

SIKHISM

What is the best way for a sikh to show commitment to God?

What is **Sikhism**?

Sikhism is one of the main world religions. It was founded in 1500 in Punjab, Northern India by Guru Nanak.

The people who follow this religion are called **Sikhs**.

Sikhs believe that there is only one God. Their holy book is called the Guru Granth Sahib. Sikhs worship in a Gurdwara.



This is the Khanda.

It is one of the most important religious symbols for Sikhs.

It is made up of 3 different weapons which have symbolic meaning.

The 5 Ks

The 5 Ks are things that Sikhs wear at all times. They are:

1. **Kesh**—Uncut hair. The Kesh is usually covered with a **turban**.
2. **Kanga** - a wooden comb that is worn in their hair. This symbolises cleanliness.
3. **Kara**— A steel bracelet. This reminds Sikhs that they are bound to God.
4. **Kachera**— cotton clothing. This reminds Sikhs to stay away from any temptations
5. **Kirpan**— This is a small dagger. It symbolises the importance of defending their faith and protecting those that are weak.



An image of
Guru Nanak



An image of a
Gurdwara

The Gurdwara

All Gurdwaras have the Holy Book—**Guru Granth Sahib**. This is kept under a canopy.

They have a community kitchen—**langar**—food is cooked here and can be shared with the whole community. The food is vegetarian,

There are usually 4 doors to show that the

Gurdwara is open to everyone. The **Nishan Sahib** is a triangular yellow flag with the **Khanda** symbol. It is flown over every Gurdwara.

Visitors of any religion are welcome in the Gurdwara. Everyone who enters must cover their head, remove their shoes and wash their hands.

Everyone sits on the floor.

Guru Granth Sahib

This is the holy scripture. It is classed as the 11th Guru. It contains the words of the 10 Gurus who founded Sikhism.

At every festival the entire book is read from start to finish continually. This takes about 48 hours.

The **chauri** is a ceremonial whisk made of horse hair in a silver or wooden handle. It is waved from time to time over the scriptures as they are being read, this is a sign of respect for the Guru Granth Sahib.



Sikh Festivals

Hola Mohalla - February/March - a time for contests when Sikhs show their skills at athletics, horsemanship and martial arts.

Baisakhi - March/April - New Year's Day in the Punjab.

Diwali - October - a festival when the story of Hargobind, the sixth Guru, is told.

Guru Nanak's Birthday - October/November- The Guru Granth Sahib is carried through the streets by five men.



BBC—Film clips about Sikhism

