

VERSION 1.0

**RHINE-RUHR 2025**

# SPORTS

ENGLISH



**FISU**  
WORLD  
UNIVERSITY  
GAMES  
SUMMER

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# INTRODUCTION

## A Celebration of Sport

From 16 to 27 July 2025, Germany will be the stage for one of the greatest sporting shows on earth, as around 8,500 student-athletes and officials from up to 150 countries come together for the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games.

The welcomes will be friendly but the competition fierce: it is usual for a FISU World University Games to attract Olympic champions and household names, witness world records, or stage some of the greatest matches ever seen in a sport. And that's before counting the hundreds of student-athletes who have enjoyed world championships or Olympic Games success after first breaking through at a FISU Games (see ›Star Pedigree‹ on pages 8–11).

With medals to be won in 18 sports, the high-octane action will be shared among the cities of Bochum, Duisburg, Essen, Mülheim an der Ruhr and Hagen in North Rhine-Westphalia, plus Berlin.



## International University Sports Federation (FISU)

The International University Sports Federation (in French: Fédération Internationale du Sport Universitaire) is the body responsible for the organisation and governance of international competitions for student-athletes, including the FISU World University Games. FISU is based in Lausanne, Switzerland, and is governed by President Leonz Eder.

## FISU World University Games

Debuting as the World University Games in 1923 in Paris, France, the precursor event was held in Europe every two years until 1939. The event was revived in 1947 – two years before the founding of FISU – and returned as the ›Universiade‹ in Turin, Italy, in 1959. As part of the relaunch, the ›U‹ shape of the FISU flag and the song ›Gaudeamus Igitur‹, which is played at the award ceremonies instead of the national anthem, were introduced. Since then, the multi-sport event has been held every two years (in odd-numbered years), with both summer and winter editions. The most important competition in international university sport, the Universiade became known as the ›FISU World University Games‹ in 2020.

## Eligibility

The FISU Games are open to students who will be aged between 18 and 25 on 31 December of the year of the event (that is, born between 1 January 2000 and 31 December 2007), and who have been nominated by their national university sports federations. Participants include both up-and-coming student-athletes and established top athletes, many of whom already have world championship and Olympic Games appearances – and medals – to their name.

## Sports

The summer edition of the FISU World University Games comprises 15 compulsory sports: archery, artistic gymnastics, athletics, badminton, basketball, diving, fencing, judo, rhythmic gymnastics, swimming, taekwondo, tennis, table tennis, volleyball, and water polo. The optional sports 3x3 basketball, 3x3 wheelchair basketball, beach volleyball and rowing complete the programme of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games.

# EVENT OVERVIEW

## Easy access

The Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU Games will feature multiple venues in each of Bochum, Duisburg and Essen, standalone venues in Mülheim an der Ruhr and Hagen, plus three sports in Berlin. Due to the short distances between most competition venues, it will be possible for visitors to watch several different events on the same day.
























## Distances by road between host cities (kilometres)

	BOCHUM	DUISBURG	ESSEN	HAGEN	MÜLHEIM AN DER RUHR	BERLIN
BOCHUM	x	35	14	22	24	478
DUISBURG	35	x	19	63	8	513
ESSEN	14	19	x	44	9	494
HAGEN	22	63	44	x	54	477
MÜLHEIM AN DER RUHR	24	8	9	54	x	504
BERLIN	478	513	494	477	504	x

## Breaking new ground, by not breaking any

The host cities of the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games will use only existing venues for every competition, producing a low carbon footprint and leaving a sustainable legacy since no new halls or stadia are required to be built.

