

Are you a Baseball Guy?

A Baseball Guy loves baseball in a way that can be characterized as very special. It can sometimes be characterized as childish, silly, crazy, unhealthy, and even sick. You know that verse, "For every thing there is a season..."? There is no season for a Baseball Guy. A Baseball Guy's abiding interest in The Game is a compelling year-round obsession.

A Baseball Guy loves Super Bowl Sunday - not for the football - but for the fact that it signals to baseball fans that it's nearing the beginning of February, which is the month that pitchers and catchers report.

A Baseball Guy sees and appreciates the subtleties of The Game. A Baseball Guy sees and appreciates the subtleties of the subtleties of The Game. A Baseball Guy sees every nuance of The Game's every color. And there are thousands!

A Baseball Guy has never said, "Baseball's booooooring," as some other kinds of guys have. A Baseball Guy knows that statement is an admission of a lack of appreciation of The Game's finer points, a lack of understanding of the game's wondrous complexities. Perhaps most important, a Baseball Guy knows such a statement will anger the Baseball Gods.

You see, to a Baseball Guy, there are Baseball Gods. And the Baseball Gods determine how baseball goes for its participants, its observers, even its detractors. To a Baseball Guy, a ballpark is barely short of being a cathedral. Being there enlivens the spirit and warms the heart of a Baseball Guy.

A Baseball Guy's love of The Game reaches so far beyond the mere playing of it, that it's immeasurable. A Baseball Guy loves The Game's people, its places, its numbers, its storied characters and its rich history. A Baseball Guy loves the sight of a magnificent building whose sole purpose for being is to have baseball games played there. When a Baseball Guy hears the echo of a classical ballpark public-address announcer and he has heard the voice of a baseball lord.

A Baseball Guy is captivated by the crack of a horsehide ball against wood or the distinctively different crack of a horsehide ball against a leather glove. A Baseball Guy loves the smell of green grass, the warmth and glow of the sun and the blue sky above.

Ernie Banks is a Baseball Guy. When it comes to baseball, he is in nearly every way, still a youngster. To a Baseball Guy, Ernie's credo, "Let's play two!" is not a credo, but a quotation from The Gospel According to Ernie. It is also a belief that every Baseball Guy believes to his core. No day could ever be spent doing anything better than playing - or watching - two baseball games.

The great Hall of Famer Roy Campanella said to play baseball, you've gotta' have a lot of little boy in you. Campy was a Baseball Guy, no question about it. He had a lot of "little boy" in him. Try to think of anyone in the world who loves the game more than Campy did! Alright, stop trying... there isn't anyone.

Baseball Guys love The Game. It's that simple. Can you think of some Baseball Guys? There are quite a few of them out there. Are you a Baseball Guy? How do you know for sure? A Baseball Guy can be identified rather simply and in a host of different ways. If you truly love the game, chances are you have embarked on an all-consuming, lifelong quest to attain a level of knowledge and appreciation of baseball that few around you seem to match. If that's the case, then you may very well be a Baseball Guy.

And a Baseball Guy should not be afraid or ashamed to admit that he or she is a Baseball Guy. He or SHE you ask? Yes, absolutely! A Baseball Guy CAN be a woman or a girl, and be referred to as a "guy" if you consider the context. Like when you're being served in a restaurant and the server greets a mixed gathering as: "You guys" - same idea.

So read these sample criteria and ask yourself.... "Am I a Baseball Guy?"

- If you believe that horses, cows and trees were put on Earth simply to supply The Game with baseballs, gloves and bats; then there is a good chance that you are a Baseball Guy.
- If two of the four-letter words that you will not allow spoken in your home are "turf" and "dome," then there is a somewhat realistic possibility that you are a Baseball Guy.
- If someone asked you to name the two worst years of your life, and you were to answer: "The strike years, '81 and '94," then it could well be that you are a Baseball Guy.
- If you knew that umpire Bob Davidson would be punished by the Baseball Gods for robbing Mark McGwire of what should have been his 66th homer with that insane ground-rule-double call in Milwaukee in 1998, and you were not at all surprised when 21 other umps went down with him, then you just may be thought of as being a Baseball Guy.
- If you considered having your name legally changed because your initials were "D.H." then there is a distinct possibility that you are a Baseball Guy.
- If the destinations in all of your dream vacations are Major League cities, then you could quite possibly be a Baseball Guy.
- If you mistakenly grew up thinking that hot dogs and peanuts are two of the four basic food groups, then it is conceivable that you are a Baseball Guy.
- If you close your eyes and try to imagine the exact sound of the voice of God, and all you can hear in your mind are the voices of Vin Scully and Ernie Harwell, then you are more than likely a Baseball Guy.
- If someone asks you who the NL MVP was in 1964, and you answer Ken Boyer; then you reel off his uniform number, how many Gold Gloves he won, the years he played, all of the clubs that he played for in the order that he played for them - then you nearly certainly are a Baseball Guy.
- If you believe that Bill Buckner missed that simple little ground ball that wound up costing the Red Sox and their vast legion of fans the thrill of a World Series victory, because in 1974, he climbed the fence in an attempt to rob Henry Aaron of his record 715th homer, then you just may well be a Baseball Guy.

- If you believe that the Red Sox would still have lost Game 6 and eventually the series in 1986, even without Buckner, because you believe that there really is a "Curse of the Bambino," then you might be able to consider yourself a Baseball Guy.
- If somebody says to you: "I've got a great baseball trivia question for you... see if you know this", and you not only answer the supposedly tough question before the guy's done asking it, but you then help him re-phrase the question for next time; then you may quite naturally be seen as a Baseball Guy.
- If you were told that as Mayor of New York, you had to decide between whether St. Patrick's Cathedral or Yankee Stadium had to be demolished, and you answered "Let me sleep on it," then there is a very real chance that you are a Baseball Guy.
- If you are of the opinion that there has never been any such thing as an authentic baseball movie, then you could be a Baseball Guy.
- If you don't care who our 32nd president was, or what The War of 1812 was about, but you can flawlessly recite all of the years that the Yankees won the World Series or all of the MVPs in your lifetime, then there is a fairly decent chance that you are a Baseball Guy.
- If you're at the ballpark, taking in a twin-bill, and the nightcap goes into extra innings, and you are heard saying: "Cool, extra innings," then you have a serious problem whose only plausible explanation is that you are a Baseball Guy.
- If you are of the opinion that wearing a baseball cap on your head backwards might be breaking the "eleventh commandment", then you're probably a Baseball Guy.
- If you have tattoos and at least one of them is baseball themed – then you my friend, might in fact be a Baseball Guy.
- If you enjoy watching the local high school practicing, little league games or the pros with equal delight, you can be categorized as a Baseball Guy.
- If you believe that 90 feet between bases & 60 feet 6 inches from pitcher's mound to home plate are the most perfect distances ever applied to any sport, you could very well be a Baseball Guy.
- If you don't care what the "stats" say, and you understand that there is more to a player's contributions than just his numbers, you are probably a Baseball Guy.
- If you show up to the ballpark early, with your mitt, and never, ever leave the park before the game is over, you can be considered a Baseball Guy.

So, are you a Baseball Guy?

Baseball is a magnificent piece of life. I certainly hope you will always appreciate The Game and everything it has to share - our hopes, faith, traditions, disappointment, expectation, struggles, successes, failures, loyalty, and so much more - are rolled into one beautifully complex, yet simple game - the great game of Baseball.