

The Winter Olympic Games

Winter Olympic History

The Winter Olympics is an international contest of winter sports that happens once every four years, with the best athletes from around the world coming together to take part.

The Winter Olympic Games were developed because it became necessary to have an international Olympic competition only for sports that take place on ice and snow, rather than competing alongside all other sports in the Olympic Games.

The first Winter Olympics took place 98 years ago in 1924, in Chamonix, France, with only 16 nations participating.

Since 1924, the Winter Olympics has been hosted in a range of different cities in 12 different countries around the world. The countries are:

- the United States (hosted four times).
- France (hosted three times).
- Austria, Canada, Japan, Italy, Norway and Switzerland (all hosted two times).
- Germany, (former) Yugoslavia, Russia and South Korea have hosted once.

During the Second World War, the Winter Olympics in both 1940 and 1944 were cancelled.

The last Winter Olympics was held in Pyeongchang in South Korea, in 2018.

The 2022 Olympic Games

The next Winter Olympics will be held in the city of Beijing in China in February 2022. Beijing also hosted the 2008 Summer Olympic Games. This is the first time the Winter Olympics will be hosted by a city that has also hosted the Summer Olympics.

The event will get underway on the 4th February with an opening ceremony and will last for 17 days, concluding on the 20th February with a closing ceremony.

Did You Know...?

The 2022 Winter Olympic mascot is a panda wearing a shell made from ice that resembles an astronaut's suit.

The Panda, which is China's national animal, is called Bing Dwen Dwen.

'Bing' means ice and symbolises purity and strength. 'Dwen Dwen' represents children.

During that time, there will be 80 nations competing in 15 different winter sports. The events will be held in 26 various indoor and outdoor venues around the city of Beijing. Some events will also take place in the towns of the neighbouring Hebei province - 140 miles from Beijing.

The Italian cities of Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo have been elected to host the next Winter Olympics in 2026.

The Winter Olympic Sports

The 2022 Winter Olympic sports include: alpine skiing, biathlon, bobsleigh, cross country skiing, curling, figure skating, freestyle skiing, ice hockey, luge, Nordic combined, short-track speed skating, skeleton, ski jumping, snowboarding and speed skating.

Biathlon - combines cross-country skiing and rifle shooting.

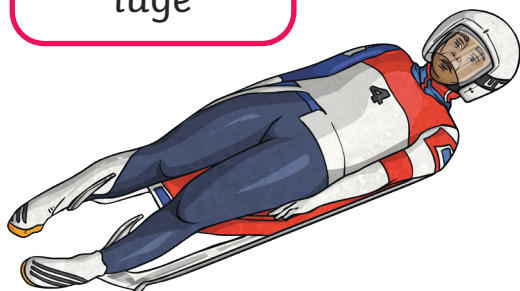
Nordic combined - includes cross-country skiing and ski jumping.

What are the luge and skeleton?

The luge involves sledging down an ice track, feet-first on your back. Riders can reach speeds of up to 90 miles per hour.

The skeleton requires the competitor to ride head-first and face down on a flat sled down an ice track, hitting speeds of up to 80 miles per hour.

luge



skeleton



Great British Success at the Winter Olympics

58 competitors from Great Britain competed in 11 of the sports at the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea. They won five medals in total, one gold and four bronze, placing them 19th in the medal table.

Lizzy Yarnold became the first British athlete to win more than one gold medal by winning the women's skeleton title in back-to-back games.