

# About the Olympic and Paralympic Games

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## About the Olympic Games

The Olympic Games is a quadrennial international multi-sport event celebrated as a global sports festival by people all over the world. The Olympic Games are held in both the summer and winter, and its ultimate goal is the cultivation of people and world peace through sports. The Games of the XXIX Olympiad held in 2008 in Beijing, China, with 302 events in 28 sports, had athletes participating from 204 countries and regions. London was the hosts of the 2012 Olympics, commemorating the memorable 30th Olympic Games.

## The Ancient Olympic Games

Today's Olympic Games' roots date back to the ancient Olympic Games held 2800 year ago. Also known as the "Olympiad", the event took place in the Olympia region of ancient Greece. There are various opinions regarding its origins. It is said that the event was an athletic and artistic festival dedicated to worshipping of the gods. However, the ancient Olympic Games were hindered along the way by numerous conflicts and finally came to an end in 393 AD.



## The Modern Olympic Games

1,500 years later, in 1892, a French educator, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, began the Olympic revival movement at the forefront. Baron de Coubertin's idea to reinstate the Olympic Games was presented to the audience at the international congress held in June 1894, Paris, and his proposal was unanimously approved. Subsequently, two years later, the unforgettable first Modern Olympic Games were held in Athens, Greece, the homeland of the ancient Olympic Games. The five rings, the well-known symbol of the Olympic Games, were also devised by Baron de Coubertin to express the solidarity of the world's five continents.



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## Olympic Games in Japan

Japanese educator, Jigoro Kano, considered the "father of the Olympic Movement", was the headmaster of the Tokyo Higher Normal School (known currently as Tsukuba University), and made great efforts toward the promotion of judo. In 1909, Kano became the first IOC member to serve from Asia. Following this, Kano established the Japan Sports Association in preparation for Japan's eventual participation in the Olympic Games. In 1911, he organised an Olympic qualifying competition, from which short distance runner Yahiko Mishima and marathoner Shiso Kanaguri qualified for the Games of the V Olympiad held in 1912 in Stockholm - the first Olympic Games in which Japanese athletes participated.



## Olympism

Baron de Coubertin's notion of Olympism he advocated for was the elevation of the mind and soul, overcoming differences between nationalities and cultures, embracing friendship, a sense of solidarity, and fair play; ultimately leading to the contribution towards world peace and the betterment of the world. This ideal has been passed down undiminished to this day, and as a result he is revered as the "Father of Olympics". In addition to the Olympic theme of "sports" and "culture", another focus today is "environment". The Olympic Games provide an opportunity for the international community to direct its attention to global environmental issues.

## The Olympic Movement

The Olympic Movement is led by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) guided by the philosophy of Olympism, which strives to promote world peace and the betterment of society. The Olympic Movement is embraced all over the world, and the Olympic Charter stipulates the intersecting five-ring mark as the movement's symbol.

The IOC is fully responsible for the advancement of Olympism in accordance with the Olympic Charter. The IOC recognises 205 countries and regions, and hosts the Summer and Winter Olympic Games.



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## **Main Organisations**

The Olympic Movement is advanced by various people and organisations. The National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and the International Federations (IFs) are also members of the Olympic Movement. The NOCs send their national delegations to the Olympic Games. The Japanese Olympic Committee (JOC) is the NOC in Japan. The IFs are the international sports organisations that govern each specific sport, and they reserve full authority over the operation of their respective competitions during the Games.

Additionally, the International Olympic Academy (IOA) and the National Olympic Academy (NOA) both take charge in educational and promotional activities founded on Olympism.

## **Activities of the Olympic Movement**

Leading activities that are part of the Olympic Movement include anti-doping, women's participation, and economic support.

