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# Wood Rat Park

What on earth is that, you may be thinking when you read the title. Actually it is the literal translation of Koshien. As all baseball lovers know, Koshien is the Mecca of baseball in Japan

The formal name of the ball park is the Hanshin Koshien Stadium. Did you know that it got its name because of the year in which it was built? That was 1924 which according to the Japanese zodiac was the Year of the Wood Rat [甲子which is read *kinoene* in Japanese]. The design of the stadium was heavily influenced by the Polo Grounds in New York City. When it opened on August 1, 1924 it could seat 55,000 spectators. In 1936 it became the home stadium for the Osaka Tigers, the team which today is called the Hanshin Tigers.

The National High School Baseball Championship is held in August every year and a smaller, invitational tournament called the National High School Baseball Invitational Tournament is held in March each year. Both tournaments are generally referred to as Koshien.

The legendary Babe Ruth played an exhibition game at Koshien in 1934 and there is a plaque at the stadium commemorating the event.

The top seats are the green seats (sold in season tickets) directly behind home plate and under the Ginsan roof. These seats are entirely covered and corporate. The seats in the infield are colored green on the first base side and the third base side under the Ginsan roof and called "Ivy Seat." Both sides are [¥](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_yen)4,000. The outfield benches along the lines are called the "[Alps](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alps)" and they are ¥2,500. The outfield seats are ¥1,900.