

# Dodgers



## My Drift

**Title: The Greatest Dodgers**

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**I grew up as a Brooklyn Dodgers fan. My favorite player was Duke Snider. I remember listening to the baseball games on the radio. When I was a kid, the games were not on television yet, which didn't matter too much since we didn't have a television set until I was a teenager. Okay, most of my younger readers probably never heard of the Brooklyn Dodgers. Here is a short history of the Brooklyn and Los Angeles Dodgers:**

*The Brooklyn Dodgers were a Major League baseball team that played in the National League from 1884 until 1957, after which the club moved to Los Angeles, California, where it continues its history as the Los Angeles Dodgers. The team moved west at the same time as its longtime rivals, the New York Giants, also in the National League, relocated to San Francisco in northern California as the San Francisco Giants. The team's name is derived from the reputed skill of Brooklyn residents at evading the city's trolley streetcar network. The Dodgers played in two stadiums in South Brooklyn, each named Washington Park, and at Eastern Park in the neighborhood of Brownsville before moving to Ebbets Field in the neighborhood of Flatbush in 1913. The team is most noted for signing Jackie Robinson in 1947 as the first black player in the modern major leagues.*

**Just in case you are not too swift at geography and was wondering where Brooklyn is located, it is the most populous borough of New York City, with an estimated 2,700,000 residents. Named after the Dutch village of Breukelen, it borders the borough of Queens at the western end of Long Island.**

**I will have to admit that I follow basketball and football more than baseball now days, but the Dodgers are still my favorite baseball team. The only team in the history of baseball with more famous players than the Dodgers is the “hated” New York Yankees. I’m going to pick the most famous (greatest) players in Dodger history and provide some justification plus pictures.**

### **PITCHERS (LEFT-HANDED)**

**Sandy Koufax**



**Sandy Koufax was a left-handed pitcher who pitched 12 seasons for the Brooklyn/Los Angeles Dodgers from 1955 to 1966. Koufax, at age 36 in 1972, became the youngest player ever elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. He has been hailed as one of the greatest pitchers in baseball history.**

**Koufax's career peaked with a run of six outstanding years from 1961 to 1966, before arthritis in his left elbow ended his career prematurely at age 30. He was an All-Star for six seasons and was the National League's Most Valuable Player (MVP) in 1963. He won three Cy Young Awards in 1963, 1965, and 1966, by unanimous votes, making him the first three-time Cy Young winner in baseball history and the only one to win three times when one overall award was given for all of major league baseball instead of one award for each league. Koufax also won the NL Triple Crown for pitchers those same three years by leading the NL in wins, strikeouts, and earned run average.**

**Koufax was the first major league pitcher to pitch four no-hitters and the eighth pitcher to pitch a perfect game in baseball history. Despite his comparatively short career, Koufax's 2,396 career strikeouts ranked 7th in history as of his retirement.**

**Koufax is also remembered as one of the outstanding Jewish athletes in American sports. His decision not to pitch Game 1 of the 1965 World Series because it fell on Yom Kippur garnered national attention as an example of conflict between professional pressures and personal beliefs.**

**Clayton Kershaw**



**Clayton Kershaw (born March 19, 1988) is a left-handed starting pitcher who has played in the major leagues since 2008, and his career earned run average (ERA) and walks and hits per innings pitched average (WHIP) are the lowest among starters in the live-ball era with a minimum of 1,000 innings pitched. Kershaw has a career hits allowed per nine innings pitched average of 6.61—the second lowest in MLB history—along with three Cy Young Awards and the 2014 National League Most Valuable Player Award. He has been described throughout the majority of his career as the best pitcher in baseball.**

### **PITCHERS (RIGHT-HANDED)**

**Don Drysdale (July 23, 1936 – July 3, 1993) was a right-handed pitcher who pitched for the Los Angeles Dodgers for his entire career. Drysdale won the 1962 Cy Young Award and in 1968, pitched a record six consecutive shutouts and 58 and 2/3 consecutive scoreless innings.**

**One of the most dominant pitchers of the late 1950s and early to mid-1960s, Drysdale stood 6 feet 5 inches tall and was not afraid to throw pitches near batters to keep them off balance. His 154 hit batsmen remain a modern National League record.**

