HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE OLYMPIC GAMES?
This manual, which is intended for the general public, provides an introduction to the Olympic Movement and the Olympic Games. The brochure is made up of 15 sections, each one introduced by a question. Each section provides basic information and some additional details about the topics that it covers.
WHERE DID THE OLYMPIC GAMES BEGIN?

The Olympic Games began in Greece.

The Ancient Greeks held athletic competitions in Olympia in the Peloponnese. The first existing written records of these events date back to 776 BC.

What was special about these Games? They took place every four years, and were dedicated to Zeus, the king of the gods.

They were open only to free men of Greek citizenship, which meant that men from other countries, women and slaves were unable to take part. Married women were not allowed to watch the Games, although the spectators did include girls.

A few months before the competitions began, a sacred truce was proclaimed. Messengers travelled throughout the country announcing the truce which called for the cessation of wars and conflicts between states. In this way, athletes and spectators could travel to the competition in safety.

Games were also held in honour of the gods at sites other than Olympia: in Nemea for Zeus (as in Olympia), in Delphi for Apollo and in Isthmia for Poseidon. The Games held on these four different sites are known collectively as the Panhellenic Games.

The ancient Olympic Games lasted for more than 1000 years! Over this long period, the programme evolved and the sports included in it varied considerably. After enjoying significant popularity, the Games gradually began to lose their prestige.

Their deathblow was dealt by the Roman emperor Theodosius I. A convert to Christianity, he would not tolerate pagan events within his empire, and abolished them in 393 AD.

Information about the ancient Games can be discovered by examining a training scene painted on a vase, the sculpture of an athlete, or a few verses composed to the glory of an athletic winner. Artists, potters, writers, historians and poets of the time have left behind invaluable testimonies, all of which provide us with ways to learn about the Ancient Games.
WHO FOUNDED THE MODERN OLYMPIC GAMES?

The modern Games were founded by the Baron Pierre de Coubertin, a Frenchman. To appreciate his actions, one has to understand the times in which he lived.

The 18th century saw the discovery of the site of Olympia, and the start of excavations in the 19th century created a great deal of interest in the ancient Olympic Games. During the 19th century, several attempts were made to revive the Games: in Grenoble (France), Much Wenlock (Great Britain) and Athens (Greece), for example. These, however, remained local events without any lasting influence in the wider world.

Pierre de Coubertin, born in 1863, was very interested in these Games of the past. He also took a keen interest in the English education system, which included sport in the school curriculum, something unheard of at the time in France.

Pierre de Coubertin, inspired by his first-hand research in English and American schools, wanted to make his contemporaries understand the benefits of sport for young people. Not everyone shared his views. The Baron realised he needed some particularly convincing arguments to change people’s minds. Then this visionary had an extraordinary idea: to revive the Olympic Games.

Why did Coubertin succeed where so many others had failed? His genius was to immediately give the Games an international and modern dimension, and to see them as part of a wider strategy of education through sport.

Pierre de Coubertin was sincere in his convictions, had faith in his vision, and persevered despite several reversals of fortune. He achieved his goal with the creation of what would become known as the International Olympic Committee in Paris on 23 June 1894 and with the first celebration of the modern Olympic Games in Athens in 1896.

The Baron’s interests were not limited to Olympism. Pierre de Coubertin was a historian, writer and educator, and liked to express his opinions on a wide range of subjects.
Pierre de Coubertin died in 1937. His body was buried in the Bois-de-Vaux cemetery in Lausanne (Switzerland), while his heart was placed in a marble stele in Olympia (Greece).

Pierre de Coubertin was the second president of the IOC, from 1896 to 1925.
WHAT ABOUT THE OLYMPIC GAMES SINCE 1896?

The Winter Games initially took place during the same year as the Games of the Olympiad. Since 1992, the summer and winter Games have alternated every two years.

In just over a century of existence, the Olympic Games have evolved along with the society in which they take place. Current affairs help to shape the identity of the Games, at the same time that the Games leave their mark on the world around them.

The participation of women is one of the features of the modern Olympic Games. They first participated in the 1900 Games in Paris. Women gradually established footholds in the rest of the programme, and today they are present in all the Olympic sports. At the 2016 Games in Rio, they made up 45 per cent of the participants.

