

The Olympic Games

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Beautiful Olympia in Greece!





The Olympic Games have a very long history. They began in 777 BC in Greece and took place every four years for nearly twelve centuries at Olympia. The Olympic games originate in athletic contests to honor of Zeus. Only men competed and they wore no clothes in order to have greater freedom of movement.



Statue of Olympic Zeus

The ancient Greek Olympics were held every four years during the full moon of midsummer. That date was chosen so the games could last into the night. The time between games was called an Olympiad, and each Olympiad was named for an athletic victor at the previous contests. The Greeks used the Olympiads as a way to establish historical chronology.



Only free born male Greek citizens not accused of murder or sacrilege were eligible to participate. Training began as early as one year before the games in the athlete's home city. A month before the games, the athletes were the obligated to move to Elis or Olympia for their final training. It was here that the athletes were taught the rules of fair-play and honorable competition.



Spectators also abided by strict rules. Only free men not convicted of any sacrileges could attend. Women, especially married women were not allowed to watch nude contests between men. Only the priestess of Demeter Chamyne, seated on the altar of the goddess, was allowed to watch the contests in the stadium.



A simple foot race marked the early Olympic games, but over the centuries the games became numerous and complicated. At most, a total of fourteen contests were held over a period of four days. The games were divided into two classes: physical contest were held in the stadium nude, and those on the race tracks with chariots.

People from all over Greece gathered for this Olympic festival. It was a chance to sell goods, recite poems for money, negotiate business deals, and even sign peace treaties between cities. Visitors slept in the open air or tents due to overcrowded small residential quarters.



- In 1894 French Baron Pierre de Coubertin, addressed all the sports governing bodies and pointed out the significance of sport and its educational value. Two years later the first modern Olympic Games took place. Of course, the competitions were held in Greece to symbolize the continuation of the centuries-old tradition.





They included many different kinds of sports: running, boxing, wrestling, etc. All the cities in Greece sent their best athletes to Olympia to compete in the Games.

- Alfréd Hajos won both the 100m and the 1,200m swimming events. For the longer race, the competitors were shipped out into the lake and then swam back to shore. According to Hajos, 'I must say that I shivered at the thought of what would happen if I got a cramp from the cold water. My will to live completely overcame my desire to win.'



An Olympic Anthem composed by Spyros Samaras was played at the Athens. For the next 60 year a variety of musical compositions provided the backgrounds to the Opening Ceremonies, then in 1960, the Samaras composition became the official Olympic Anthem

The Most Famous Long Distance Race – The Marathon

- The Marathon race legend tells us that Phedippedes ran from Marathon on one coast, over the hills to Athens and brought word of a great victory for the Greeks led by Callimachus over the Persians led by Darius.

They call the race the 'Marathon' not the 'Athens'. The crucial point is that Marathon is on the opposite coast from Athens and was the site of a famous Greek victory against the Persians (Modern Turkey / Iran).

- No wonder they refer to these legends as Greek tragedies; in this instance sadly, the Spartans hit a religious time-out and would not help the Athenians, and Phedippedes himself, hit a terminal 'Blue Screen' when he returned to Athens to tell of the fall of Sparta to the impending Persian 490 BC.

Athens 2004 Olympic Games

- The 2004 Summer Olympic Games, officially known as the Games of the XXVIII Olympiad, was a premier international multi-sport event held in Athens, Greece from August 13th to August 29th, 2004 with the motto "Welcome Home".

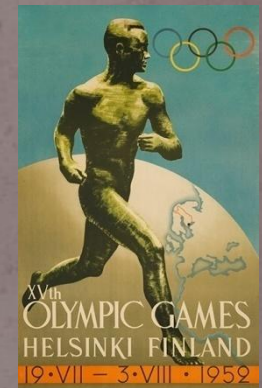
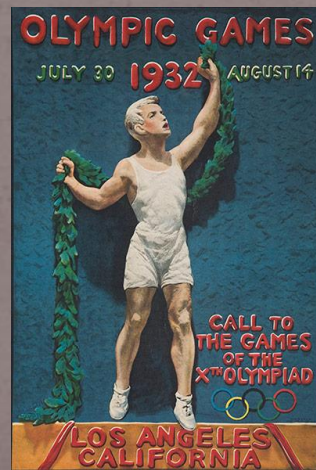
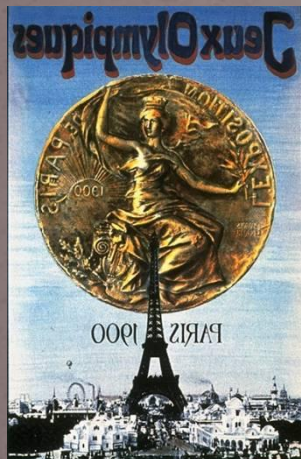
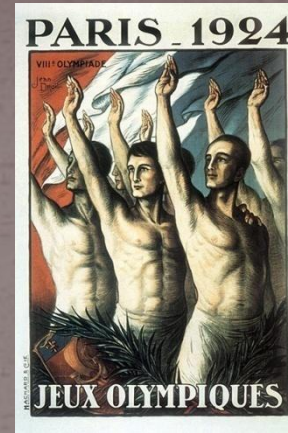
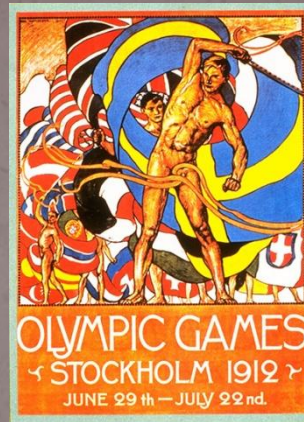
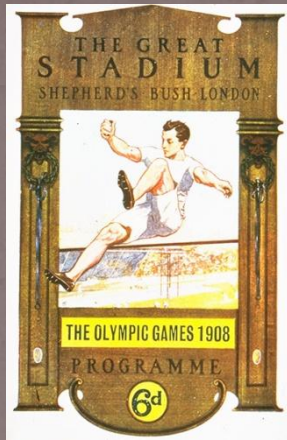




Athens 2004 marked the first time since the 1996 Summer Olympics that all countries with a National Olympic Committee were in attendance. It was also the first time since 1896 that the Olympics were held in Greece.

New Stadium in Athens





The History of the Olympic Games

2014 Sochi

2012 London

2008 Beijing

2004 Athens

2000 Sydney

1996 Atlanta

1992 Barcelona

1988 Seoul

1984 Los
Angeles

1980 Moscow

1976 Montreal

1972 Munich

1968 Mexico City

1964 Tokyo

1960 Rome

1956 Melbourne

1952 Helsinki

1948 London

1936 Berlin

1932 Los Angeles

1928 Amsterdam

1924 Paris

1920 Antwerp

1912 Stockholm

1908 London

1904 St. Louis

1900 Paris

1896 Athens