



## Pole vault

Sergei Bubka has dominated the pole vaulting competition since 1984. Unable to compete in the Los Angeles Olympics owing to the Soviet boycott, he won the gold medal in Seoul in 1988 and will be looking to retain the number one spot in Barcelona. In 1991 he became the first man to clear 6.10 metres – almost doubling the record set by William Hoyt in 1896

1991 Sergei Bubka (CIS) 6.10m

1989 Maksim Tarasov (URS) 5.80m

1968 Bob Seagren (USA) 5.40m

1964 Fred Hansen (USA) 5.10m

1957 Bob Gutowski (USA) 4.78m

1928 Sabin Carr (USA) 4.20m

1912 Henry Babcock (USA) 3.95m

1896  
William Hoyt  
(USA) 3.30m

## Pole vaulting technique:

- 1: Athlete pushes off from ground. Hanging from the pole, body weight is used to bend it back, increasing power from the pole as it straightens
- 2: Hips swing upwards, body tucks under pole
- 3-6: As pole straightens legs are raised into a handstand position
- 7-9: Athlete releases pole and clears bar feet first to land on his back

## Olympic record

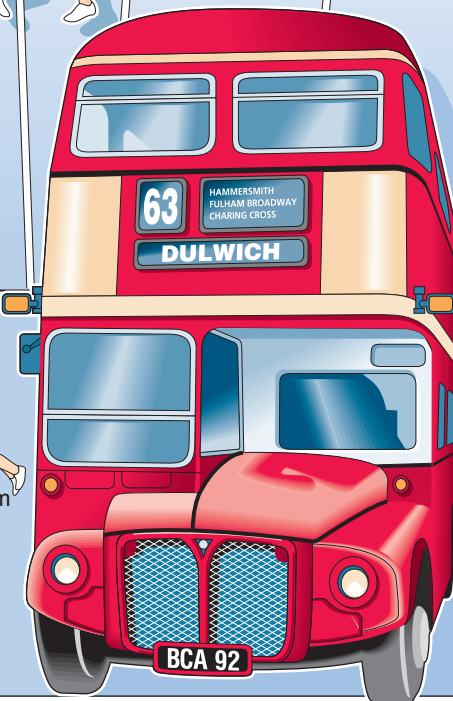


Men 5.90m: S. Bubka (URS) 1988

## World record

Men 6.10m: S. Bubka (CIS) 1991

The heights achieved in pole vaulting owe much to the pole itself. Ash, oak, cedar and hickory poles were used until 1912 when bamboo became popular. 1957 saw the first world record using an aluminium pole. Within five years metal had been superseded by highly flexible fibreglass which is still used today



London double-decker bus:  
4.34m high

