

## An overview of the religion:



Sikhism is the world's 5th largest religion, with about 28 million followers. It began over 500 years ago. Sikhs are the people who follow Sikhism. Sikhs believe in one God who guides and protects them. Sikhs see everybody as being equal in God's eyes.

Sikhism was founded by a man called Guru Nanak. It is based on what he taught people. They believe that he received messages from God telling them how to live. Leading a good life and making the right choices are important in Sikhism. Granth Sahib is the holy book of Sikhism. Sikhs worship at home and in Sikh temples called Gurdwaras.

## Question and Answers on Sikhism.

Where do most Sikhs live in the world?



- Sikh people are mainly found in the Punjab region of north India. In total, there are nearly 23 million Sikhs in India. However, there are also populations of Sikhs on every inhabited continent.
- The largest populations of Sikhs in countries outside of India are in the United States, Canada, the UK and Malaysia. There are very few Sikhs in parts of Africa and Central America.

What are some other Sikh traditions?



- When a Sikh baby is born, the whole community turns out to celebrate! Fathers traditionally tell the news to friends and family, and the baby name is revealed in a ceremony at the gurdwara.
- Sikh names are easily distinguishable. Boys and men are given an extra Sikh name: Singh: meaning 'lion.' Girls and women have Kaur: 'princess.'

Where and how do Sikhs worship? Why?



- Sikh temples are called gurdwaras. They are built with a large central dome. Gurdwaras have four doors, to show that they are open to all people, as a part of the Sikh belief that everyone is equal.
- Before Sikhs worship in a gurdwara, they should take a bath as a mark of respect and cleanliness. Shoes are taken off, and heads are covered.

What is the Sikh holy book?



- The Sikh holy text is the Guru Granth Sahib. It is exactly 1430 pages long in its printed form, and all of the hymns in it are in the same order. This helps Sikhs from everywhere to read it the same way.

## The Key Beliefs of Sikhism:

### Guru Nanak

Sikhs believe that Guru Nanak was born in a small village called Punjab in India. He was born into a Hindu family, but grew up around Hindus and Muslims.

Sikhs believe that Guru Nanak was spoken to by God, who told him to follow a simple faith, in which everybody was equal. In other religions, some people were thought of as better than others.



### The Five Ks.

Sikhs display their commitment to their religion by adhering to the 5 Ks, which are the 'Sikh Articles of Faith.'



1. **Kesh** – Uncut Hair
2. **Kangha** – Comb
3. **Kara** – Steel Bracelet
4. **Kirpan** – Sword
5. **Kaccha** – Soldier's shorts

### Vaisakh

Vaisakhi marks the Sikh New Year. At this time, Sikhs remember when Khalsa was created. Khalsa was the purified Sikh community created by Guru Gobind Singh, in which all were equal.

This event takes place in April, and also marks the start of the Harvest.



## Key Vocabulary:

Sikh,	Guru Nanak,	India,	Punjab,
Granth Sahib,	El Onkar,	Gurdwara,	Gobind Singh,
Nishan Sahib,	Golden Temple,	Vaisakhi	