# COMPETITION VENUES AND SPORTS

CITY	COMPETITION VENUES		SPORTS		
BOCHUM	02	Jahrhunderthalle	02	 3X3 Basketball	
		Lohrheidestadion		 3X3 Wheelchair basketball	
				 Athletics	
DUISBURG	04	ASC Duisburg	04	 Water polo	
		Regattabahn Duisburg		 Rowing	
		Sportpark Duisburg		 Beach volleyball	
		Walter-Schädlich-Halle		 Basketball	
ESSEN	10	ETUF Tennisanlage	07	 Tennis	
		Grugahalle		 Basketball (finals)	
		Messe Essen		Halle 1	 Table tennis
				Halle 3	 Artistic gymnastics
				Halle 4	 Judo
				Halle 5	 Rhythmic gymnastics
				Halle 6	 Fencing
		Sporthalle Am Hallo		 Taekwondo	
		Sportpark Am Hallo Stadion		 Basketball	
		Zeche Zollverein		 Archery (qualification)	
		 Archery (finals)			
MÜLHEIM A.D.R.	01	Westenergie Sporthalle	01	 Badminton	
HAGEN	01	Ischelandhalle	01	 Basketball	
BERLIN	05	Schwimm- und Sprunghalle im Europasportpark (SSE)	03	 Diving	
				 Swimming	
		Ballsporthalle Köpenick		 Volleyball	
		Horst-Korber Sportzentrum			
		Max-Schmeling Halle			
Sportforum Große Sporthalle					
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>			<b>18*</b>	

\* Note: Basketball listed under three different cities

## STAR PEDIGREE



**3X3 BASKETBALL** Student-athletes contesting the inaugural FISU World University Games 3X3 competitions in 2025 will hope their careers can emulate those of global superstars such as **Strahinja Stoacic**, a World Cup winner with Serbia in 2022 and 2023 who transitioned from full court basketball in 2018 and has never looked back.



**ARCHERY** For student star turns in the sport of archery, look no further than Republic of Korea, and recurve archer **Choi Mi-Sun** in particular. The Gwangju Women's University student won an incredible four gold and four silver medals in her four Universiade and FISU World University Games appearances from 2015 to 2021. She also won team gold at the Olympic Games Rio 2016 and at the Hangzhou 2022 Asian Games.



**ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS** **Nadia Comaneci** was already a global household name by the time she arrived at the Bucharest 1981 Universiade in her home country of Romania. Five years earlier, at the age of only 14, Comaneci had become the first gymnast to be awarded a perfect score of 10.0 at an Olympic Games. She left Montreal with five gold medals - all in individual events - and repeated the haul in front of her expectant home crowd in Romania in 1981. More recently, an 18-year-old **Kohei Uchimura** of Japan gave a strong hint of what was to follow with two golds and one bronze medal at the Bangkok 2007 Universiade. He went on to win six world titles in the men's all-around discipline between 2009 and 2015, plus gold medals at Olympic Games London 2012 and Rio 2016, earning himself the nickname 'Superman'. Also at Rio 2016, Germany's **Fabian Hambüchen** claimed gold in the Horizontal Bars only 13 months after becoming the Universiade champion in the same event at Gwangju 2015.



**ATHLETICS** South Africa sprinter **Wayde van Niekerk** catapulted to fame at Olympic Games Rio 2016 when he broke Michael Johnson's 17-year record in the men's 400 metres with a time of 43.03 seconds. In the same event at the Kazan 2013 Universiade only three years earlier, he had failed to even make the final. In the hammer throw, four-time Olympian **Bettina Heidler** from Germany won the gold medal at the Belgrade 2009 Universiade.



**BADMINTON** Former world No.1 in women's singles, **Tai Tzu-Ying** (TPE), competed at the Kazan 2013, Gwangju 2015 and Taipei 2017 Universiades, winning two golds, one silver and two bronze medals. She went on to win silver at Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 and competed again at Paris 2024. In men's singles, five-time Olympian **Boonsak Ponsana** (THA) won gold medals in the men's singles and mixed team events at the Bangkok 2007 Universiade.



**BASKETBALL** At the Sofia 1977 Universiade, **Larry Bird** showcased his talent before his iconic NBA career took off at the Boston Celtics. Bird was not the only USA basketball player to appear at the Universiade prior to NBA and global superstardom. Fellow Hall of Famers **Charles Barkley** and **Karl Malone** took part in the 1983 Universiade in Edmonton, Canada, finishing second in a final against the home nation that is still considered to be one of the greatest upsets in the history of sport.