In 2010, the Youth Olympic Games (YOG) were added to the Olympic calendar. The main purpose of the YOG is to help young athletes between the ages of 15 and 18 develop both their sporting prowess and life skills. Some 4,000 athletes from all over the world compete in the Summer YOG, and around 1,800 athletes from 80 countries take part in the Winter YOG.

Each time, the Games are held in a different city around the globe. The Olympic Games are composed of the Games of the Olympiad (the Summer Games) and the Olympic Winter Games. The four-yearly interval between Summer Games is called an Olympiad.

The first Winter Games were held in Chamonix in 1924. The growth of sports played on snow and ice justified the creation of these Games devoted exclusively to winter sports. Prior to 1924, figure skating competitions had been included in the programme of the Games of the Olympiad, in London in 1908 and Antwerp in 1920. The Antwerp Games also saw the inclusion of ice hockey.

Ever since Athens in 1896 the Olympic Games have been a four-yearly meeting for the world’s athletes.
The five rings that make up the Olympic symbol represent the union of the five continents and the meeting of athletes from all over the world during the Games. They symbolise the universality of the Olympic Movement.

The rings are interlocking and arranged in a trapezoid shape. The colours of the rings are: blue, yellow, black, green and red.

Pierre de Coubertin first proposed this symbol at the 1914 Olympic congress in Paris.

The five rings on a white background form the Olympic flag, which was unveiled during the same congress. The flag flew for the first time in an Olympic stadium in 1920 during the Antwerp Games.

If the number of rings represents the continents, the colours (six of them, counting the white background) were chosen to ensure that every country would have at least one of the colours in its national flag included.

At the time of the Games, the rings are everywhere: they appear on the clothes, hats and bags (and even sometimes on the faces!) of Olympic participants and public alike. Through the rings, athletes and spectators are united under one and the same banner.
WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE FIVE OLYMPIC RINGS?
WHY IS THERE A TORCH RELAY?

The torch relay creates a link between the Ancient Olympic Games and the modern Olympic Games.

Several months before the opening of the Games, the Olympic flame is kindled in Olympia, in Greece. The lighting ceremony in Olympia features actresses in the role of ancient Greek priestesses. The heat of the sun is focused in a parabolic mirror, and this produces the Olympic flame.

Once lit, the flame is given to the first relay runner. It is then transported using the Olympic torch, via relay, to Athens, where it is placed in a safety lamp and subsequently taken via plane to the Games host country. The relay resumes once the flame arrives in the country, and the route varies depending on the destination. A variety of modes of transport may be used within the same relay. As well as being carried by runners on foot, the flame can also travel by plane, car, horse or boat, to cite just a few of the most common examples.

The route of the Olympic torch relay is carefully chosen. In the Games host country, the flame generally travels a route that maximises exposure to the inhabitants and their customs, as well as taking in important natural or historical sites.

On its travels, the Olympic flame is met with great enthusiasm by the public. The flame heralds the coming celebration of the Olympic Games and conveys a message of peace and friendship.

The entry of the flame into the Olympic stadium is one of the highlights of the opening ceremony, with the identity of the final torch bearer being kept secret until the last minute. This person has the honour of lighting the cauldron in which the Olympic flame will burn throughout the Games.

The Olympic torch relay is an invention of the modern celebration of the Games. Although torch relays took place in Athens, there were none at the ancient Olympic Games. However, the way the flame is lit corresponds to the method used by the Ancient Greeks to light the flames that burned constantly on the altars in their temples.
The tradition of the Olympic torch relay began with the Games of the XI Olympiad in Berlin in 1936.
For the Olympic Winter Games, a torch relay was first organised in Oslo in 1952.
WHAT ARE THE OLYMPIC VALUES?

The Olympic motto consists on three Latin words:

CITIUS, ALTIUS, FORTIUS

which means

FASTER, HIGHER, STRONGER
Practised in Olympic spirit, sport is an amazing tool which helps to build a better world. The Olympic spirit can be expressed through three core values: **excellence**, **respect** and **friendship**. Anyone who wants to take part in the Olympic Games must bear these in mind.

Athletes seek **excellence** in terms of the goal they set themselves. Then they must push themselves to exceed these goals. The aim is not to come first so much as to explore your own capacities; it is in giving your utmost that you experience victory.

Athletes show **respect** to others and to themselves. This means accepting the rules and playing fair.

