

Longest Matches in NHL Playoff History

In the NHL, teams play three 20-minute periods of hockey. If the score is tied at the end of the three periods then a five minute overtime period is played. If there is no score at the end of overtime period then a shoot out settles the game.

During the Stanley Cup Playoffs there are no shootouts. If two teams are tied at the end of regulation then 20-minute overtime periods are played sudden death style until a team scores a goal. Once a goal is scored in overtime the game is over. If a goal is not scored in an overtime period then additional 20-minute overtime periods are played until a team scores. This overtime process can result in some very long playoff games!

A regulation NHL game is 60 minutes of actual hockey, which takes about 2 hours and 30 minutes to play when you add in timeouts and intermissions. The table below gives the longest NHL games in history. The minutes of OT (overtime) does not include the regular 60 minutes of game play.

Date	City	Score				Goal Scorer	Minutes of OT	Series Winner	Total hours, minutes, seconds
3/24/1936	Montreal	Detroit	1	Montreal Maroons	0	Mud Bruneteau	116:30:00	Detroit	
4/3/1933	Toronto	Toronto	1	Boston	0	Ken Doraty	104:46:00	Toronto	
5/4/2000	Pittsburgh	Philadelphia	2	Pittsburgh	1	Keith Primeau	92:01:00	Philadelphia	
4/24/2003	Dallas	Anaheim	4	Dallas	3	Petr Sykora	80:48:00	Anaheim	
4/24/1996	Washington	Pittsburgh	3	Washington	2	Petr Nedved	79:15:00	Pittsburgh	
4/11/2007	Vancouver	Vancouver	5	Dallas	4	Henrik Sedin	78:06:00	Vancouver	
3/23/1943	Detroit	Toronto	3	Detroit	2	Jack McLean	70:18:00	Detroit	
5/4/2008	Dallas	Dallas	2	San Jose	1	BrendenMorrow	69:03:00	Dallas	
3/28/1930	Montreal	Montreal Canadians	2	New York Rangers	1	Gus Rivers	68:52:00	Montreal	
4/18/1987	Washington	New York Islanders	3	Washington	2	Pat LaFontaine	68:47:00	New York Islanders	

- The longest NHL playoff match ever played was in 1936 between Montreal and Detroit. As you can see in the table above, they played 116 minutes and 30 seconds of OT. When you add in the first 60 minutes of regulation game play, how many total hours, minutes and seconds of hockey did these teams play in this match? Put your answer in the right hand column of the table next to the corresponding game.
- Repeat this process for each of the other games in the chart. Remember to write your answers in hours, minutes and seconds.
- How much longer was the longest match in this table compared to the shortest match in this table? What statistic does this represent in regards to this set of data?
- A regulation NHL match is 60 minutes long and a game takes about 2 hours and 30 minutes to play. At this same rate, about how long did it take to play the Dallas–San Jose match in 2008? That is, about how long in real time did this match go on for?

5. This was Pacific Time Zone match, so lets say where you live the game started at 8 p.m. At about what time during the night would you have expected the match to finish?

6. Again, assuming a regulation NHL match is 60 minutes long and it takes about 2 hours and 30 minutes to play, then at the same rate about how long might it have taken to play the 1936 match between Montreal and Detroit?

7. In 1936 this match may have been televised or it may have been on the radio. Either way, if the match started at 7:30 p.m. and you watched/listened to the entire match, when would the match have ended?

8. Explain how to find the approximate real length of time it would take to play a NHL match for any number of actual playing time minutes.

9. I watched an NHL playoff match that took about 6 hours to play. About how many actual playing time minutes of overtime were played in this match? Make sure to explain your reasoning.

10. Besides hockey, baseball has had some pretty long games. The longest Major League Baseball game ever played was in 1984, between the Chicago White Sox and the Milwaukee Brewers. This game lasted 25 innings. If a standard nine-inning game takes about three hours to play, then about how long do you think this game took to play?

Sources: <https://www.nhl.com/news/nhls-longest-playoff-games/c-630492>
http://www.baseball-almanac.com/recbooks/rb_gmlg.shtml