**Don Drysdale**



**Pitching for the Brooklyn and Los Angeles Dodgers, he teamed with Sandy Koufax to form one of the most dominating pitching duos in history.**

**Drysdale was also a good hitting pitcher. In 14 seasons, he had 218 hits, including 29 home runs. Drysdale was occasionally used as a pinch-hitter, once during the World Series.**



**Don Sutton** (born April 2, 1945) was a right-handed pitcher who played for 23 total major league seasons as a member of the Los Angeles Dodgers, Houston Astros, Milwaukee Brewers, Oakland Athletics, and California Angels. He won a total of 324 games, 58 of them shutouts and five of them one-hitters, and he is seventh on baseball's all-time strikeout list with 3,574.

Beginning in 1966, he was in the team's starting pitching rotation with Sandy Koufax, Don Drysdale and Claude Osteen. Sixteen of Sutton's 23 MLB seasons were spent with the Dodgers. He registered only one 20-win season, but he earned double-digit wins in almost all of his seasons.

**Don Sutton**



### **PITCHERS (HONORABLE MENTION)**

**Orel Hershiser**



**Played: 1983-2000**  
**Win-loss record: 204-150**  
**Fernando Valenzuela**



**Played: 1980-1997**  
**Win-loss record: 173-153**

**Don Newcombe**



**Played: 1949-1960**  
**Win-loss record: 149-90**

**Claude Osteen**



**Played: 1957-1975**  
**Win-loss record: 196-195**

**Johnny Podres**



**Played: 1953-1969**  
**Win-loss record: 148-116**

**Hideo Nomo**



**Played: 1995-2008**  
**Win-loss record: 123-109**

## CATCHERS

**Mike Piazza**



**Played: 1992-2007 Hits: 2,127  
Home runs: 427 RBIs: 1,335  
Batting average: .308**

**Piazza played most notably for the New York Mets and Los Angeles Dodgers. Piazza was drafted by the Dodgers in 1988 draft as a favor from Tommy Lasorda to Piazza's father. Initially a first baseman, Piazza converted to catcher in the minor leagues to improve his chances of being promoted to the major league.**

**Roy Campanella**



**Played: 1948-1957 Hits: 1,161  
Home runs: 242 RBIs: 856  
Batting average: .276**

**Campanella was nicknamed "Campy" and played for the Negro Leagues and Mexican League before entering the minor leagues in 1946. He made his Major League Baseball debut in 1948. His playing career ended when he was paralyzed in an automobile accident in January 1958.**

## CATCHERS (HONORABLE MENTION)

**Mike Scioscia**



**Played: 1980-1992**

***Scioscia managed the LA Angels to their only World Series championship in 2002***

**John Roseboro**



**Played: 1957-1970**

***Are you old enough to remember when Juan Marichal hit John Roseboro in the head with a baseball bat?***

**Steve Yeager**



**Played: 1972-1985**

***First to wear a Throat protector - a device that hangs from the catcher's mask***



## FIRST BASEMEN

**Steve Garvey**



**Played: 1969-1987 Hits: 2,599  
Home runs: 272 RBIs: 1,308  
Batting average: .294**

Steve Garvey (born December 22, 1948) was nicknamed "Mr. Clean" because of his wholesome image during his career in baseball. Garvey was the 1974 National League Most Valuable Player Award winner, a two-time National League Championship Series MVP (1978 and 1984), a 10-time All-Star, and a two-time MVP of the All-Star Game (1974 and 1978). He holds the National League record for consecutive games played (1,207). Garvey was part of one of the most enduring infields in baseball history (8 years together) along with third baseman Ron Cey, shortstop Bill Russell and second baseman Davey Lopes.

## FIRST BASEMEN (HONORABLE MENTION)

**Gil Hodges**



**Played: 1943-1963**

*In 1944, Hodges joined the Marine Corps and fought in World War II – He was discharged in 1946*

**Eric Karros**



**Played: 1991-2004**

*No Dodger in the organization's history compiled more 30 home run 100 RBI seasons than Karros (five, matched only by Duke Snider and Gil Hodges)*

## SECOND BASEMEN

Jackie Robinson (January 31, 1919 – October 24, 1972) was the first African American to play in Major League Baseball. Robinson broke the baseball color line when the Brooklyn Dodgers started him on April 15, 1947. When the Dodgers signed Robinson, they heralded the end of racial segregation in professional baseball that had relegated black players to the Negro leagues since the 1880s. Robinson was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962.

