming - outdoors	3.0	Swimming - indoors	9.2
Aerobics	2.8	Golf/pitch and putt	8.0
Yoga	2.7	Football - indoors	3.6
Tennis	2.4	Road running	3.5
Badminton	2.2	Tennis	3.1
Road running	2.0	Badminton	2.9

¹At least one recreational walk lasting 30 minutes at moderate intensity.

²At least one recreational cycle lasting 30 minutes at moderate intensity

Source: Active People Survey, 2005-06, Sport England

•With respect to regular sports participation, almost 29% of women aged 16-24 take part in sport regularly compared with 43% of men. (National picture: 24% and 41% respectively.)

•From age 25 onwards, the gap closes between the sexes, mainly due to male decline, and between the ages of 45 and 64 women are slightly more active than men (24% of women aged 45-54 compared with 22% of men of the same age).



•When men reach retirement age their decline slows down and they are the more active sex once more (16% of men are doing regular activity aged 65-74 compared with 11% of same age women).

•There are different participation levels among the different Black and Minority Ethnic groups. African and Caribbean origin and Asian women are the least likely of all ethnic minority groups to take part regularly in sport: just 13% of Asian women and 15% of African and Caribbean women take part in sport or active recreation at least three times a week for 30 minutes compared with 21% of White women and 18% of women from the Mixed ethnic group. (National picture: 12% Asian women, 14%

African and Caribbean women, 19% White women and 21% Mixed ethnic women.)

•Around three-quarters of women (74%) with a limiting long-standing illness, disability or infirmity did no sport or recreation for at least 30 minutes in the previous four weeks. Compare this with just over half of women without a limiting long-standing illness or disability (50%). (National picture: 78% and 50% respectively.)

•Just 4% of women did at least one hour of volunteering in sport in the previous week, compared with 7% of men. (National picture: 3% and 6% respectively). Young women aged 16-24 are the most likely to volunteer (6%).

•Women are slightly more likely than men to receive sports tuition: 22% compared with 20%. (National picture: 19% and 17% respectively.)

•Approximately 24% of women are members of sports clubs compared with 32% of men. (National picture: 21% and 29% respectively.)

•Only 10% of women had taken part in organised competitive sport in the last 12 months compared with 25% of men. (National picture: 9% and 22% respectively.)

•Around 72% of South East women are satisfied with the local sports provision, a similar proportion to men (71%). (National picture: 70% and 69% respectively.)

Footnote

1. This data comes from Sport England's Active People Survey, the largest sports participation survey ever carried out, showing adults aged 16 and over participating in sport and active recreation in England in 2005-06. Around 1,000 people in every local authority in England (around 350,000 people in total) were asked questions about their activity levels. In the Active People Survey there are two measures of activity - 'some activity' refers to someone who did moderate intensity sport or active recreation for at least one session for 30 minutes in the previous month. 'Regular activity' refers to sport or active recreation at least three times a week for at least 30 minutes continuously in one session.



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The Women's Sports Foundation has a vision of a society which celebrates the diversity of women and girls, and enables them to benefit from, excel at and fulfil their potential through the sport of their choice.

Supporting women's sport

The Women's Sports Foundation is the only organisation that works solely to increase opportunities for women and girls. We are a small team of seven people, campaigning for women's sport. These fact files are provided to you free of charge to help raise awareness of the issues – and empower you to advocate for change. However, if you would like to make a contribution to cover admin costs, and to support women's sport, please visit our website and follow the links to the 'make a donation' section.