

The Olympic Games:

A Competition for the World



The Olympic Games are a lot of fun to watch, aren't they? Every even year (like 2016) there's either a Summer or Winter Olympics! At the Games, we see people from all over the world representing their country and competing for a medal in their specific athletic event, like swimming, skiing or gymnastics.

The Olympics are an exciting event to watch, but it's also really cool to see people from all around the world coming together and competing. When we see all the different countries represented — like Jamaica, Germany, Cambodia, Micronesia or Zambia — we get to see people from all around the world, and we're reminded that everyone is made in God's image. And that's a wonderful thing to see!

The games started a long time ago, back in ancient Greece, and today they're held in different countries all around the world. Let's learn some interesting facts about the Olympics, and then we're going to pretend to be an Olympian ourselves with some fun crafts!

Olympic History Fun Facts

- 🌍 **The early Olympic Games were a religious festival, starting in 776 BC and going through AD 393. The games were banned for a long time because they were a pagan festival (they were held to honor the Greek god Zeus). They didn't start again until 1896!**

- 🌐 The first modern Olympic Games were held in Athens, Greece — 280 people from 13 different countries competed in 43 events. Today that number is a lot higher!
- 🌐 The Olympic Games used to happen every four years. But since 1994, the Summer and Winter Olympic Games have been held separately and take turns, so the Olympics now happen every two years.
- 🌐 The Olympic motto is made up of three Latin words that mean **Faster — Higher — Stronger**. And that's exactly what the athletes all try to do!
- 🌐 The Olympic rings are circles of blue, yellow, black, green and red. The colors were chosen because every country flag in the world had at least one of those colors, and it shows how people from five continents all come together and compete in the Games, no matter what country they're from.

2016 Olympic Fun Facts

- 🌐 206 different countries are competing in the 2016 Summer Olympic Games.
- 🌐 Around 10,500 athletes will compete across 306 different events. That's a LOT of athletes and a LOT of events!

- 🌐 The 2016 games will be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil — Rio, for short. It's the first time that a country in South America has ever hosted the games! The games have never been held in Africa, or Antarctica (but that would be really cold!).

Let's Make an Olympic Torch!

The Olympic torch is an important part of the games. The Olympic flame is lit with the sun's rays, using a special mirror that helps focus the light so it can create enough heat to start a fire! The flame then goes on a relay around the world before it arrives at the Olympic stadium. It stays lit for the whole relay and for all of the games, and then it is extinguished at the closing ceremony.

We might not be able to run the Olympic torch through different countries, but we can run it around our house! Let's make our own torch!

Supplies:

- ✓ Toilet paper or paper towel tube
- ✓ Aluminum foil
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Red, orange and yellow tissue paper

Here's how you make it.

1. Tear off a piece of aluminum foil as long as your toilet paper or paper towel tube.
2. Wrap the foil around the tube, taping the ends and edge in place.
3. Take the tissue paper and cut out long, raindrop-like shapes. Make 5 to 6 of each color.

4. Then crunch up the tissue paper. This will help the flame look fuller and alive!
5. Bunch your pieces together into a bouquet, mixing up the colors.
6. Twist the bottom of the bouquet and tape it together, so the flames stick together.
7. Tape the bouquet inside the top of the tube. Now your Olympic torch is done and you can run it around (even if it's just around the house)!



Gold, Silver or Bronze – Be an Olympic Medalist!

Each Olympic sport has three medals that the athletes compete to win — gold for first place, silver for second and bronze for third. Being an Olympic medalist is an amazing feeling, and athletes have to work hard to be the very best at their sport in the whole world!

Supplies:

- ✓ Construction paper (yellow for gold, gray for silver, tan for bronze or white for you to color)
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Colored pencils
- ✓ Glitter — gold, silver or bronze (optional)
- ✓ Glue (optional)
- ✓ Tape
- ✓ Ribbon (any color)

Here's how you make it.

1. Take something small and circular (like a peanut butter or pickle jar) and trace around it onto your construction paper.
2. Cut out the circle you traced.
3. Color the circle however you want. You could create a special design for your own Olympics, write "USA" (or another country's name!) or whatever you want. It's your medal!
4. If you want to make your medal sparkle, put some glue on the paper — maybe around the edges, or even writing out something on the paper. Then sprinkle the glitter over it, and shake off the extra glitter into the trash.
5. Once that's dry, take a ribbon (around 24 inches long should be good!) and bring the two ends together.
6. Tape your medal to the ribbon. Now you're ready to wear it!

