



## **5 Starter Facts About Sikhism**

1. Sikhism originated in Northern India 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 ~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. Within Sikhism there are 5 articles of faith: *kes* (uncut hair), *kara* (a steel bracelet worn to remember the unity of God), *kirpan* (ceremonial dagger, often a small charm to remember the duty to fight injustice), *kacchera* (undergarment), and *kangha* (comb). Sikhs wear turbans as a mark of their faith.
4. The Sikh house of worship is known as a *gurdwara*. Local gurdwaras are the holiest places in Sikhism. Services usually include hymns, readings, and prayer, however there are no formal clergy or complex rituals. Following services many gather for the langar meal, a community meal where all are welcome.
5. Sikhs believe God is inside every person, no matter how wicked they appear, so everyone is capable of change. They also believe humans are in a cycle of birth, life, and rebirth, like other Indian religions of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The quality of each particular life depends on the law of Karma. Karma sets the quality of a life according to how well or badly a person behaved in their previous life. The only way out of this cycle, which all faiths regard as painful, is to achieve a total knowledge of and union with God.

Learn more at:

<http://www.wearesikhs.org>

<https://www.sikhcoalition.org/>

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

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