



## 5 Facts You Need to Know About Sikhism

1. Sikhism originated in Northern India more than 300 years ago with a core belief that people of different races, religions, or sex are all equal in the eyes of God. Today Sikhism is the world's fifth-largest organized religion, with more than 25 million Sikhs around the world including over half a million in the United States.
2. The word Sikh means *seeker of truth*. It is most commonly pronounced as *seek* but *sick* is closer to the original pronunciation.
3. Many Sikhs keep their hair uncut as a sign of living in harmony with God wearing turbans as a mark of their faith.
3. Nearly every person seen wearing a turban in the United States is a Sikh. The turban-or dastar- is akin to the Jewish Kippah or yarmulke or the Catholic nun's habit. It is an outward sign and reminder of values and faith.
4. Within Sikhism there are 5 articles of faith which include the *kes* (uncut hair), *kara* (a steel bracelet worn to remind them of the unity of God), the *kirpan* (a ceremonial dagger-often in the form of a small charm that is meant to remind Sikhs of the duty to fight injustice), *kacchera* (undergarment) and a *kangha* (comb).
5. The Sikh house of worship is known as a gurdwara- (*door to the Guru*). Local gurdwaras are the holiest places in Sikhism. Services usually include hymns, reading and prayer, however there are no formal clergy or complex rituals. Following services many gather for the *langer* meal- a community meal where all are welcome.

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Learn more at:

<http://www.wearesikhs.org>

<http://www.sikhcampaign.org>

<http://religion.blogs.cnn/2012/08/09/pronounce-it-for-me-sikh/>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Sikhism>

<https://www.sikhs.org/topics.htm>

*These five points are not meant to be comprehensive or authoritative. We hope they will encourage you to explore this tradition more deeply and seek out members of this community to learn about their beliefs in action. It is our firm belief that in understanding our differences we will better understand our common humanity*

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