Doping, which is the use of muscle-enhancing agents and other banned substances to improve performance, is not only illegal but can have serious detrimental effects on the body, and thus the IOC has taken on an indispensable role in establishing the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to fight doping in sports. Women were not allowed to compete in the ancient Olympic Games, and it was not until the inaugural Modern Olympic Games in Athens that they were welcomed as participants. As a result of the women's movement, as well as the efforts of the IOC's working group, many female athletes now take part in the Games. Through the aid programme "Solidarity", the IOC plays a major role in providing financial support to athletes and coaches living in economically deprived societies. Funds are allocated for scholarships, construction of sports facilities, and other activities aimed at improving expertise and performance for all.

Another core activity of the Olympic Movement is the Paralympic Games - the pinnacle sporting event for athletes with disabilities. The Paralympic Games is hosted immediately following the Olympic Games, and performance levels are increasing at a rapid pace.



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## **| The Tokyo 1964 Olympic Games**

On October 10, 1964, the Games of the XVIII Olympiad began with the Opening Ceremony at Kasumigaoka National Stadium. 5,133 athletes from 93 nations and regions demonstrated their exceptional abilities in 163 events across 20 sporting competitions. It was the first ever Olympic Games held in Asia, and was an enormous success. In conjunction with this momentous event, Tokyo experienced dramatic development from its post-war infrastructure, including the construction of the Metropolitan Expressway and the Tokaido Shinkansen railway (a.k.a. "the bullet train"). These types of major progresses in its capital served as a steppingstone for an era of rapid economic growth in Japan, and demonstrated to the world its miraculous restoration.



## **| Athletes that inspired Japan**

Japanese athletes themselves put on a remarkable Olympic show, receiving 29 medals – 16 gold, 5 silver, and 8 bronze. Among the most memorable moments was the Japanese women's volleyball team's historic gold medal winning match in straight sets over the formidable and tenacious USSR side. Many outstanding international athletes also became popular in Japan, including men's marathon two time consecutive gold medalist Abebe Bikila of Ethiopia, and Czechoslovakia's Vera Caslavská, who captured the hearts of many fans with her marvelous gymnastics performance.



## **| Achievements of the 1964 Games**

The 1964 Games not only served as a driving force of urban development and economic growth, its role in promoting sports in Japan must not be overlooked. Sports established itself as an integral part of the Japanese people's lives; the popularity of soccer set off its national league, and sports clubs began to emerge throughout the country.



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## About the Paralympic Games

The Paralympic Games, featuring athletes with an impairment, take place shortly after every Olympic Games in the same host city. The Rio 2016 Paralympic Games featured 22 sports with 4,328 athletes from 159 nations and regions participating.

In order to participate in the Paralympic Games, athletes must meet strict standards set by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC). The level of the athletes' performance has continued to improve over the years and the number of qualified athletes has been steadily increasing. For example, in the Summer Games held in Athens, 448 Olympic records and 304 world records were set.



## The History of the Paralympic Games

The history of the Paralympic Games dates back to 1948, when Sir Ludwig Guttmann, a physician working at a hospital in Stoke Mandeville, England, organised an archery competition involving World War II veterans with spinal cord injuries as part of their rehabilitation programme. In 1952 the event became an international competition, and from the 1960 Games in Rome they have been held in the same host country as the Olympic Games. Since the 1988 Games in Seoul, they have been held shortly after the Olympic Games using the same venues and facilities.

## The Parallel Olympic Games

Although in the beginning the Paralympic Games were designed for rehabilitation purposes, the event developed into a more elite sports competition. Athletes taking part in the Games now represent not only those needing the aid of wheelchairs but a more diverse spectrum of impairments, thus the term Paralympic Games is now interpreted as meaning "parallel Olympic Games" or "the other Olympic Games".

## Cooperative Relationship with the Olympic Games

In the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games the IOC and the IPC reached a basic agreement that the Paralympic Games will always take place shortly after the Olympic Games, reaffirming the cooperative relationship between the two organisations. The "parallel Olympic Games" live up to its name and continues to develop.