



INTERNATIONAL
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

FACTSHEET

THE PROGRAMME OF THE GAMES OF THE OLYMPIAD

UPDATE – OCTOBER 2017

According to the [Olympic Charter](#), “*the programme of the Olympic Games (hereinafter 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.

Today, the Olympic programme is reviewed after each edition of the Games. This is the task of the Olympic Programme Commission, which is made up of IOC members and representatives of the National Olympic Committees (NOCs), IFs, athletes and other experts. 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 procedure for the definition of the Olympic programme has evolved since the implementation of [Olympic Agenda 2020](#), the strategic roadmap for the future of the Olympic Movement.

THE SPORTS PROGRAMME OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES TOKYO 2020

In August 2016, the IOC agreed to add baseball/softball, karate, skateboard, sports climbing and surfing to the sports programme for the [Olympic Games Tokyo 2020](#). The decision taken [129th IOC Session in Rio de Janeiro](#) was part of the most comprehensive evolution of the Olympic programme in modern history. The Organising Committee for the Tokyo 2020 Games proposed the five new sports in response to the new flexibility provided

by [Olympic Agenda 2020](#). The vote was the culmination of a two-year process that began with the unanimous approval of the IOC’s strategic roadmap in 2014. The recommendation to give Organising Committees the flexibility to propose new sports for their edition of the Games was intended to put even more focus on innovation, flexibility and youth in the development Olympic programme. Tokyo 2020, the first Organising Committee able to take advantage of the change, submitted its proposal for the five new sports to the IOC in September 2015. Since this was the first time for the new OCOG proposal procedure, these five sports and their associated athletes are considered outside of the Olympic Agenda 2020 mandated quota of 10,500 athletes and 310 events, according to principles approved by the IOC Executive Board.

In June 2017, the IOC Executive Board (EB) approved the event programme for the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. The decision marks a key milestone in the evolution of the Olympic programme by introducing youth and urban innovations, significantly improving gender equality, and reducing the overall number of athletes in an effort to reduce cost and complexity. The EB decision leads to a net increase of 15 events, an overall reduction of 285 athletes from [Rio 2016](#), and the highest representation of female athletes in Olympic history with an estimated 48.8% female athletes’ representation. In Tokyo, the number of mixed events will double from nine in Rio 2016 to 18. All new events will make use of existing venues.

The decision is a significant step towards achieving the 50 per cent gender balance at the Olympic Games in both athletes and events, as clearly stated by [Olympic Agenda 2020](#).

[The full programme of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 is available here.](#)



OLYMPIC PROGRAMME COMMISSION

The Olympic Programme Commission has the responsibility of analysing the programme of sports for both the Games of the Olympiad and Olympic Winter Games, and forming recommendations for consideration by the IOC Executive Board.

Olympic Agenda 2020 noted that “*the Olympic programme is the fundamental core of the Olympic Games as decisions regarding the programme have an impact on virtually all other areas of the Olympic Games and Olympic Movement.*”

The responsibilities of the Olympic Programme Commission are to:

- Develop a programme that maximises the popularity of the Olympic Games while containing costs and complexity;
- Ensure the Olympic programme remains relevant to young people by promoting innovation and adapting to modern taste and new trends, while respecting the history and tradition of the sports;
- Thoroughly evaluate the sports and events in close cooperation with the respective International Federations;
- Respect the frameworks and principles outlined in Olympic Agenda 2020 Recommendations 9, 10 and 11.

OLYMPIC PROGRAMME PROCESS

There are three steps to the finalisation of the programme for an Olympic Games or Olympic Winter Games. These steps are detailed below.