**BEACH VOLLEYBALL** Germany's **Karla Borger** celebrated her first international successes in beach volleyball at FISU events. Alongside playing partner **Britta Büthe** she won the gold medal at the FISU World University Championships 2010 in Antalya, Türkiye, and at the Shenzhen 2011 Universiade. Borger won silver with Büthe at the 2013 World Championships and competed at the Olympic Games Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020.



**DIVING** **Guo Jingjing** won an astonishing nine gold medals at three successive Universiades between 2001 and 2005 and collected six Olympic Games medals including four golds from her appearances on the 3-metre boards at Sydney 2000, Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008. Guo is the most successful female water diver to date and is also regarded as the most elegant of all the Chinese divers. Legendary US diver **Greg Louganis** won gold medals in the men's 3m springboard and 10m platform at the Edmonton 1983 Universiade before going on to claim gold in the same two disciplines at both Olympic Games Los Angeles 1984 and Seoul 1988.




**FENCING** Widely regarded as one of the best female fencers of all time, **Valentina Vezzali** won five gold and three silver medals in her four Universiade appearances from 1995 to 2001. The Italian won a total of six gold, two silver and one bronze medals at the Olympic Games from 1996 to 2012. **Marcel Fisher** is a Swiss fencer who won the gold medal in the men's épée at the Olympic Games Athens 2004. He won three bronze medals in the discipline at the Universiades held in Palma de Mallorca in 1999, Beijing in 2001 and Izmir in 2005.





**JUDO** Germany's **Ole Bischof** won the bronze medal in the men's 81kg category at the Jeju 2003 Universiade before winning gold in the same weight class at Olympic Games Beijing 2008 and silver at London 2012. Bischof enjoyed a great rivalry with **Kim Jae-bum**, a Republic of Korea judoka whom he beat in the final in Beijing but lost to in the final in London. Kim had won the silver medal in the lighter 73kg category at the Universiade in Bangkok in 2007.


 **RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS** **Anna Bessonova** won an incredible 10 gold medals at four successive Universiades from 2003 to 2009. During the same period, the Ukrainian claimed bronze in the all-around at Olympic Games Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008. At the world championships between 1999 and 2009, Bessonova won five gold medals, 15 silvers and seven bronzes. Bulgaria's **Maria Petrova** won the full set of all five individual gold medals at the Fukuoka 1995 Universiade. She was already a triple world and European all-around champion when she arrived in Japan for her only FISU Games appearance.

 **ROWING** **Elisabeta Lipă** of Romania won gold in the women's single sculls at the Duisburg 1989 Universiade and went on to become the most decorated rower in Olympic history, winning five gold, two silver and one bronze medals in six successive appearances from 1984 to 2004.


 **SWIMMING** The FISU World University Games have been a launching pad for the careers of many record-breaking swimmers. In the 1980s, **Matt Biondi** (USA), **Michael Groß** (GER) and **Jon Sieben** (AUS) each put their mark on a Universiade and were followed in the 2000s by **Otylia Jędrzejczak** (POL), **Yana Klochkova** (UKR), **Oleg Lisogor** (UKR), **Britta Steffen** (GER) and **Federica Pellegrini** (ITA). More recently, Italy's **Gregorio Paltrinieri** followed up his 1500m freestyle gold medal at Olympic Games Rio 2016 with gold in the same event at the Taipei 2017 Universiade, while adding the 800m freestyle and the 10km marathon swimming titles. And in her first major international competition, **Lilly King** returned home to the US from the Gwangju 2015 Universiade with the silver medal in 100m breaststroke. She went on to win two gold medals at Rio 2016, in the 100m breaststroke and 4x100m medley relay.

 **TABLE TENNIS** At the Shenzhen 2011 Universiade, home favourite **Xu Xin** won the men's singles, men's doubles and team events as People's Republic of China swept all seven table tennis gold medals. Xu later became world No. 1 and a double Olympic champion. **Lee Sang Su** won men's singles bronze at the Gwangju 2015 Universiade and went on to represent Republic of Korea at Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. Also at Gwangju 2015, **Bernadette Szocs** from Romania collected the women's singles bronze to finish as one of only three non-Asian medallists in the sport. She later won gold at the European Games Kraków - Małopolska 2023.

