



INTERNATIONAL
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

FACTSHEET

THE PROGRAMME OF THE GAMES OF THE OLYMPIAD

UPDATE – OCTOBER 2013

HISTORY

Since the first Games in Athens in 1896, the programme of the Games of the Olympiad has evolved considerably. Some sports have disappeared, like croquet, tug of war, lacrosse or jeu de paume; others have reappeared, like archery in 1972; and some have hardly changed, such as athletics, fencing, swimming or gymnastics, which have been on the programme since the start of the modern Games. The programme has also seen regular innovations in the sports which have joined fairly recently (such as judo or triathlon).

At the first editions of the Games, the official programme was quite complex, with the Games taking place over several weeks or even several months. The Games of the Olympiad were sometimes linked to universal exhibitions, as in Paris in 1900 and St Louis in 1904. On these occasions, numerous other sports events were held, which at times made it difficult to tell which events were in fact part of the Olympic programme. The organisers also had greater flexibility; and the rules and competition formats were not yet standardised as they are today. Some events were held with just three or four competitors, even if they were all from the same country!

Over time, the programme of the Games expanded, growing from around 40 events in 1896 to more than 120 at the 1924 Games in Paris. After the Second World War, the Olympic Movement grew stronger, and the Games became more structured. Fewer new events were added, with just 30 more joining the programme between 1948 and 1968, and 30 more at the next six editions of the Games of the Olympiad. In some cases the additions were new sports, new disciplines or simply women's events, to achieve a better balance. Since 1980, almost 100 new sports, disciplines or events have joined the programme, reflecting the huge increase in and diversity of sports practice around the world.

Since 2000, each new addition to the programme is studied carefully by the [Olympic Programme Commission](#), meaning that there have been very few additions, but rather changes in events, in order to limit the size of the Games.

A FEW DATES AND EXAMPLES OF THE GAMES

1896: First edition of the Games of the Olympiad in Athens, Greece, with 43 events in nine sports: athletics, cycling (road and track), fencing, artistic gymnastics, shooting, swimming, tennis, weightlifting and Greco-Roman wrestling

1900: Football, rowing, sailing and equestrian sports made their Olympic debut. First events for women, in tennis and golf

1904: Freestyle wrestling joined the Games. Greco-Roman wrestling had featured in 1896.

1908: First field hockey competition

1912: Swimming added women's events; first modern pentathlon competition. Road cycling returned to the Games.

1920: Weightlifting reappeared, after being absent from two editions of the Games, this time with competitions by weight category.

1924: Foil became the first women's fencing event.

1928: First athletics competitions for women

1936: Basketball and canoe-kayak joined the programme, with both men's and women's events.

1952: Equestrian sports became mixed. In gymnastics, individual events for women were introduced.

1964: Judo joined the programme in Tokyo, and came back for good in 1972. The first volleyball medals were awarded.

1972: Handball rejoined the programme at the Games in Munich after an appearance in 1936. Canoe-kayak slalom made its first appearance.

1984: In Los Angeles, synchronised swimming made its Olympic debut with two events, and



rhythmic gymnastics did likewise with one competition.

1988: At the Games in Seoul, the first Olympic table tennis tournament was held.

1992: Badminton entered the Games with four events in Barcelona.

1996: Mountain bike joined the programme, along with beach volleyball.

2000: Triathlon was added to the programme for the Games in Sydney, alongside trampoline and taekwondo.

2008: The first Olympic BMX medals were awarded.

2012: Women's boxing will make its first Olympic appearance at the Games in London, together with mixed doubles in tennis.

2016: Return of golf and rugby on the programme for Rio 2016.

Between 1896 and 2016, the Olympic programme has grown considerably. From 43 medals presented at the first edition in Athens, the Games of the Olympiad in 2016 will feature 306 events in 26 sports: 161 men's, 136 women's and nine mixed.

Joining the Olympic programme

According to the Olympic Charter, "the programme of the Olympic Games (herein also referred to as 'the programme') is the programme of all competitions of the Olympic Games established for each edition of the Olympic Games by the International Olympic Committee (IOC)".

The Olympic sports are those governed by International Federations (IFs) recognised by the IOC. Only sports that adopt and implement the World Anti-Doping Code can be included or remain in the programme. The components of the programme are sports, disciplines and events. A discipline is a branch of a sport comprising one or several events. An event is a competition in a sport or in one of its disciplines, resulting in a ranking and giving rise to the award of medals and diplomas.

Today, the Olympic programme is reviewed, and if necessary modified, after each edition of the Games. This is the job of the Olympic Programme Commission, which is made up of IOC members and representatives of the National Olympic Committees (NOCs), IFs and the athletes. It studies the programme of sports, disciplines, and events at the Olympic Games. The Commission then makes its recommendations to the IOC Executive Board (EB) and reports to the IOC Session.

The inclusion of sports on the programme is subject to a number of conditions. Rule 45 of the Olympic Charter, "Programme of the Olympic Games" sets out the requirements.

The inclusion of any **sport** in the programme of any edition of any Olympic Games falls within the competence of the Session. This must be decided no later than at the Session electing the host city of that edition of the Olympic Games.

The decision to include a **discipline** or **event** in the programme falls within the competence of the IOC EB. The inclusion of disciplines or events in the programme of any edition of an Olympic Games is decided by the IOC EB no later than three years before the opening of the Olympic Games. The deadlines may be waived, in order to allow changes in the programme with the approval of the relevant IF, of the OCOG and of the competent organ of the IOC.