1. Sports programme

Seven years before the Games, the IOC Executive Board submits a proposal of the final sports to the IOC Session for a vote before the host city of that Games is elected ([Olympic Charter](#), Bye-law to Rule 45, section 1.1)

2. NEW since December 2014 – Host City / OCOG proposal

This step is an optional proposal which is made by the Host City to the IOC. Currently it occurs sometime between the confirmation of the sports programme and the finalisation of the event programme. This is considered outside the quota of 10,500 athletes and 310 events for the Games of the Olympiad, upon agreement with the Organising Committee of the Games (OCOG). The process is loosely defined as follows:

- The OCOG proposal on new sports is submitted to the IOC for review and the Olympic Programme Commission makes a recommendation to the IOC Executive Board;
- The Olympic Programme Commission works to review the proposal;
- The IOC Executive Board reviews and makes a proposal to the IOC Session on events and athlete quotas in the OCOG proposal on new sports;
- The IOC Session votes on the OCOG proposal on new sports ([Olympic Charter](#) Rule 45 and its Bye-law).

3 Event programme – three years out from the Games

This is considered within the quota of 10,500 athletes and 310 events.

- The Olympic Programme Commission reviews all proposed changes to the programme in consultation with the IFs and makes a recommendation to the IOC Executive Board;
- The IOC Executive Board votes to accept, reject or request further review.

A FEW DATES AND EXAMPLES OF THE GAMES

1896: First edition of the Games of the Olympiad in Athens, with 43 events in nine sports.



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 was the first women's fencing event.

1928: First athletics competitions for women

1936: Basketball and canoe-kayak joined the programme, with 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 re-joined the programme at the Games in Munich after an appearance in 1936. Canoe slalom made its first appearance.

1984: Synchronised swimming and rhythmic gymnastics made their Olympic debuts.

1988: First Olympic table tennis tournament

1992: Badminton entered the Games.

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

2000: Triathlon was added to the programme, alongside trampoline and taekwondo.

2008: Award of the first Olympic BMX medals

2012: Women's boxing made its first Olympic appearance.

2016: Return of golf and rugby to the programme

2020: Addition of five new sports: surfing, karate, sports climbing, skateboarding, baseball/softball.

Between 1896 and 2020, the Olympic programme has grown considerably. From 43 medals presented at the first edition in Athens, the Games of the Olympiad in 2020 will feature 339 events in 33 sports: 165 men's, 156 women's and 18 mixed.



Evolution of the sports programme of the Games of the Olympiad since 1896

Editions	Women	Men	Total athletes	Number of sports	Number of events
1896		241	241	9	43
1900	22	975	997	19	95
1904	6	645	651	16	95
1908	37	1,971	2,008	22	110
1912	48	2,359	2,407	14	102
1920	65	2,561	2,626	22	156
1924	135	2,954	3,089	17	126
1928	277	2,606	2,883	14	109
1932	126	1,206	1,332	14	117
1936	331	3,632	3,963	19	129
1948	390	3,714	4,104	17	136
1952	519	4,436	4,955	17	149
1956	376	2,938	3,314	17	151
1960	611	4,727	5,338	17	150
1964	678	4,473	5,151	19	163
1968	781	4,735	5,516	18	172
1972	1,059	6,075	7,134	21	195
1976	1,260	4,824	6,084	21	198
1980	1,115	4,064	5,179	21	203
1984	1,566	5,263	6,829	21	221
1988	2,194	6,197	8,391	23	237
1992	2,704	6,652	9,356	25	257
1996	3,512	6,806	10,318	26	271
2000	4,069	6,582	10,651	28	300
2004	4,329	6,296	10,625	28	301
2008	4,637	6,305	10,942	28	302
2012	4,676	5,892	10,568	26	302
2016	5059	6179	11,238	28	306
2020	~5,386	~5,704	~11,090	33	339

See [here](#) For more information on the historical evolution per sport

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For further information, please contact



INTERNATIONAL
OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE

Château de Vidy,
1007 Lausanne,
Switzerland

The Olympic Studies Centre
Tel. +41 21 621 66 11
Fax +41 21 621 67 18
studies.centre@olympic.org