 **TAEKWONDO** **Panipak Wongpattanakit** is one of the most successful taekwondo athletes of all time. A gold medallist in the women's 49kg category at Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024, the Thai athlete also won gold at two Universiades (2017 and 2019) and the Chengdu 2021 FISU World University Games.

 **TENNIS** At the Shenzhen 2011 Universiade, home favourite **Xu Xin** won the men's singles, men's doubles and team events as People's Republic of China swept all seven table tennis gold medals. Xu later became world No. 1 and a double Olympic champion. **Lee Sang Su** won men's singles bronze at the Gwangju 2015 Universiade and went on to represent Republic of Korea at Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. Also at Gwangju 2015, **Bernadette Szocs** from Romania collected the women's singles bronze to finish as one of only three non-Asian medallists in the sport. She later won gold at the European Games Kraków - Małopolska 2023.

 **VOLLEYBALL** **Pavel Pankov** made two Universiade appearances as a setter for Russia, winning the gold medal at Gwangju 2015 and the bronze at Naples 2019, before competing in the ROC team which took silver at Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. The team's libero in Tokyo, **Valentin Golubev**, was part of Russia's gold medal-winning team at the Kazan 2013 Universiade. **Ana Carolina da Silva** and **Roberta Ratzke** both played in the Brazil women's teams which won the silver medals at Kazan 2013 and Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.

 **WATER POLO** Over the past decade, universities in Serbia have become a production line for top water polo talent. **Strahinja Rasovic** won the men's water polo gold medals at the Shenzhen 2011 and Taipei 2017 Universiades, as well as bronze at Kazan 2013. A legend of university sport, he went on to win gold at Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. Compatriots **Nikola Jakšić** and **Sava Randelovic** both sandwiched their Olympic Games gold medals from Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020 with the Universiade gold alongside Rasovic in Taipei. A fourth member of Serbia's victorious 2017 squad, **Đorđe Lazić**, also won gold in Tokyo. The USA women's squad which triumphed in Taipei was also bursting with future stars. Three members – **Aria Fischer**, **Jamie Neushul** and **Alys Williams** – went on to win gold at Tokyo 2020, while Fischer and Kiley Neushul were mainstays of the team which had also won Olympic gold in Rio.

# 3X3 BASKETBALL 3X3 WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL



Host City: **Bochum**

Competition venue: **Jahrhunderthalle**

FISU Games debut: **2025**

Past appearances: **Debut in 2025**

Compulsory sport? **No**

## 4 Medal events

men's tournaments (2) & women's tournaments (2)

## The sport

Played with a single hoop, half a court and six players, the streamlined rules of 3x3 encourage unrelenting, fast-paced play. Games are won at 21 points (or 22 if the last shot is a 2 pointer) or by the leading score after ten minutes. Unlike full-court basketball, there are no breaks in play. The inclusion of 3x3 wheelchair basketball means that for the first time in the history of the FISU World University Games Summer, Para Sport will be included in the programme.



## Origins

The simplicity and flexibility of 3x3 have been key to its recent explosion in popularity and profile. In only a few years the sport has developed from an informal network of ›pickup‹ games modelled around ›streetball‹, to a professional competition tournament network in many countries around the world. Internationally, 3x3 debuted at the Youth Olympic Games Singapore 2010 and made its Olympic Games debut at Tokyo 2020.

## 3x3 Basketball and FISU

FISU has been in step with the development of 3x3 since the beginning. An ideal team sport for student-athletes on campus, the first university world championships in 3x3 took place in 2012 in Kragujevac, Serbia. It then became part of the FISU University World Cups programme and will make its FISU Games debut in 2025.

## Fun Fact

3x3 is known as ›the 10-minute sprint‹ due to its fast, intense, and explosive format.

## Glossary

- Two-pointer** There is no three-point shot in 3x3. The ›typical‹ distance shot beyond the arc scores only two points.
- Ranking** Every player registered with play.fiba3x3.com has their own ranking, which evolves according to results at FIBA-endorsed events. It allows players to compare their skills with friends, local players and pros from all over the globe.
- Interaction** In 3x3, players may not interact with anybody outside the court. The players own the processes and if somebody does, the team will get called for a technical foul.

