

01 Olympic symbols

At the end of the 19th century, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, a sportsman and teacher, drew on his experience with young sportsmen and women in English high schools and American universities to internationalize sport and thus ensure the success of pacifism.

He drew on Greek history, the prestige of the competitions at Olympia and the educational ideal of democratic Athens in the 5th century BC, in which training the body and mind forged young people. Pierre de Coubertin succeeded in convincing the participants of the first Olympic Congress in 1894 of the need to revitalize the Olympic Games to energize young people.

Organized in Athens in 1896, the maxim "citius, altius, fortius", "Faster, higher, stronger", became the motto of this first modern Olympiad. Since then, every four years, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has organized worldwide competitions.

In 2024, Paris has been chosen as the "host city" for the thirty-second edition of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Paris will become the sporting heart of the world during the 16 days of events, from 26 July to 11 August, and the 11 days of competitions between Paralympic athletes, from 28 August to 8 September 2024.

Billions of television viewers and more than 9,700,000 spectators will witness the prowess of 10,500 athletes and 4,500 Paralympic sportspeople. They will all be demonstrating their excellence in 329 disciplines at 35 dedicated venues, accompanied by 31,000 volunteers.

More than just sport, these Games are also a popular, multicultural festival for people from all over the world. The Cultural Olympiad will feature thousands of events at the crossroads of art and sport, throughout France and the French overseas territories. The ongoing dialogue between the values of the Olympic and Paralympic movements is reflected in the symbols shown on page 1 of this booklet.

The numbering is at the top left of the pages.

In each host city of the Olympic Games, a new symbol is specially designed for the event. For the first time in history, Paris 2024 has a common emblem for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. At the top of the board, across the entire width, the Paris 2024 design is materialized by a double emblem, made up of a figure, a typography and a symbolic logo. In communications, the partners' brands are inserted between these two linked emblems, "one Olympic and the other Paralympic".

The image of these emblems combines three symbols: in the upper part, the round shape of a medal encompasses the outline of the smiling face of a Marianne, a flame enclosed in her forehead.

The gold, silver and bronze medals symbolize surpassing oneself. They evoke athletes who give their all and seek out the best in others. Everyone pushes their limits and proves that victory is always possible.

A flame carries a powerful imagination and an emotion aroused by the symbolism of the sacred.

Marianne, a familiar female figure, is omnipresent in French people's daily lives. For example, on stamps and on the pediments of town halls, she evokes values that are also those of sport, Olympism and Paralympism. This allegory of the French Republic represents humanism, fraternity, generosity and sharing.

Below, note that the typeface chosen for the words "Paris 2024" is inspired by the art deco style, a reminder of the 1924 Olympics held in Paris for the second time. The very first Olympics were held in Paris in 1900.

Below, the international Olympic and Paralympic symbols express unity, sharing and peace, and mark the history of sport and the Games right up to the present day: on the left, the five interlaced rings of the same size represent Olympic universality and the five continents. They are blue, yellow, black, green and red. Baron Pierre de Coubertin devised and formalized this distinctive design at the Antwerp Olympics in 1920. He himself explained: "As you know, the Olympic flag is all white, with the interlaced rings in the center and the blue ring at the top left next to the staff. Designed in this way, it is symbolic: the five colors reproduce those of all the national flags that fly around the world, and the embrace reflects the universality of sporting values: friendship, respect, excellence.

On the right, three interlocking arches symbolize the "Paralympic agitos", each in a different color: red, blue and green. They encircle each other in an asymmetrical crescent shape against the white background of the flag. They mean "I'm on the move" in Latin. The "agitos" are also the emblem of the Paralympic values: determination, equality, inspiration and courage. This Paralympic symbol was proposed at the Seoul Games in 1988 and made official at the Athens Games ceremony in 2004.

Sports competitions between disabled people began in 1948 in a military hospital north of London, in Stoke-Mandeville.

Sir Ludwig Guttmann, a German neurologist, was looking for a way to speed up the recovery of his paraplegic patients, veterans of the Second World War.

Sixteen wheelchair-bound veterans took part in an archery and netball competition derived from basketball. This new sporting movement was so popular that from 1952 onwards, international competitions were organized annually in Stoke-Mandeville.

The first "Paralympic Games" were held in Rome in 1960, six days after the closing of the Olympic Games. 5,000 people attended the opening ceremony, and 23 nations were present with 400 athletes, all in wheelchairs. They competed in eight sports.

The fifth Paralympic Games were held in Toronto, Canada, alongside the Olympic Games in Montreal. They brought together 1,657 athletes, including 253 women, from 40 countries, and included 261 amputees and 187 visually impaired athletes.

The International Paralympic Committee (IPC) was founded in 1989.

In 2001, the IOC and IPC decided that from the Beijing Games in 2008 onwards, each future host city would organize "Olympic and Paralympic" Games. They would have to use the same facilities at different sports venues, have the same financial support and take place shortly afterwards, over the same period.

In the center of the page, the graphic also features the elegant torch created for Paris 2024 and containing the Olympic flame.

The flame is shown in a relay situation.

On the left, a runner, a torchbearer, in profile, hands the torch to a torchbearer who, as she runs, turns her upper body to receive it and continue the journey.

This image evokes the 11,000 male and female partner torchbearers who will be crossing more than 400 towns and cities since the start in Olympia.

Since 16 April 2024, they have been taking turns in all the French and overseas territories, covering more than 12,000 kilometers around the world. The lighting of the Olympic cauldron at midnight will mark the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games on 26 July 2024.

The Paralympic Flame will be lit where it first shone in Stoke Mandeville at the end of August.

It will then cross the English Channel in a "relay" of 1,000 scouts, crossing more than fifty towns and cities, before arriving in Paris to light up the cauldron at the Opening Ceremony of the Paralympic Games on 28 August 2024.