Athletes celebrate **friendship**. In practising sport, they meet others, welcome differences and show tolerance. These three values are inseparable: you cannot have one without the others. Putting these three values into practice is part of the quest for balance and harmony. That is the mark of a true champion, both on and off the field of play.
WHY ARE THERE OPENING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES?

These events provide an unparalleled illustration of the Olympic values, and are one of the elements that make the Olympic Games stand apart from other sports events. As both a celebration of sport and culture and a showcase for universality and peace, the ceremonies make up a ritual that symbolises the unity of body and mind.

Today the opening ceremonies begin with the official component.

Pride of place is given to the protagonists of the Games, the athletes! They line up behind their country’s flag and parade in front of the spectators. As a tribute to the origins of the Olympic Games, Greece traditionally leads the parade. The host country delegation is the last to enter the stadium.

After the head of state of the host country has declared the Games open, the Olympic anthem is played and the Olympic flag is brought in. The flag, which is often carried by athletes, is then hoisted in the stadium.

The arrival of the flame and the lighting of the cauldron are the highlights of the opening ceremony. A symbolic
WHY ARE THERE OPENING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES?

The release of doves represents the hope for peace during the Games.

The Olympic oath has existed since the Games of the Olympiad in 1920 in Antwerp. Today, when taking this oath, the athletes, judges and coaches promise to abide by the rules and commit to sport that is free of doping and cheating.

The official ceremony is followed by an artistic programme featuring colourful costumes, dancing, singing and music. Sometimes the creativity and imagination of the artistic directors glows in the light of a magnificent fireworks display.

Whether seated in the stadium or in their favourite armchair in front of their screens, spectators around the world join in the party atmosphere!

The end of the Olympic Games is marked by the closing ceremony on the last day of competition. Ever since the 1956 Games in Melbourne, the athletes parade together, rather than by delegation. The Olympic flag is handed over to the mayor of the host city of the next Olympic Games. Although the flame is extinguished, a promise is thus made to meet again in four years’ time.
WHAT IS AN OLYMPIC SPORT?

Foot races, the discus throw, the javelin throw, the long jump, combat sports (such as wrestling and boxing) and equestrian competitions (chariot and horseback races) were on the programme of the ancient Olympic Games.

Although most of the ancient sports feature in some form in the modern Olympic Games, the programme has undergone some major changes in just over a century of existence.

An Olympic sport can be split into two subcategories: disciplines and events.
A discipline is a branch of a sport that includes one or more events. An event is a competition in an Olympic sport or in one of its disciplines which results in a ranking and gives rise to an award of medals and diplomas.

Examples:
The men’s wrestling programme at the 2016 Games in Rio featured a total of 18 events in two disciplines – freestyle wrestling and Greco-Roman wrestling. The women’s programme contained six events in just one discipline, freestyle wrestling.

At the Winter Games, snowboarding is not a sport, but a discipline in the sport of skiing. The snowboard programme at PyeongChang 2018 featured five women’s events and five men’s events: parallel giant slalom, snowboard cross, halfpipe, slopestyle and big air.

In Olympic history, many sports and events have disappeared like cricket, tug of war and underwater swimming. Others have been adopted, such as triathlon and taekwondo. Some sports have been reintroduced after having been dropped, such as tennis, archery, rugby, golf, curling and skeleton.

Since 2015, in an effort to develop the Olympic programme and heighten its appeal, the Organising Committees have been able to propose the inclusion of one or more additional sports for their Games edition (on the condition that the sports in question are governed by a recognised IF and adhere to the World Anti-Doping Code). Five new sports were added to the programme for the Tokyo 2020 Games: baseball/softball, karate, sport climbing, skateboarding and surfing. The composition of the Olympic programme is now reviewed after each Games edition.

In Athens in 1896, there were nine sports and 43 events on the programme; Tokyo 2020 will feature 33 sports and 321 events. The difference in these figures gives a good indication of how much the Olympic programme has evolved.
The programme of the ancient Games at Delphi included music and singing competitions. Pierre de Coubertin, keen to involve the arts in the Olympic Games, created competitions for artists, writers, poets, architects and musicians. These events took place from 1912 to 1948. Today, art is included in a different way, particularly through the cultural programme organised during the Games, and also in the opening and closing ceremonies.
HOW DOES AN ATHLETE GET TO THE OLYMPIC GAMES?

In order to participate in the Olympic Games, athletes must comply with the Olympic Charter and follow the rules of the International Federation (IF) governing their sport.