## International Basketball Federation

- [www.fiba3x3.com](http://www.fiba3x3.com)
- [www.instagram.com/fiba3x3](https://www.instagram.com/fiba3x3)
- [www.facebook.com/FIBA3x3](https://www.facebook.com/FIBA3x3)
- [www.youtube.com/fiba3x3](https://www.youtube.com/fiba3x3)

## German Basketball Federation

- [www.3x3.basketball-bund.de](http://www.3x3.basketball-bund.de)
- [www.instagram.com/dbb.3x3](https://www.instagram.com/dbb.3x3)
- [www.facebook.com/DBB.3x3](https://www.facebook.com/DBB.3x3)
- [www.youtube.com/@dbb\\_basketball](https://www.youtube.com/@dbb_basketball)

## International Wheelchair Basketball Federation

- [www.iwbf.org](http://www.iwbf.org)
- [www.instagram.com/int\\_wheelchair\\_basketball\\_fed](https://www.instagram.com/int_wheelchair_basketball_fed)
- [www.facebook.com/InternationalWheelchairBasketballFederation](https://www.facebook.com/InternationalWheelchairBasketballFederation)
- [x.com/FIBA](https://x.com/FIBA)

# ARCHERY

Host City: **Essen**

Competition venues: **Sportpark Am Hallo Stadion** (qualification),  
**Zeche Zollverein** (finals)

FISU Games debut: **2003**

Past appearances: **7**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 10 Medal events

(For both recurve and compound divisions):

Men's Team / Women's Team / Mixed Team / Individual Men / Individual Women

## The sport

A target sport played using a bow and arrows, archery can be enjoyed from the recreational to elite levels regardless of age, gender or ability. At the Olympic and FISU Games, the sport is contested in two categories depending on the type of bow. Recurve bows are simpler to release than compound bows, which rely on a complex pulley system and let-off feature. Both require strength, a steady hand and sharp eye to operate.



## Origins

Archery can be traced to the Old Stone Age and the discovery in Africa of arrowheads dating from around 64,000 years ago. The first tournaments are thought to have taken place in People's Republic of China over 3,000 years ago. Archery featured at four of the six Olympic Games held from 1896 to 1920 but was left out of the programme for 52 years before its readmittance in 1972. Republic of Korea has traditionally excelled in the sport.

## Archery and FISU

The first World University Archery Championship were held in 1996 in Vaulx-en-Velin, France. Seven years later the sport debuted at the Universiade in Daegu, Republic of Korea, with the host nation winning five of the eight gold medals on offer. After five appearances as an optional sport at the Universiade, archery became a compulsory part of the FISU World University Games Summer programme in 2019.

## Fun Fact

It pays to be precise! To record the maximum score with a single arrow of ten points, archers must hit a centre ring measuring only 12.2cm in diameter from a distance of 70 metres in recurve, or only 8cm in diameter from a distance of 50 metres in compound.

## Glossary

- 10,10,10** A perfect score in archery: three arrows bedded into the centre of the target.
- Expand** When shooting in archery, the body expands to fight against the pull of the bow. For this reason, upper body and core strength are key to maintaining a steady firing position.
- Release** The critical moment when the finger is removed from the bowstring.

## World Archery Federation

- [www.worldarchery.sport](http://www.worldarchery.sport)
- [www.instagram.com/worldarchery](https://www.instagram.com/worldarchery)
- [www.facebook.com/worldarchery](https://www.facebook.com/worldarchery)
- [www.twitter.com/worldarchery](https://www.twitter.com/worldarchery)
- [www.youtube.com/WorldArcheryTV](https://www.youtube.com/WorldArcheryTV)

## German Shooting and Archery Federation

- [www.dsb.de](http://www.dsb.de)
- [www.instagram.com/deutscherschuetzenbund](https://www.instagram.com/deutscherschuetzenbund)
- [www.facebook.com/DeutscherSchuetzenbund](https://www.facebook.com/DeutscherSchuetzenbund)
- [www.twitter.com/DSB\\_de](https://www.twitter.com/DSB_de)

# ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS



Host City: **Essen**

Competition venue: **Messe Essen (Halle 3)**

FISU Games debut: **1961**

Past appearances: **28**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 14 Medal events

Men's Team Final / Men's All Around / Men's Floor Exercise / Men's Pommel Horse / Men's Rings / Men's Vault / Men's Parallel Bars / Men's Horizontal Bar / Women's Team Final / Women's All-Around / Women's Vault / Women's Uneven Bars / Women's Balance Beam / Women's Floor Exercise

## The sport

Artistic gymnastics combines speed, strength, power and flexibility with tumbling and acrobatic skills, all performed with an emphasis on style and grace. Student-athletes perform short routines for the floor exercise and for other events on various pieces of apparatus, namely the vault – used by men and women – and additionally on the pommel horse, rings, parallel bars and horizontal bar for men; and on the uneven bars and balance beam for women. From 2005 the mode of scoring changed from a maximum of ten points to a combination of a D score (representing the difficulty/content of the exercise) and an E score (execution). This has enabled a greater variation between athlete performances.

## Origins

The term ›gymnastics‹ is attributed to Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, a German educator known as ›Turnvater Jahn‹ (Gymnastics Father Jahn), who began physically training young men in the early 1800s in response to the Napoleonic occupation of Prussia. He founded the first public gymnastics area at the Hasenheide in Berlin in 1811 and introduced apparatus such as the parallel bars and the horizontal bar. The new sport grew in popularity and in 1881 the International Gymnastics Federation was founded. Gymnastics was part of the programme of the newly revived Olympic Games in Athens in 1896.

## Artistic gymnastics and FISU

Artistic gymnastics has featured at all but three editions of the summer Universiade and FISU World University Games Summer. It was added to the programme for Sofia 1961 and will make its 17th straight appearance in 2025.

## Fun Fact

Founded in 1881, the International Gymnastics Federation is the oldest international sports federation in the world.

## Glossary

<b>Tumbling</b>	A swift and rhythmical succession of acrobatic bounding from hands to feet, feet to hands or even feet directly back onto feet during a floor exercise
<b>Connection value</b>	Bonus points or tenths of points awarded to gymnasts who incorporate difficult combinations of skills into their routines.
<b>Stick</b>	Completing a landing without taking any steps, and therefore receiving no landing deductions. ›Sticking a landing‹ at the end of a routine is every gymnast's hope

## Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique

[www.gymnastics.sport](http://www.gymnastics.sport)

[www.instagram.com/figymnastics](https://www.instagram.com/figymnastics)

[www.facebook.com/fig.gymnastics](https://www.facebook.com/fig.gymnastics)

[www.twitter.com/gymnastics](https://www.twitter.com/gymnastics)

[www.youtube.com/user/figchannel](https://www.youtube.com/user/figchannel)

## German Gymnastics Federation

[www.dtb.de](http://www.dtb.de)

[www.instagram.com/deutscherturnerbund](https://www.instagram.com/deutscherturnerbund)

[www.facebook.com/DeutscherTurnerBund](https://www.facebook.com/DeutscherTurnerBund)

[www.twitter.com/dtb\\_online](https://www.twitter.com/dtb_online)

[www.youtube.com/dtbonline](https://www.youtube.com/dtbonline)

# ATHLETICS

Host City: **Bochum**

Competition venue: **Lohrheidestadion**

FISU Games debut: **1959**

Past appearances: **31**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 51 Medal events

**Track (men and women):** 100m / 200m / 400m / 800m / 1500m / 5000m / 10.000m / 100mH, 110mH / 400mH / 3000m SC / 4x100m / 4x400m / 4x400m Mixed

**Field (men and women):** High jump / long jump / triple jump / pole vault / shot put / discus throw / javelin throw / hammer throw

**Combined:** Decathlon (men) / heptathlon (women)

**Road (men and women):** Half-marathon / 20km race walk (both held at Kemnader See) team ranking

## The sport

Perhaps more than any other sport, athletics embodies the Olympic motto of 'Faster, Higher, Stronger'. Students compete in disciplines that demand speed, precision, and strength – through swift sprints, tactical endurance races, long throws, or outstanding jumps. From Usain Bolt's world records in sprinting to the origins of the marathon, athletics is a versatile and demanding sport. It not only fosters athletic competition but also promotes teamwork and values such as discipline and perseverance, all while showcasing the extraordinary capabilities of the human body.