Robinson had an exceptional 10-year MLB career. He was the recipient of the inaugural MLB Rookie of the Year Award in 1947, was an All-Star for six consecutive seasons from 1949 through 1954 and won the National League Most Valuable Player Award in 1949—the first black player so honored. Robinson played in six World Series and contributed to the Dodgers' 1955 World Series championship.



**Jackie Robinson Stealing Home – He did it 19 times!**

| Career Stats | At Bat | Hits | HRs | Runs | RBI's | Average | SB  |
|--------------|--------|------|-----|------|-------|---------|-----|
|              | 4877   | 1518 | 137 | 947  | 734   | .311    | 197 |

In 1997, MLB retired his uniform number 42 across all major league teams; he was the first pro athlete in any sport to be so honored. MLB also adopted a new annual tradition, "Jackie Robinson Day", for the first time on April 15, 2004, on which every player on every team wears No. 42.

## SECOND BASEMEN (HONORABLE MENTION)

**Davey Lopes**



**Played: 1972-1987**

*Lopes was one of the most effective base stealers (557) in baseball's history*

**Jim Gilliam**



**Played: 1953-1966**

*Gilliam was the 1953 National League Rookie of the Year*

**Steve Sax**



**Played: 1981-1994**

*Sax has two World Series rings with the Los Angeles Dodgers in 1981 and 1988*



### THIRD BASEMEN

Dodger third baseman Ron Cey was part of an All-Star infield that included Steve Garvey (first baseman), Davey Lopes (second baseman) and Bill Russell (shortstop). The four infielders stayed together as the Dodgers' starters for eight years. Cey was nicknamed "The Penguin" for his slow waddling running gait. In 1977, he was named NL Player of the Month in April after helping the Dodgers to a fast start by batting .425 with 9 home runs and a ML record 29 RBIs for the month of April. The Dodgers won the National League pennant that year and again in 1978 and 1981.

Ron Cey



Played: 1971-1986 Hits: 1,868  
Home runs: 316 RBIs: 1,139  
Batting average: .261

### THIRD BASEMEN (HONORABLE MENTION)

Adrián Beltré



Played: 1998-2018

*Beltré is the all-time hits leader (3,166) among foreign-born players and the fifth major leaguer to hit at least 100 home runs for three different teams.*

Justin Turner



Played: 2009-Present

*Turner signed a minor league contract with the Dodgers in 2014 – In 2016, the Dodgers signed Turner to a four-year contract valued at \$64 million.*



Dodger Stadium



### Best Dodger Infield Ever



*Ron Cey – Bill Russell - Davey Lopes - Steve Garvey*

### SHORTSTOPS

Wills was an All-Star for five seasons and seven All-Star Games and was the first MLB All-Star Game Most Valuable Player (MVP) in 1962. He also was the National League MVP in 1962, and a Gold Glove winner in 1961 and 1962. In a fourteen-year career, Wills batted .281 with 20 home runs, 458 runs batted in, 2,134 hits, 1,067 runs, 177 doubles, 71 triples, and 586 stolen bases in 1,942 games.

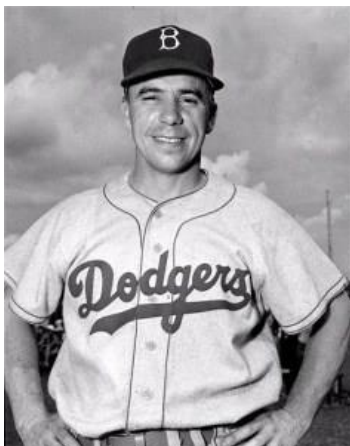
### Maury Wills



**Played: 1959-1972**

### SHORTSTOPS (HONORABLE MENTION)

#### Pee Wee Reese



**Played: 1940-1958**

*A ten-time All Star, Reese contributed to seven National League championships for the Brooklyn Dodgers.*

#### Bill Russell



**Played: 1969-1986**

*Russell was the starting shortstop for four National League pennant winners and one World Series championship team.*

## LEFT FIELDERS

Baker played for the National League All-Star team in 1981 and 1982 and his team won three League Championship series in 1977, 1978, and 1981. Baker ultimately won a World Series title in 1981 with the Dodgers. Baker played an integral part in the first ever high five, which occurred between Baker and Dodgers teammate Glenn Burke on October 2, 1977, at Dodger Stadium. As a player and manager, he is noted for his love of toothpicks - He chews them at every game.