Sports on the programme of the Games of the XXXI Olympiad in Rio in 2016

Abbreviation	Title	Year established
IAAF	International Association of Athletics Federations	1912
FISA	International Rowing Federation	1892
BWF	Badminton World Federation	1934



FIBA	International Basketball Federation	1932
AIBA	International Boxing Association	1946
ICF	International Canoe Federation	1924
UCI	International Cycling Union	1900
FEI	Fédération Équestre Internationale	1921
FIE	Fédération Internationale d'Éscrime	1913
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association	1904
IGF	International Golf Federation	1958
FIG	International Gymnastics Federation	1881
IWF	International Weightlifting Federation	1905
IHF	International Handball Federation	1946
FIH	International Hockey Federation	1924
IJF	International Judo Federation	1951
FILA	International Federation of Associated Wrestling Styles	1912
FINA	Fédération Internationale de Natation	1908
UIPM	Union Internationale de Pentathlon Moderne	1948
IRB	International Rugby Board	1886
WTF	World Taekwondo Federation	1973
ITF	International Tennis Federation	1913
ITTF	International Tennis Table Federation	1926
ISSF	International Shooting Sport Federation	1907
WA	World Archery Federation	1931
ITU	International Triathlon Union	1989
ISAF	International Sailing Federation	1907
FIVB	International Volleyball Federation	1947

THE SPORTS PROGRAMME OF THE 2016 GAMES IN RIO

For the 2016 Olympic programme, the EB, under the direction of the previous IOC President Jacques Rogge, addressed two proposals in August 2009: the list of 26 core sports and two additional sports, golf and rugby (rugby sevens). These proposals were submitted to the full IOC membership for a final decision at their 121st Session in Copenhagen in October 2009.

Seven sports — baseball, golf, karate, roller sports, rugby, softball and squash — were seeking to enter the Olympic programme.

The voting took place by secret ballot. The EB took its decision based on the work of the [Olympic Programme Commission](#), which had undertaken a thorough evaluation of the potential added value to the Games of each of the seven sports. The seven IFs of the sports concerned were invited to present their arguments to the Programme Commission in November 2008 and to the EB in June 2009.

In line with the decision of the IOC Session, golf and rugby (sevens) will return to the Olympic programme after almost a century at the Games of the XXXI Olympiad in Rio, in 2016. The golf competition will follow the stroke play format, which involves counting the total number of strokes a player needs to complete the round. The player with the lowest number of strokes at the end wins the competition. For rugby, there will be two rugby seven competitions, one for men and one for women.

Evolution of the programme of the Games of the Olympiad

Date of first inclusion in the programme of the Games		
Sport / Discipline	Men	Women
Athletics	1896	1928
Rowing [†]	1896	1976
Badminton	1992	1992



Basketball	1936	1976
Boxing	1904	2012
Canoe - flat-water	1936	1948
Canoe- slalom ²	1972	1972
Cycling – track	1896	1988
Cycling – road	1896	1984
Mountain biking	1996	1996
BMX	2008	2008
Fencing	1896	1924
Football	1900	1996
Artistic gymnastics	1896	1928
Rhythmic gymnastics	-	1984
Trampoline	2000	2000
Weightlifting	1896	2000
Handball ³	1936	1976
Hockey	1908	1980
Judo	1964	1992
Greco-Roman wrestling ⁴	1896	-
Freestyle wrestling ⁴	1904	2004
Swimming	1896	1912
Diving	1904	1912
Water polo	1900	2000
Synchronised swimming	-	1984
Modern Pentathlon	1912	2000
Equestrian – dressage ⁵	1912	1952
Equestrian – jumping ⁵	1900	1952
Equestrian – eventing ⁵	1912	1952
Taekwondo	2000	2000
Tennis ⁵	1896	1900
Table tennis	1988	1988
Shooting ⁷	1896	1968
Archery ⁸	1900	1904
Triathlon	2000	2000

Sailing ^{1 and 9}	1900	1900
Volleyball	1964	1964
Beach volleyball	1996	1996
Golf	1900	1900
Rugby	1900	2016

1- Rowing and sailing were on the programme of the 1896 Games, but the events were cancelled because of adverse weather conditions.

2- This discipline was included for the first time at the Munich Games in 1972. It was excluded from the Olympic programme between 1976 and 1988, but returned in 1992.

3- Handball was introduced (on grass) at the Berlin Games in 1936. It was then removed from the programme before reappearing in its current form (indoors) in Munich in 1972.

4- Since 1920, freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling have been two separate competitions. Prior to that date (apart from 1908), only one style was included, usually Greco-Roman.

5- Before 1952, only men participated in equestrian events at the Olympic Games. All riders had to be military athletes, in fact officers. These restrictions were lifted in 1952, since when men and women have competed against each other in the same events.

6- Tennis was included in the Olympic programme from 1896 to 1924. It was reintroduced in 1988.

7- Women participated in shooting events for the first time in 1968, in mixed events. It is only since the Atlanta Games in 1996 that the programme has included separate men's and women's events.

8- Archery was an Olympic sport several times between 1900 and 1920, before disappearing from the Olympic programme for more than 50 years. It was reintroduced at the Munich Games in 1972.

9- Women have always competed in the mixed Olympic sailing events, but separate women's events were introduced in 1988.

IMPRINT

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October 2013

A publication of the

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