

66 Sporting events

A The Olympics



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Summer Olympics: facts and figures

- The first games took place in 776 BC, with one **competition**: a **race** of about 192 metres.
- The first modern Olympics took place in 1896 with 241 **competitors taking part** in nine sports, including **athletics**¹, **cycling**², **fencing**³, **gymnastics**⁴, **weightlifting**⁵ and **shooting**. By 2016, there were over 11,000 people **competing** in 28 sports.
- Gymnast Larissa Latynina **holds the record** for the woman with the most Olympic **medals** (18). She later **coached** the national gymnastics team.
- Boxing is now the only Olympic sport where **professionals** are not allowed to compete.

GLOSSARY

figure	an amount in numbers
race	a competition to see who is fastest or best, or who wins
take part (in sth)	join with other people in an activity SYN participate
shooting	the sport of shooting animals, birds or objects with guns shoot
record	the best performance in sth, especially sport: hold a record have a record; break a record make a new record
medal	a piece of metal given to an athlete who comes 1st, 2nd or 3rd
coach	train sb to do a sport, learn a skill, etc. coach n
professional	sb who plays a sport for money as their job OPP amateur

SPOTLIGHT *competition*

A **competition** is a situation in which two or more people are trying to win something or be better than someone. The person is a **competitor**. **competitive adj**; **compete v**

► *He is competing in the Boston Marathon.*

Use the to check the pronunciation and stress on these words.

1 Complete the sports.

► **shooting** _____

2 c _____

4 f _____

1 w _____

3 g _____

5 a _____

2 Circle the correct answer(s). Both answers may be correct.

► It's a long **race** / **medal**.

► It was a hard **race** / **competition**.

1 What are the official **figures** / **competitors** for the games?

5 Anyone can **take part** / **participate**.

2 He broke the **record** / **competition**.

6 The race **takes place** / **takes part** on Tuesday.

3 Did she win a **race** / **medal**?

7 She **holds** / **broke** the record.

4 **Professionals** / **Amateurs** do something as a job.

8 He's a **competitor** / **competition**.

3 Complete the sentences.

► There are about 3,000 **competitors** in the modern Olympics.

1 The latest _____ from **Sport England** show that over 60% of the population do at least 150 minutes of exercise a week.

2 It's hard for poor countries to _____ against rich countries in certain events.

3 A Soviet gymnast holds the _____ for the woman with the most Olympic medals.

4 There are a few Olympic amateurs, but now most of the _____ are _____.

5 The marathon (just over 42kms) is the longest _____ on foot in the Olympics.

6 My uncle won a silver _____ in the shooting _____ at the 1996 Olympics.

7 Michael Phelps _____ four individual world swimming records at the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

He was _____ by Bob Bowman throughout his career.

8 The biggest sport in the Olympics is athletics, so every event is very _____.

9 Boxing is now the one sport where only _____ can take part.

10 How many sportsmen and women _____ in the last Olympics?



TEST YOURSELF

B The World Cup



The World Cup is an international football **championship**, and like the Olympic Games, it is also **held** every four years. First of all, countries have to **qualify** in their different continents (**except for the host nation**) before they can take part in the final **tournament**. The first World Cup was in Uruguay, in 1930, with just 13 countries and that has now risen to 32 countries in **recent** tournaments. The most successful team has been Brazil: they have won the **final** and the competition five times. The **current champions** (in 2019) are France, but that may be different by 2022.

SPOTLIGHT *championship and tournament*

A **championship** is a competition between different players or teams to find the best. It may take place over days, weeks or even a year. The winner(s) is/are **champion(s)**. A **tournament** is a competition in which players or teams play against each other, over days or perhaps weeks. The two words are very similar in meaning.

- *He won a medal at the European Athletics Championships.*
- *a golf/basketball/tennis, etc. tournament*

GLOSSARY

cup	1 a large metal cup given as a prize 2 the competition to win a cup
hold	make sth happen: hold a competition / talks / a meeting
qualify	win the right to enter a competition or continue in it
except (for)	not including sb or sth: <i>Everybody went except (for) me.</i>
host	usually a person who invites people to their home, but also a country that invites other countries to visit them for a competition, meeting, etc.
nation	a country and all the people who live in it
recent	that happened or began only a short time ago
final	the last game or race in a competition to decide the winner
current	happening or used now currently <i>adv</i>

4 Circle the nouns.

current cup hold host recent qualification except for championship qualification nation

5 One word is missing in each sentence. What is it, and where does it go?

except for final tournament cup recent champions held ✓ host nations

- The World Cup is / every four years.
- 1 The first nation was Uruguay.
- 2 The first was held in 1930.
- 3 Thirteen different took part in the first tournament.
- 4 Every country has to qualify, the host nation.
- 5 Thirty-two teams have competed in championships.
- 6 Brazil has won the five times and therefore the championship.
- 7 The in 2018 were France.
- 8 The winners receive a large.

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6 Complete the sentences.

- No team has won the tournament five times, except for Brazil.
- 1 The 2026 World will be in the United States, Canada and Mexico, with 48 taking part.
- 2 Germany were in 2014. They played Argentina in the and won 1–0.
- 3 Many people believe that the 1970 World Cup was one of the greatest in its history.
- 4 (in 2018), there are 134 teams that have entered the World Cup championship but have never for the final stages of the tournament.
- 5 In 2010, the nation was South Africa, and the was won by Spain.



TEST YOURSELF