The IFs organise qualification events, while the National Olympic Committee (NOC) is responsible for entering the athletes for the Games.

If an athlete has dual nationality he or she may compete for the country of his or her choice. However, if they have already represented one country at the Olympic Games or another major sports event, they may not compete for the other country until a certain period of time has elapsed.

There is no age limit for competing in the Games, except for one which may be imposed by individual IFs for health reasons.

By entering the Olympic Games, athletes make a commitment to respect the Olympic values. They agree to undergo doping tests.

Athletes wishing to be entered for the Olympic Games must be exceptional in their sport. In order to reach this level, they must submit to long hours of training, have a competitive spirit and feel a desire to pit themselves against others.

Being selected for the Olympic Games is the ultimate goal for the majority of athletes.
WHERE DO THE ATHLETES LIVE DURING THE GAMES?

The majority of the athletes live in the Olympic Village.

In the early days, athletes had to find their own accommodation and make their own catering arrangements. They were housed in hotels, schools, military barracks and even on boats!

As the modern Olympic Games grew, so did the number of participants, and it became urgent to find a more appropriate solution.

The first attempt to lodge athletes in the same location dates back to the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris, when temporary huts were made available. However, it was not until the 1932 Games in Los Angeles that what many regard as the first real Olympic Village was built.

The advantage of such villages is that athletes have access to everything they need: shops, post offices, cinemas, cultural centres, and of course restaurants. The catering requirements are enormous (60,000 meals per day were prepared using 210,000kg of ingredients at the 2016 Games in Rio) and the menus must be varied enough to satisfy the tastes of athletes from the five continents.

The Village is provided with a high degree of security, and only people with a special accreditation can get in. Security for the 1932 Olympic Village even included a small number of cowboys on horseback, who lassoed any intruders!

Originally, the Olympic villages were reserved for men. It was not until the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne that women were also able to stay in them.

After the Games, the Olympic Village often begins a second life. The apartments are generally sold on, or let for a modest rent.
HOW ARE THE WINNERS REWARDED?

Before the rules were defined, there were some variations in the prizes awarded to the winners. There were no gold medals at the 1896 Olympic Games in Athens. The winner received a silver medal and the runner-up a bronze medal. In 1900, the Games in Paris took place at the same time as the Universal Exposition. Winners were rewarded not with medals but rather with commemorative plaques or works of art! It was not until the 1908 Games in London that medals became standardised.

In the ancient Panhellenic Games, victors were rewarded with wreaths of olive, celery, laurel or pine. In the modern Olympic Games, the three best athletes in each event are honoured with medals of gold, silver or bronze.

Today, the winner’s medal must be covered with at least six grams of pure gold.

The first eight competitors receive diplomas.

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The medals for the Games of the Olympiad must meet the standards set by the IOC. From 1928 to 2000, the medals hardly changed at all: the obverse bore a representation of Nike, the goddess of Victory. As of 2004, this image of Nike was altered, the goddess appearing as a winged figure with the ancient Athens stadium in the background.

The Winter Games medals are not subject to the same constraints. Each Organising Committee is free to choose a different design. These medals tend to be more imaginative in their designs, incorporating a variety of materials such as crystal, granite and lacquer.

The podium, used for the medal presentation ceremony, made its first appearance at the 1932 Olympic Winter Games in Lake Placid.

The presentation ceremony is always a moving event. Although the time the athletes spend on the podium is short compared with the time it took for them to get there, the admiration of the public amplifies the victory of the heroes and heroines, and gives them perhaps their sweetest reward.
How can the Olympic Games be safeguarded?

The infrastructure required to hold the competitions and to accommodate the athletes and the media is considerable, as are the security measures needed. These days, the Olympic Games affect more than just the stadium. They affect an entire geographical region. The importance the Olympic Games have acquired on the international stage has made them an unmissable event, followed by the media of the entire world. For an athlete, the prospect of winning a medal in the media spotlight represents a springboard to fame and fortune. The pressure exerted by the athletes’ entourage and sponsors, amplified by personal ambition, can drive some of them to use illegal means to reach their ends. The threat of doping looms large over the Games. Doping distorts results, undermines the notion of a level playing field, betrays spectators’ trust and, above all, is damaging to athletes’ health.

In order to combat doping, a number of preventative and dissuasive measures have been taken, such as drug tests and the expulsion of athletes who test positive.

