

## Top 22 Single-Season Giants Home Run Leaders

When it comes to home runs hit by San Francisco Giants players, there are probably two names that immediately come to mind: [Barry Bonds](#) and [Willie Mays](#). That happens for a good reason, too -- they're not only two of the most dominant players to ever grace a field (yea, I said it), but they also dominate the Giants' single-season home run leaderboard.

They leave very little space for anyone else to join them within the top 22.

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### Giants Home Run Leaders: Top 5

#### Barry Bonds: 73 Home Runs in 2001

Bonds' 73-homer barrage in 2001 is the most obvious one to discuss here. It's the [most home runs in a season](#) by any player in MLB history. The outfielder's overall numbers look like they came straight out of a video game, too -- Bonds slashed .328/.515/.863 (!) with those 73 dingers, 137 RBI, and 129 runs scored. He won his fourth NL MVP award that year, and it began a streak of four straight seasons where he brought home the hardware.

Obviously, to put together a season like this, you have to dominate pretty much from start to finish, and that's what Bonds did. His monthly OPS never dropped below 1.100, and it even got above 1.400 in three separate months. The only time he hit fewer than 11 home runs in a month came in July when he slugged six. What's most eye-popping to me is that his OPS in wins (1.569) and losses (1.154) were both incredibly high. Bonds hit 47 of his home runs in games the Giants were victorious, which helped him post a 1.012 slugging percentage in that situation. And, no -- that's not a typo.

#### Willie Mays: 52 Home Runs in 1965

Bonds may have the top spot on San Francisco's single-season home run leaderboard, but his godfather has three of the four next spots. While Bonds' 73 homers are the most ever, it was the only time in his career he hit more than 50 in a single season. As we see here, hitting 50-plus dingers is something May did twice during his Hall of Fame career. He had to rack up those types of numbers to remain the Giants' [all-time home run leader](#), ya know.

The 1965 season was the fourth and last time May led the league in homers, and he won his second and final NL MVP award off the strength of a .317/.398/.645 line with those 52 dingers, 112 RBI, 118 runs scored, and a Gold Glove for his defensive work in the outfield.

What's interesting about his performance in '65 is that he did the majority of his damage in the power department over the span of three months. He hit double-digit homers in May (12), August (17), and September (11), but in the other three months? He didn't hit more than five and combined to slug just 12 dingers. Either way, hitting just over half of your 52 home runs during

the season's final two months is the best way to put an exclamation point on an MVP performance.

### **Willie Mays: 51 Home Runs in 1955**

Mays stepped up to the plate 50 fewer times in the second half compared to the first half in 1955, but he really elevated his game in such a way that he nearly achieved identical overall statistics by the end. Let's explain that a bit -- in the first half of play, he slashed .298/.389/.628, which led to a 1.017 OPS, 27 homers, and 64 RBI. In the second half, his line improved dramatically to .343/.413/.694, which produced a 1.107 OPS, 24 homers, and 63 RBI. See what I mean?

The young outfielder had posted a 1.000-plus OPS in five of the six months during 1955, and while July was his most powerful month (he hit 13 home runs), it was September that was the most eye-popping of all. Over his final 98 plate appearances, Mays hit .396/.429/.879 with 11 homers, 31 RBI, and 20 runs scored. Now that's how you finish a season strong.

This was his second consecutive season of 40-plus homers, and it was a number he'd ultimately pass six total times throughout his career.

### **Johnny Mize: 51 Home Runs in 1947**

Like so many ballplayers in the 1940s, the prime of [Johnny Mize](#)'s career was spent serving his country in World War II from 1943-45. He came back to the Giants in 1946 in time to suit up for 101 games. Mize posted a 1.013 OPS with 22 home runs and 70 RBI during this campaign, but his first full season back in '47 was the big one.

Mize slashed .302/.384/.614 with 51 home runs and 138 RBI, which enabled him to finish third in MVP voting. Those homer and RBI totals not only led the league, but they were single-season career-high marks for him. On a monthly basis, the first baseman was quite consistent in the power department. He didn't hit fewer than six dingers in a month, and he hit exactly seven on three occasions. However, July and August are where he did his best work, hitting a combined 24 dingers during this period of time.

### **Willie Mays: 49 Home Runs in 1962**

Willie Mays was so good -- especially during the prime of his career -- that incredible seasons likely just became what people expected of him. His 1962 performance is a great example of that. He led the league in homers, drove in 141 runs, slashed .304/.384/.615, went to the All-Star Game, finished in the top-10 of NL MVP voting, and won a Gold Glove.

