



Collin's Corner

Coming In With A Bang

Players Who Homered On Their First Big League Swing

by Lee Collin
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The talented rookie, making his big league debut, full of emotion, takes his first swing and deposits the ball into the distant outfield seats. What a way to begin a big league career.

In the history of the National and American Leagues only fourteen hitters managed a home run on the first pitch they saw as a big leaguer. None of baseball's most renowned sluggers (from Ruth to McGwire) are on the list.

Going deep on the first pitch of the first major league plate appearance is not necessarily a gateway to stardom. Most of the players on the list turned out to be journeymen with undistinguished careers. Nine of the fourteen players appeared in less than 500 major league games. Only **Bert Campaneris**, **Will Clark** and **Jay Bell** have appeared in over 1,000 games in the majors.

Clise Dudley of Brooklyn was the first major leaguer to homer on the first pitch he saw as a big leaguer when the rookie righthanded pitcher drove Philadelphia's Claude Willoughby's offering into the bleacher seats on April 27, 1929. Boston's **Bill Lefebvre** was the first in the American League to accomplish this feat when he homered off Chicago's Monty Stratton on June 10, 1938.



On the first pitch that **Chuck Tanner** saw as a major leaguer he delivered a pinch hit home run off Reds' pitcher Gerry Staley. That turned out to be the highlight of Tanner's career as a player.

New Orleanian **Will Clark**, who homered on his first swing as a professional with Fresno in the California League in 1985, later homered on his first major league swing off Nolan Ryan on April 8, 1986.

The following tables outline the American League and National League players who have accomplished this unique feat.

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HOMERED ON THEIR FIRST MAJOR LEAGUE SWING

American League				
Name	Club	Date	HR Total	MLB Games
Bill Lefebvre	Boston	June 10, 1938	1	75
George Vico	Detroit	April 20, 1948	12	211
Bert Campaneris	Kansas City	July 23, 1964	79	2,328
Brant Alyea	Washington	September 12, 1965	38	371
Don Rose	California	May 24, 1972	1	19
Jay Bell	Cleveland	September 29, 1986	180	1,830
Junior Felix	Toronto	May 4, 1989	55	585

National League				
Name	Club	Date	HR Total	MLB Games
Clise Dudley	Brooklyn	April 27, 1929	3	125
Eddie Morgan	St. Louis	April 14, 1936	1	39
Clyde Vollmer	Cincinnati	May 31, 1942	69	685
Chuck Tanner	Milwaukee	April 12, 1955	21	396
Will Clark	San Francisco	April 8, 1986	284	1,976
Jim Bullinger	Chicago	June 8, 1992	4	186
Jay Gainer	Colorado	May 14, 1993	3	23

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