Athletes and teams may also be persuaded to lose on purpose. This is known as match-fixing or competition manipulation. Unfortunately, corruption is a problem that can affect all sports and all countries.

Educating young people about the Olympic values and raising awareness about the risks of doping and non-compliance with the rules are essential to preventing these scourges, which are completely at odds with the Olympic spirit.
WHERE DOES THE MONEY TO STAGE THE GAMES COME FROM?

These examples provide an illustration of the various means devised to finance the Olympic Games. As the Games have grown over the course of the 20th century, other sources of revenue have been tapped. Today, the major source of revenue is the rights paid by television channels to broadcast the Games.

In the 1980s, the IOC introduced a marketing policy for creating **partnerships with multinational companies**. In buying the right to use the Olympic symbol, these companies provide financial support as well as expertise that proves invaluable during the Games (technology, equipment, and so on).

Innumerable Olympic-related items are sold as souvenirs. The creation of **mascots** provides an additional boost in this area. In addition to the sales revenues they generate, they also help to define the visual identity of the Games. Whether real or imaginary, animals or people, these characters serve as an important communication tool. They build a bridge between the Olympic host city and the general public.

The first modern Olympic Games were partly financed by issuing a set of Olympic stamps. For the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki, coins were struck for the same reason.

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The first-ever mascot was introduced at the 1968 Winter Games in Grenoble. But it was probably the mascot of the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona that has enjoyed the greatest commercial and popular success. The little dog **Cobi**, designed by Javier Mariscal, appeared in a variety of shapes and materials. His versatility and adaptability to a wide range of situations goes some way towards explaining his extraordinary success.
WHAT ROLE DOES THE IOC PLAY IN ALL OF THIS?

The IOC (International Olympic Committee), founded in 1894 in Paris by Pierre de Coubertin, now has over one hundred members representing the National Olympic Committees (NOCs) from all over the world.

Today the IOC is led by a president, elected for an initial eight-year term, with the possibility of being re-elected for a further term of four years.

One of the roles of the IOC is to ensure the celebration of the Olympic Games. The process of selecting the host city or country begins approximately nine years before the Games. The IOC recently took a number of decisions designed to make this process more flexible and foster a permanent, ongoing dialogue with the cities, regions and countries interested in submitting a candidature.

The newly adopted principles also aim to provide greater flexibility with regard to the location of Games venues, and are fully in keeping with the key concepts of sustainability, legacy and cost reduction.

Around seven years before the Games, the IOC elects the city that will host them.

It is not the IOC that organises the Games, but an Olympic Games Organising Committee (OCOG) set up by the host city. The IOC supervises the organisation.

Apart from the Olympic Games, the IOC is involved in a variety of activities encouraging the practice of sport throughout the world, and promoting fair-play, non-violence and non-discrimination. The IOC is also involved in actions to promote peace.

The IOC has a special relationship with the city of Lausanne. This Swiss city has been home to the IOC headquarters since 1915. After occupying a series of different buildings, the administration and president's office took up permanent residence in the Château de Vidy in 1968. An adjoining building was added several years later. In light of the growing number of employees, the IOC decided to build a new Olympic House. Inaugurated in June 2019, the new IOC headquarters meets the most stringent international sustainable building standards.
HOW DOES THE IOC KEEP ITS OLYMPIC MEMORIES ALIVE?

Archives, photographs, films, documents and objects from the Games, the entire Olympic heritage, in fact, can be found within its walls. A series of exhibitions give adults and children alike the opportunity to discover the history of the ancient and modern Games and the Olympic Movement, by exploring themes related to sport, art and culture.

An Olympic Studies Centre receives students and researchers and provides access to any information and documentation they may need.

The Olympic Museum heads a network of other Olympic museums around the world. Is there one in your country?

The idea of an Olympic Museum was first suggested by Pierre de Coubertin. It was Juan Antonio Samaranch, the 7th IOC president, who brought the project to fruition. The Olympic Museum, on the shores of Lake Geneva, opened on 23 June 1993. It was closed for two years of extensive renovation work, reopening in 2013. The Museum now welcomes almost 300,000 visitors every year.

The Olympic Museum, also in Lausanne, just a few kilometres from the IOC headquarters, welcomes visitors from around the world.

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and disseminating the Olympic spirit and values to a wider audience. They provide a place to learn, discuss, study and share.

The Olympic Museum heads a network of other Olympic museums around the world. Is there one in your country?