## Origins

Athletics is by nature the oldest form of sport, having developed out of the most basic of human activities: walking, running, jumping, and throwing. Organised athletics competitions are traceable to the ancient Olympic Games held in Greece from 776 BC to 393AD. The rules and format of the modern events in athletics were defined in Western Europe and North America in the 1800s and were then exported around the world. When the Olympic Games were reborn in Athens in 1896, athletics was at the top of the programme.

## Athletics and FISU

With over 1,000 student-athletes across 51 disciplines, athletics is the biggest sport by participation at the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games. Athletics has been an integral part of the FISU programme since the first Universiade was held in 1959 in Turin, and has produced numerous future stars – including discus thrower Daniel Jasinski, hammer thrower Bettina Heidler, and sprint legend Wayde van Niekerk. The next generation of track and field talent now have the ideal stage on which to shine: the newly renovated Lohrheidestadion in Bochum.

## Fun Fact

The FISU World University Games record in the women's shot put has stood since 1973, when Nadezhda Chizhova threw 20.82 metres at the Moscow Universiade. She had arrived at her third and final Universiade as the world record holder and Olympic champion.

## Glossary

- False start** If the athlete moves within 0.1 seconds after the gun has fired the athlete has false-started.
- Bell lap** The final lap of a multi-lap race on the track, named because a bell is rung to alert runners.
- Baton** The hollow tube passed between runners in relay races.

## World Athletics

- [www.worldathletics.org](http://www.worldathletics.org)
- [www.instagram.com/worldathletics](https://www.instagram.com/worldathletics)
- [www.facebook.com/worldathletics](https://www.facebook.com/worldathletics)
- [www.twitter.com/worldathletics](https://www.twitter.com/worldathletics)
- [www.youtube.com/worldathletics](https://www.youtube.com/worldathletics)

## German Athletics Federation

- [www.leichtathletik.de](http://www.leichtathletik.de)
- [www.instagram.com/dlv\\_online](https://www.instagram.com/dlv_online)
- [www.facebook.com/leichtathletik.de](https://www.facebook.com/leichtathletik.de)
- [www.twitter.com/dlv\\_online](https://www.twitter.com/dlv_online)
- [www.youtube.com/leichtathletik\\_DE](https://www.youtube.com/leichtathletik_DE)

# BADMINTON

Host City: **Mülheim an der Ruhr** Competition venue: **Westenergie Sporthalle**

FISU Games debut: **2007** Past appearances: **6** Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 6 Medal events

Men's and women's singles / Men's and women's doubles / Mixed doubles / Mixed team

## The sport

Badminton is a racket sport in which players score points by striking a shuttlecock over a net and landing it in their opponent's half of a rectangular court. While points are generally scored after a few exchanges of the shuttle, rallies can be as long as 100 shots or one minute in duration, especially in the doubles format. Matches are best-of-three games; each game played to 21 points (or higher until a two-point lead is established).



## Origins

With roots traceable to ancient Greece, Great Britain, India and Japan, a standardised form of the sport was unveiled in 1873 at Badminton House in Gloucestershire, UK. Two decades later, the Badminton Association of England published the first set of official rules and in 1899 the All England Open Badminton Championships, the oldest surviving badminton competition in the world, was first contested.

## Badminton and FISU

Although badminton joined the compulsory programme of the FISU World University Games Summer in 2021, it was first contested as an optional sport at the Bangkok 2007 Universiade. Before that, Nicosia in Cyprus hosted the first World University Badminton Championships in 1990. Unlike at an Olympic Games, at the FISU Games the losers of the semifinal matches share the bronze medal.

