

# FACTSHEET

## The programme of the Games of the Olympiad

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According to the Olympic Charter, “*The programme of the Olympic Games (“the programme”) is the programme of all sports competitions established by the IOC for each edition of the Olympic Games in accordance with the present Rule and its Bye-law.*” ([Olympic Charter, Chapter 5, Rule 45](#)).

The Olympic sports are those governed by International Sports 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](#) and was further strengthened by the new strategic roadmap [Olympic Agenda 2020+5](#) for the future of the Olympic Movement.

### The sports programme of 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 [129<sup>th</sup> 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](#) and which is now reflected in Rule 45 of the Olympic Charter. 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 Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (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 EB.

In June 2017, the IOC 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 IOC 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](#).



See **table A** for further information on the historical evolution of the programme.

[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 and events for both the Games of the Olympiad and Olympic Winter Games, and forming recommendations for consideration by the IOC EB.

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 IFs;
- Respect the frameworks and principles outlined in Olympic Agenda 2020 Recommendations 9, 10 and 11 and Olympic Agenda 2020+5 Recommendation 1 and 2.

## 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

In principle seven years before the Games, the IOC EB submits a proposal of the initial sports programme to the IOC Session for a vote no later than the host of that Games is elected ([Olympic Charter, Chapter 5, Bye-law to Rule 45, section 1.1](#)).

### 2. New since December 2014 – Host / OCOG proposal

This step is an optional proposal which is made by the Host to the IOC. The proposal should be submitted by the OCOG and reviewed by the IOC 4-6 years before the Games. This is considered inside the quota of 10,500 athletes and 310 events for the Games of the Olympiad. The process is loosely defined as follows:

- The OCOG proposal on new sports is submitted to the IOC for review;
- The Olympic Programme Commission works to review the proposal and makes a recommendation to the IOC EB;
- The IOC EB 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, Chapter 5, Rule 45 and its Bye-law](#)).

### 3. Event programme – three-four years out from the Games

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

- The Olympic Programme Commission reviews all changes to the programme proposed by the IFs in consultation with the OCOG and makes a recommendation to the IOC EB;
- The IOC EB 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 at the Games in Paris. First events for women, in tennis and golf.

**1904:** Freestyle wrestling is added to the programme of the St. Louis Games. Greco-Roman wrestling had featured in 1896.

**1908:** First field hockey competition at the Games in London.

**1912:** At the Games in Stockholm, swimming added women's events; first modern pentathlon competition. Road cycling returned to the Games.



**1920:** Weightlifting reappeared in Antwerp, 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 for this second edition of the Games in France.

**1928:** First athletics competitions for women at the Games in Amsterdam.

**1936:** Basketball and canoe-kayak joined the programme for this edition in the German capital, with men's and women's events.

**1952:** Equestrian sports became mixed at the Games in Helsinki. In gymnastics, individual events for women were introduced.

**1964:** At the Olympic Games Tokyo 1964, judo joined the programme, and came back for good in 1972. The first volleyball medals were awarded.

**1972:** Handball re-joined the programme at the Games of Munich after an appearance in 1936. Canoe slalom made its first appearance.

**1984:** Synchronised swimming and rhythmic gymnastics made their Olympic debuts at the Games of Los Angeles.

**1988:** First Olympic table tennis tournament at the Games in Seoul.

**1992:** Badminton entered at the Games in Barcelona.

**1996:** Mountain bike joined the programme at the Games in Atlanta, along with beach volleyball.

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

**2008:** In Beijing Award of the first Olympic BMX medals.

**2012:** Women's boxing made its first Olympic appearance at the London Games.

**2016:** Return of golf and rugby to the programme Games of the XXXI Olympiad Rio 2016.

**2020:** Addition of five OCOG-proposed sports for Tokyo 2020: surfing, karate, sports climbing, skateboarding, baseball/softball.

**2024:** Addition of four OCOG-proposed sports for Paris 2024: skateboarding, sport climbing, surfing and breaking (at its Olympic debut).



**Table A: Evolution of the sports programme of the Games of the Olympiad since 1896**

Editions	Women	Men	Total of 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	<b>-5,407</b>	<b>-5,685</b>	<b>-11,092</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>339</b>
2024	<b>5250</b>	<b>5250</b>	<b>10,500</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>329</b>

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

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