What I found interesting was how even his offensive performance was, regardless of how many outs there were when he stepped to the plate. With no outs, Mays had a 1.004 OPS with 15 home runs and 35 RBI. With one out, he had a .926 OPS with 17 homers and 55 RBI. With two outs, his OPS went up slightly to 1.074 to go along with 17 homers and 51 RBI.

It's also worth noting Mays' performance with runners in scoring position because it was so good. He slashed .361/.450/.728 with 14 homers and 91 RBI.

## Giants Single-Season Home Run Leaders: The Rest

Here's what the remainder of the Giants' top-22 most powerful seasons in franchise history looks like:

- Barry Bonds, 2000: 49 home runs
- Willie Mays, 1964: 47
- [Kevin Mitchell](#), 1989: 47
- Barry Bonds, 1993 and 2002: 46
- [Orlando Cepeda](#), 1961: 46
- Barry Bonds, 2003 and 2004: 45
- [Willie McCovey](#), 1969: 45
- Willie McCovey, 1963: 44
- [Matt Williams](#), 1994: 43
- Barry Bonds, 1996: 42
- [Mel Ott](#), 1929: 42
- Willie Mays, 1954: 41
- Barry Bonds, 1997: 40
- Willie Mays, 1961: 40
- Johnny Mize, 1948: 40

## The Top 22 Giants All-Time Home Run Leaders

The Giants all-time home run leaders list is filled with some of baseball's best players from recent generations. What's also noticeable, though, is how a handful of sluggers have distanced themselves from the rest of the pack.

San Francisco's top-four power hitters all slugged at least 450 home runs during their respective tenures with the organization. Within that small group, three of them slugged more than 500 homers. After that, nobody else in franchise history has hit more than 275 homers yet.

## Giants All Time Home Run Leaders: Top 5

### Willie Mays: 646 Home Runs

Due to some recency bias, it'd be easy to assume that [Barry Bonds](#) is the [Giants' all-time home run leader](#). Being MLB's [career home run king](#) helps with that assumption, too. But he's not -- that honor belongs to [Willie Mays](#).

There are a couple of ways to put Mays' Hall of Fame career into proper perspective. He last played in an MLB game in 1973. Despite that, his 660 home runs still rank sixth all-time. Also,

his 635 home runs as a center fielder [are the most ever](#). This man was just on another level during his career.

Mays enjoyed seven seasons of 20-plus homers before he turned 30 years old. However, it was what he did at the plate from age 30-35 that qualifies as his power peak. During this six-year stretch, The Say Hey Kid hit fewer than 40 homers twice. Those two occasions were still powerful -- he hit 38 in 1963 and 37 in 1966.

The outfielder led baseball in home runs four times in his career. Three of those occasions came between 1961 and 1966. An average year for Mays included a .305/.384/.599 line with 44 home runs, 116 RBI, and 119 runs scored. His production tailed off from 1967 to the end of his career in 1973. However, Mays still slugged 20-plus homers three more times before hanging up his spikes.

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## **Barry Bonds: 586 Home Runs**

Mays has Bonds beat on the Giants' all-time home run list, but Bonds has him beat on San Francisco's [single-season homer leaderboard](#). Well, he has everyone beat when it comes to hitting the [most home runs in a season](#). It feels like most of the attention Bonds gets for his Giants career involves 2001-07, which included four NL MVP Awards. So with that in mind, let's look at what happened before this historic stretch of dominance.

After winning an MVP award in 1992 for the Pittsburgh Pirates, Bonds landed in San Francisco and did the same thing for the Giants. While capturing those honors for a second straight year, he posted a .336/.458/.677 line while leading the league in home runs (46) and RBI (123). That's how you make a good first impression.

Bonds played in San Francisco for 15 years. He didn't hit fewer than 33 homers in a single campaign until 2005. That was his 13th year with the organization. It was his age-40 season and the outfielder was limited to 52 games. While he posted five straight seasons of 40-plus homers from 2000-04, Bonds accomplished that feat in consecutive years just one other time.

It happened in 1996 (42 homers) and 1997 (40 homers). That 1996 season was special because he was the second player [to enter the 40-40 club](#). He nearly did it the following year, too, swiping another 37 bases in the process. Before his base-stealing numbers began to taper off in 1999, Bonds actually stole at least 28 bags for six straight years. He did that while hitting 30-plus homers, driving in at least 100 runs, and winning Gold Gloves for his defense in left field.