**Dusty Baker**



**Played: 1968-1986**

**Hits: 1,981 Home runs: 242**

**RBIs: 1,013 Batting average: .278**

## LEFT FIELDERS (HONORABLE MENTION)

**Tommy Davis**



**Played: 1959-1976**

*He played for ten different teams, but he is best known for his years with the Los Angeles Dodgers when he was a two-time National League batting champion.*

**Pedro Guerrero**



**Played: 1978-1992**

*In 1982, Guerrero became the first Dodger to hit 30 home runs and steal 20 bases in a season.*

**Kirk Gibson**



**Played: 1979-1995**

Kirk Gibson's 1988 World Series home run occurred in Game 1 at Dodger Stadium. Gibson, pinch hitting in the bottom of the ninth inning, with injuries to both legs, hit a two-run walk-off home run off the Oakland Athletics' Dennis Eckersley that won the game by a score of 5-4.

## CENTER FIELDERS

**Duke Snider**



**Played: 1947-1963**  
**Hits: 2,116 Home runs: 407**  
**RBIs: 1,333 Batting average: .295**

Edwin Donald "Duke" Snider was nicknamed "The Silver Fox" and "The Duke of Flatbush". Snider was named to the National League (NL) All-Star roster eight times and was the NL Most Valuable Player (MVP) runner-up in 1955. In his 16 out of 18 seasons with the Dodgers, he helped lead the Dodgers to six World Series, with victories in 1955 and 1959. He was elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1980.

## CENTER FIELDERS (HONORABLE MENTION)

**Willie Davis**



**Played: 1960-1979**

*Davis won Gold Glove Awards from 1971 to 1973. He had 13 seasons of 20 or more stolen bases, led the NL in triples twice. He holds Los Angeles club records (1958–present) for career hits (2091), runs (1004), triples (110), at bats (7495), total bases (3094) and extra base hits (585). His 31-game hitting streak in 1969 remains the longest by a Dodger.*

**Reggie Smith**



**Played: 1967-1982**

*Smith appeared in four World Series, including his rookie 1967 season for the Red Sox, and three (1977, 1978 and 1981) for the Dodgers. He hit three home runs in the 1977 series. In the 1978 season, Dodger pitcher Don Sutton went public with comments that Smith was a more valuable player to the Dodgers than the more-celebrated Steve Garvey. This led to an infamous clubhouse wrestling match between Sutton and Garvey.*



## RIGHT FIELDERS

**Raúl Mondesí**



**Played: 1993-2005**

**Hits: 1,589 HRs: 271 RBIs: 860**

**Batting average: .273 SBs: 229**

Mondesí played 13 seasons, primarily for the Los Angeles Dodgers. He was the National League (NL) Rookie of the Year in 1994, an MLB All-Star, and a two-time Gold Glove Award winner. Known for his combination of power and speed, Mondesí twice achieved the 30–30 club. Also noted for his strong throwing arm, he led right fielders in assists three times while registering over 100 in his career.

**Carl Furillo**



**Played: 1946-1960**

**Hits: 1,910 HRs: 192 RBIs: 1,058**

**Batting average: .299**

Furillo was a key member on the Dodgers' 1949 champions, hitting .322 (4th in the NL) with 18 home runs, and among the league's top ten players in RBI (106), slugging average (.506), hits (177), runs (95), triples (10) and total bases (278). He was skilled at fielding balls hit off the high right-field wall at Ebbets Field, and after he led the NL in assists in both 1950 (18) and 1951 (24).

