

When is the best time to buy? A SeatGeek data study.

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Methodology
Data was collected via SeatGeek.com at four-time intervals before tipoff for each of four Purdue home games. Non-aisle upper-level seats in rows 42–46 from the court were targeted for cross-game consistency.
75 hrs before tipoff – Baseline / early market
27 hrs before tipoff – Day-before window
3 hrs before tipoff – Day-of / late window
1 hr before tipoff – Near-game / last-minute
Each data point recorded: section, row, seat numbers, rows from court, price per ticket, and batch size (3–5 seats). Eight seat blocks were documented per time interval per game.
Data was compared game-to-game and correlated against opponent ranking and Purdue's performance to identify demand-driven pricing signals.

Avg. Price Per Ticket Summary				
Game	75 hrs	27 hrs	3 hrs	1 hrs
Illinois	\$252	\$128	\$203	\$222
Oregon	\$193	\$128	\$117	\$169
Michigan	\$246	\$206	\$200	\$200
Indiana	\$404	\$342	N/A	N/A

↓ green = lowest avg. price for that game



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Research Question
 "Does opponent ranking and the time of ticket purchase have a significant impact on the price of Purdue home game tickets on SeatGeek — and when is the optimal time to buy?"

Hypothesis: Tickets purchased approximately 27 hours before tipoff yield lower prices than those bought 75 hours or 1 hour before the game.

Research Aim: To quantify how opponent ranking, team performance, and purchase timing drive ticket price fluctuations on third-party resale markets and identify the most cost-effective purchasing window.

Significance: This offers practical, data-driven guidance for any fan or company attending Purdue games — enabling smarter spending without sacrificing seat quality.

Games Tracked
vs. Illinois Sat, Jan 24 · 3:00 PM
vs. Oregon Sat, Feb 7 · 1:00 PM
vs. Michigan Tue, Feb 17 · 6:30 PM
vs. Indiana Fri, Feb 20 · 8:00 PM (Rivalry)

Key Findings
IU commands the highest prices: Indiana rivalry games averaged \$404/ticket at 75 hrs — over 2× the cost of non-rivalry matchups. Even at the 27-hour window, IU tickets held at ~\$342, confirming that rivalry demand is price-inelastic.
Prices drop clearly at the 27-hr mark: Across all games tracked, average prices were highest at 75 hrs and dropped consistently by 27 hrs — making this the sweet spot of lowest price combined with the widest available seat selection.
Oregon shows the sharpest price decline: Oregon prices fell \$193 → \$128 → \$117 across 75/27/3 hrs — the most consistent and predictable decline observed across all four games and all-time intervals.
Michigan shows mid-tier demand: Michigan averaged \$246 at 75 hrs, falling to \$206 at 27 hrs. Limited data at 3 hrs and 1 hr makes the final-hour trend unclear, but the 27-hr drop is consistent.
Late-game prices partially rebound: At 1 hour before tipoff, prices ticked back up for Oregon (\$169) and Michigan (\$200), suggesting last-minute buyers re-inflate the market — making the final hour a worse window than 27 hrs.

Batch Size Analysis
 Examining prices by batch size (3, 4, or 5 adjacent seats) reveals nuance beyond overall trends:

- Oregon: Prices were similar across batch sizes closer to the game. At 75 hrs, 4-ticket batches were noticeably cheaper than 3- or 5-ticket options — a supply-driven anomaly.
- Michigan: More expensive overall, especially for 3- and 5-ticket batches early on. Prices drop across all batch sizes as tipoff approaches.
- IU: Consistently the priciest across all batch sizes, even as prices decline. Smaller 3-ticket batches carry the steepest premiums at every time window.

Practical Recommendations

- Standard games: Monitor SeatGeek starting 3–4 days out and buy at the 27-hour mark for optimal price + availability.
- Rivalry/high-demand games (IU, Michigan): Prices stay elevated throughout — buy at 27 hrs to minimize cost while ensuring availability; do not wait for a last-minute discount that may not come.
- Group size: 4-ticket batches often offer a slight discount vs. 3- or 5-ticket groups — worth checking if your party is flexible.
- Avoid buying at 75+ hrs or within 3 hrs of tipoff: both windows carry price premiums relative to the 27-hr sweet spot.

Abstract
 This study examined fluctuations in ticket prices and grouped seat availability for Purdue men's basketball home games as tip-off approached. Using batch-level data collected at multiple time intervals prior to each game, the analysis measured price changes using listings from the third-party marketplace SeatGeek.

The study accounted for demand-driving variables including opponent rankings, team performance, and game timing. The research was motivated by a B2B scenario: a Chicago company sought cost-effective ticket recommendations for corporate team-building outings at Mackey Arena.

Four home games were tracked across the 2024–25 season. Data was collected at 75 hours, 27 hours, 3 hours, and 1 hour before tipoff, targeting upper-level non-aisle seats in rows 42–46 from the court.

27 hrs
 Optimal purchasing window before tipoff

\$128
 Lowest avg. price/ticket (Illinois & Oregon at 27 hrs)

\$404
 Highest avg. price/ticket (Indiana at 75 hrs)