## **Mel Ott: 511 Home Runs**

[Mel Ott](#) played the entirety of his 22-year MLB career with the New York Giants. The last time he played in a game was as a 38-year-old. So, that means he actually made his big-league debut as a 17-year-old back in 1926. He immediately made a good first impression in his first 35 games (61 plate appearances) by slashing .383/.394/.417.

That gave everyone a clue that he'd be a good hitter, and it's exactly how things turned out. In more than 11,000 career plate appearances, Ott was a .304 hitter with a .947 OPS. He enjoyed 15 years with 20-plus homers, and eight of those went for at least 30 dingers.

Ott led the league in home runs six times during his career, but his most powerful season of all came in his age-20 campaign in 1929. The left-handed slugger collected 42 home runs and 151 RBI while hitting .328/.449/.635 in 675 plate appearances. His most powerful span of time came between 1934 and 1938 when he slugged 30-plus homers in five straight years. Four of the six times he led baseball in homers came during this stretch, too.

He posted a .987 OPS during those five seasons, all while averaging 32 home runs, 121 RBI, and 115 runs scored. Ott never won an MVP award, but he finished within the top 20 of voting 13 times. This includes five top-10 finishes, as well. The closest he came was placing third in 1942 after leading the league in homers (30), runs scored (118), walks (109), OPS (.912), and OPS+ (165).

### **Willie McCovey: 469 Home Runs**

[Willie McCovey](#) hit 521 total home runs during his career. That currently has him in a three-way tie for [20th all-time](#) between him, [Ted Williams](#), and [Frank Thomas](#). As we can see, the majority of those dingers came as a member of the Giants. I mean, there's a reason why San Francisco named the body of water right outside Oracle park McCovey Cove, you know.

In the 22 years he spent in the big leagues, McCovey hit 20-plus homers 12 times. Heck, the only time he hit fewer than 10 were when he hit seven in 1976 (not with the Giants) and one in 1980 (his final season). The first baseman enjoyed seven years with 30-plus homers, and six of them came consecutively from 1965-70. The three-year span between 1968 and 1970 were especially powerful. He led the league in homers twice, finished in the top-10 of MVP voting three times (winning it in 1969), and never hit fewer than 36 dingers.

His career-high marks for homers (45) and RBI (126) both came during his NL MVP campaign of 1969. He produced at a high level all year, but it was his first-half performance that likely sealed the deal. Prior to the All-Star Game, McCovey had 30 homers and 79 RBI in 353 plate appearances thanks to a 1.158 OPS. Once he returned from the midsummer break, his OPS was 1.041 to go along with 15 homers and 47 RBI in 270 trips to the plate. The change in his slugging percentage was the most drastic. It went from .710 before the break to .582 after the break.

### **Matt Williams: 247 Home Runs**

Speaking of hitting a lot of home runs before the All-Star Game, [Matt Williams](#) did that in 1994. He slugged 33 home runs before the midsummer classic, which is [among the most in MLB history](#). He finished with a league-leading 43 taters, and it obviously would've been more if there wasn't a Strike that season.

Williams debuted with the Giants in 1987 but didn't play in his first full season until 1990. When given a full season's worth of plate appearances, he delivered by slugging 33 home runs. The third baseman slugged at least 20 homers in each of his final seven seasons with the franchise. This included four efforts of 30-plus dingers.

There were two separate times where Williams hit at least 30 in consecutive years. The first one was from 1990-91 when he hit 33 and 34 homers, respectively. The second came from 1993-94, which was undoubtedly his power peak. Before slugging those 43 dingers in '94, Williams preceded it with 38 round-trippers in '93. These four seasons didn't bring any NL MVP Awards, but he came awfully close. The right-handed hitter placed within the top six three times, including a second-place finish in 1994. He also took home three Silver Sluggers and three Gold Gloves during this time.

## **Giants All Time Home Run Leaders: The Rest**

Here is what the rest of the top 22 looks like for Giants career home run leaders:

- [Orlando Cepeda](#): 226 home runs
- [Bobby Thomson](#): 189
- [Bobby Bonds](#): 186
- [Will Clark](#): 176
- [Jeff Kent](#): 175
- [Brandon Belt](#): 175
- [Jack Clark](#): 163
- [Buster Posey](#): 158
- [Johnny Mize](#): 157
- [Jim Ray Hart](#): 157
- [Bill Terry](#): 154
- [Rich Aurilia](#): 143
- [Kevin Mitchell](#): 143
- [Darrell Evans](#): 142
- [Brandon Crawford](#): 139 (...and counting)
- [Travis Jackson](#): 135
- [Pablo Sandoval](#): 135