

# Sikhism

Guru Nanak is the first guru and founder of Sikhism. He was born in the village of Talwandi in Punjab, India in 1469.



# Sikhism

About 25 million people practice Sikhism. Sikhs live all over the world, but the vast majority (90%) live in the Punjab region of India and Pakistan.



# Sikhism

The word Sikhism comes from the Hindi word for disciple, meaning someone who follows a teacher.



# Sikhism

Sikhs believe in one God, who is a power, not a person. Everyone has equal status, no one person is more important than any other.



# Sikhism

Sikhs worship in a Gurdwara, which has four doors to symbolise that it is open to everybody. Gurdwaras do not have any statues or religious pictures and always have a light on.



# Sikhism

After the service in the Gurdwara, everybody is served a free meal, which is usually vegetarian, known as the langar. Everyone sits on the floor and eats together.



# Sikhism

Some Sikhs do not cut their hair, as a symbol of devotion to God. This is known as Kesh. Hair is combed with a Kanga (a wooden comb) and men tie it into a knot and cover it with a turban.



# Sikhism

The 5 Ks are five physical symbols of devotion worn by some Sikhs. They are; Kesh (uncut hair), Kangha (a wooden comb), Kara (a steel bracelet), Kachera (cotton underwear) and Kirpaan (a dagger or sword).





# Sikhism

Vaisakhi is the Sikh New Year festival, which takes place in April. The Guru Granth Sahib is often taken out of the Gurdwara in a procession around the streets, accompanied by singing and drumming.



# Sikhism

The holiest site for Sikhs is the Golden Temple of Amritsar, also known as Sri Harmandir Sahib (House of God).



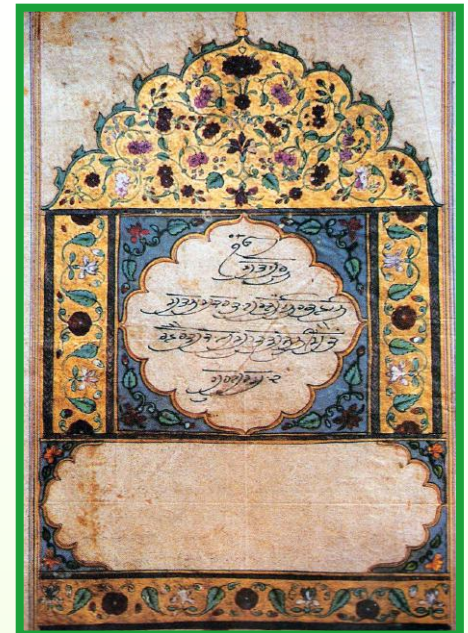
# Sikhism

Sikhism has ten gurus, starting with Guru Nanak and ending with Guru Gobind Singh who died in 1708.



# Sikhism

The holy book of Sikhism is the Guru Granth Sahib. It was compiled from the writings of the gurus, and leaders of other religions. It is made up of poetry and hymns.



# Sikhism

During a Sikh baby naming ceremony, the Guru Granth Sahib is randomly opened and the family choose a name beginning with the first letter of that page.



# Sikhism

In addition to their first name and family name, all Sikh women have the name Kaur, meaning princess, and all Kikh men have the name Singh, meaning lion.





Guru Nanak's birthday is an important Sikh festival, During this, and other festivals, a team of people read the Guru Granth Sahib continuously. This takes 48 hours to complete.



Khanda is the symbol of Sikhism. It is formed from a double edged sword, a circle and two kirpans (curved swords). It symbolises the belief in one God and the balance of worldly and spiritual matters.





# Sikhism

The Nishan Sahib is a triangular flag that is flown at every Gurdwara. It usually shows the Khanda symbol in blue or black on a yellow or orange background.



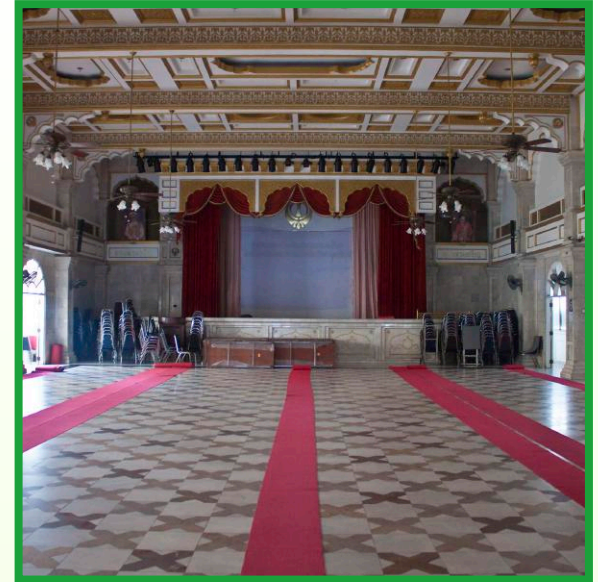
# Sikhism

Sikhs have set times for prayer, in the morning, evening and before going to sleep. When they pray, they try to empty their mind of worldly concerns and concentrate on their relationship with God.



# Sikhism

There are no priests in Sikhism and any Sikh can lead a service in the Gurdwara. The Guru Granth Sahib is read by a Granthi, who is a person who has spent several years studying and preparing for the role.



# Sikhism

When he was 30, Guru Nanak disappeared for three days, and his friends feared he had drowned. When he returned, he started to spread the message of Sikhism; that God loves everyone equally.



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