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Women’s College Basketball Championship Game Draws Record-Breaking 18.9 Million Viewers

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South Carolina-Iowa matchup becomes most-watched basketball game — at any level — since 2019.

New York – April 9, 2024 — An estimated 18.9 million viewers watched the NCAA Women’s Basketball National Championship matchup between the South Carolina Gamecocks and the Iowa Hawkeyes on ABC and ESPN on Sunday, according to Nielsen live-plus-same-day data. Viewership peaked at 24.1 million viewers during the final minutes of the game (between 5:00 – 5:14 PM ET).

The women’s championship game audience stands as the largest in women’s college basketball history, and is the most-watched basketball game — at any level — since 2019. It is also the third women’s basketball viewership record set in the past week, outpacing the 12.3 million viewers that watched the Iowa-LSU Elite Eight matchup on April 1, followed by the Iowa-UConn Final Four game on April 5, which drew 14.2 million viewers.

Viewership to the 2024 women’s championship game was up over 90% compared with the 9.9 million viewers that watched in 2023, and over 288% compared with the 2022 audience.

Meanwhile, an estimated 14.8 million viewers watched the Men’s College Basketball National Championship on Monday, April 8 between the University of Connecticut and Purdue — nearly 4 million less than the women’s championship. This marks the first time in NCAA tournament history that viewership of the women’s championship game was higher than the men’s game.

NCAA Women’s Basketball Championship Viewership 1995 – 2024

Year	Date	Time (ET)	Network(s)	Matchup	Total Viewers (Millions)
2024	Apr 7	3:00 PM	ABC, ESPN	S. CAR vs IOWA	18,900,000
2023	Apr 2	3:30 PM	ABC, ESPN2	LSU vs IOWA	9,910,000
2022	Apr 3	8:00 PM	ESPN, ESPN2, ESPNU	UCONN vs S. CAR	4,850,000
2021	Apr 4	6:00 PM	ESPN	AZ vs STAN	4,120,000
2019	Apr 7	6:15 PM	ESPN	ND vs BAY	3,720,000
2018	Apr 1	6:15 PM	ESPN	ND vs MSST	3,560,000
2017	Apr 2	6:11 PM	ESPN	MSST vs SC	3,820,000
2016	Apr 5	8:41 PM	ESPN	UCONN vs SYR	2,970,000
2015	Apr 7	8:30 PM	ESPN	ND vs UCONN	3,080,000
2014	Apr 8	8:30 PM	ESPN	ND vs UCONN	4,270,000
2013	Apr 9	8:30 PM	ESPN	LOU vs UCONN	3,200,000
2012	Apr 3	8:30 PM	ESPN	ND vs BAY	4,240,000
2011	Apr 5	8:30 PM	ESPN	ND vs TAMU	3,830,000
2010	Apr 6	8:19 PM	ESPN	STAN vs UCONN	3,530,000
2009	Apr 7	8:30 PM	ESPN	UCONN vs LOU	2,660,000
2008	Apr 8	8:30 PM	ESPN	STAN vs TENN	3,850,000
2007	Apr 3	8:28 PM	ESPN	RUTG vs TENN	2,910,000
2006	Apr 4	8:30 PM	ESPN	UMD vs DUKE	3,580,000
2005	Apr 5	8:30 PM	ESPN	BAY vs MSU	3,230,000
2004	Apr 6	8:28 PM	ESPN	UCONN vs TENN	5,580,000
2003	Apr 8	8:30 PM	ESPN	TENN vs UCONN	4,360,000
2002	Mar 31	8:30 PM	ESPN	UCONN vs OKLA	5,680,000
2001	Apr 1	8:30 PM	ESPN	ND vs PUR	3,730,000
2000	Apr 2	8:59 PM	ESPN	TENN vs UCONN	3,670,000
1999	Mar 28	8:58 PM	ESPN	DUKE vs PUR	5,130,000
1998	Mar 29	8:30 PM	ESPN	LA TECH vs TENN	3,940,000
1997	Mar 30	8:30 PM	ESPN	ODU vs TENN	4,580,000
1996	Mar 31	6:30 PM	ESPN	TENN vs UGA	3,510,000
1995	Apr 2	3:49 PM	CBS	UCONN vs TENN	7,440,000

Source: Nielsen

Time-shifted viewing (Live+Same-Day, 3am-3am) is included in audience estimates in this table for years 2006 and later. Estimates in 2005 and earlier include live viewing only.

The NCAA Tournament was canceled in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

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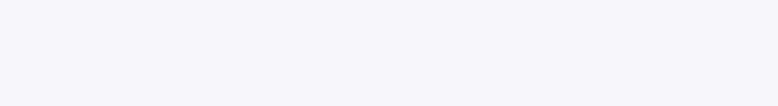
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