## RIGHT FIELDERS (HONORABLE MENTION)

**Shawn Green**



**Played: 1992-2007**

*Among all-time Jewish MLB baseball players—he was second in career home runs and RBIs (behind Hank Greenberg).*

**Yasiel Puig**



**Played: 2013-Present**

*Puig tried to defect to Mexico 13 times in order to become a legal resident so he could sign a contract in Major Leagues.*

## **FUTURE GREAT DODGER**

Actually, he is pretty great already and is only a third of season into his third year as a Dodger. After 50 games this year (2019), here are his stats:

**Batting Average:** .404

Hits: 72

Home Runs: 19

Runs: 48

Runs Batted In: 49

Stolen Bases: 7

No other MLB player has hit over .400 after 50 games in the last 10 years.

Do you know who was the last player was to hit over .400 for a season? It was Ted Williams of the Boston Red Sox in 1941 with a .406 batting average. That was 78 years ago! It is much harder now days to hit .400 or even the high 300s.

So, who is this Dodger?

Cody Bellinger



Cody James Bellinger (born July 13, 1995) plays first base and the outfielder (mostly right field) for the Los Angeles Dodgers.

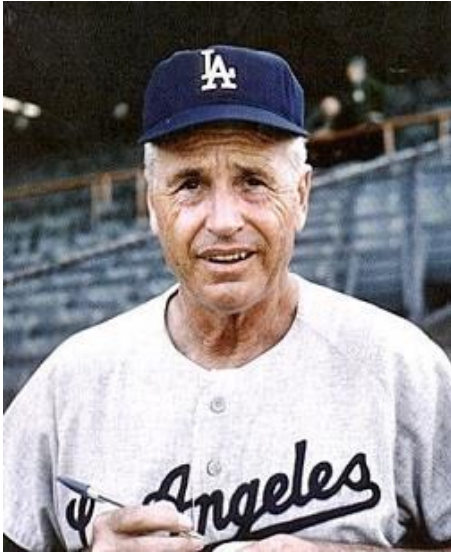
**Amateur career:** Bellinger played in the 2007 Little League World Series for the Chandler, Arizona team and played high school baseball at Hamilton High School in Chandler. While known primarily for his hitting ability, Bellinger also pitched for his high school and threw a four-hit, complete-game shutout with 10 strikeouts in a national tournament.

**Pro career:** Bellinger began the 2017 season with Oklahoma City but was called up to the majors for the first time on April 25, 2017. After the season, he was unanimously voted as the National League Rookie of the Year. Don't be surprised if he is named the MVP this year.

I watched the Dodgers play the New York Mets on Memorial Day (2019) and all Bellinger did was throw out two Met players at home plate and hit a homer. The Dodgers with Clayton Kershaw pitching beat the Mets 8 to 5.

## MANAGERS

**Walter Alston**



**Managed: 1959-1976**  
**Record: 2040 wins 1613 loses**

**Tommy Lasorda**



**Managed: 1976-1996**  
**Record: 1599 wins 1439 loses**

## FOUNDERS

The team currently known as the Dodgers was formed as the Brooklyn Grays in 1883 by real estate magnate and baseball enthusiast Charles Byrne, who convinced his brother-in-law Joseph Doyle and casino operator Ferdinand Abell to start the team with him.

## OWNER

**Walter O'Malley**



**Primary Owner 1945-1979**



## SPORTSCASTER

**Vin Scully**



**Vincent Edward Scully (born November 29, 1927) started calling games for Major League Baseball's Los Angeles Dodgers, beginning in 1950 (when the franchise was located in Brooklyn) and ending in 2016. His run constitutes the longest tenure of any broadcaster with a single team in professional sports history, and he is second only to Tommy Lasorda (by two years) in terms of number of years associated with the Dodgers organization in any capacity. He retired at age 88 in 2016, ending his record-breaking run as their play-by-play announcer.**

**He is known for his dulcet voice, lyrically descriptive style, and signature introduction to Dodger games: "It's time for Dodger baseball! Hi, everybody, and a very pleasant good (afternoon/evening) to you, wherever you may be." He is considered by me and most baseball fans as the greatest baseball broadcaster of all time.**

**If you are still with me, you must be a Dodgers fan. Hope you enjoyed the article.**

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