## Fun Fact

Each badminton shuttlecock is made using 16 feathers plucked from the left wing of a goose.

## Glossary

<b>Drift</b>	The impact of wind on the flight of the shuttlecock
<b>Hairpin Net Shot</b>	Shot made from below and very close to the net with the shuttle rising, just clearing the net, and then dropping sharply down the other side.
<b>Kill</b>	Fast, downward shot that cannot be returned and ›kills‹ the rally.

### Badminton World Federation

- [www.bwfbadminton.com](http://www.bwfbadminton.com)
- [www.instagram.com/bwf.official](https://www.instagram.com/bwf.official)
- [www.facebook.com/bwfbadminton](https://www.facebook.com/bwfbadminton)
- [www.twitter.com/bwfmmedia](https://www.twitter.com/bwfmmedia)
- [www.youtube.com/bwftv](https://www.youtube.com/bwftv)

### German Badminton Association

- [www.badminton.de](http://www.badminton.de)
- [www.instagram.com/dbv\\_badminton](https://www.instagram.com/dbv_badminton)
- [www.facebook.com/DeutscherBadmintonVerband](https://www.facebook.com/DeutscherBadmintonVerband)
- [www.twitter.com/DBVbadminton](https://www.twitter.com/DBVbadminton)
- [www.youtube.com/DeutscherBadmintonVerband](https://www.youtube.com/DeutscherBadmintonVerband)

# BASKETBALL

Host Cities: **Essen**

**Duisburg**

**Hagen**

Competition venues: **Grugahalle** (finals), **Sporthalle Am Hallo**

**Walter-Schädlich-Halle**

**Ischelandhalle**

FISU Games debut: **1959**

Past appearances: **30**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 2 Medal events

Men's tournament / Women's tournament

## The sport

Basketball is a sport played by two opposing teams of five players on a rectangular 28m × 15m indoor court. The aim of the game is to score as many points as possible by throwing the ball through a hoop suspended 3.05m above the floor and scoring one-, two- and three-pointers, depending on how far away from the hoop the player shoots. In the FISU World University Games, basketball games consist of four quarters, each lasting 10 minutes.



## Origins

Basketball was first played in the United States in December 1891, when a teacher named James Naismith invented a new way to keep students physically active indoors during the winter. The first game was played with a soccer-style ball and two peach baskets at the International YMCA Training School in Springfield, Massachusetts. It quickly gained popularity and became an Olympic sport in 1936. Today, basketball is enjoyed by millions worldwide.

## Basketball and FISU

Basketball became a compulsory sport at the Universiade in Turin in 1959. Renowned for its participation of high-level athletes, the basketball tournament is highly anticipated at the FISU World University Games, drawing top talent from universities worldwide.

## Fun Fact

When setting up the first game of basketball, James Naismith placed the peach baskets at the height of the gym's balcony railing: precisely 3.05 metres. That measurement has remained the standard height for basketball hoops worldwide.

## Glossary

- Triple Threat** Holding the ball ready to pass, shoot, or dribble.
- Pick and Roll** Setting a screen then rolling toward the basket for a pass.
- Slam Dunk** A showpiece move in which a player jumps near to the basket and, without throwing the ball, forcefully slams it down through the hoop.

## International Basketball Federation

- [www.fiba.basketball](http://www.fiba.basketball)
- [www.instagram.com/FIBA](https://www.instagram.com/FIBA)
- [www.facebook.com/FIBA](https://www.facebook.com/FIBA)
- [www.twitter.com/FIBA](https://www.twitter.com/FIBA)
- [www.youtube.com/FIBAWorld](https://www.youtube.com/FIBAWorld)

## German Basketball Federation

- [www.basketball-bund.de](http://www.basketball-bund.de)
- [www.instagram.com/dbb\\_basketball](https://www.instagram.com/dbb_basketball)
- [www.facebook.com/DBB.Baskeball](https://www.facebook.com/DBB.Baskeball)
- [www.twitter.com/DBB\\_Basketball](https://www.twitter.com/DBB_Basketball)
- [www.youtube.com/thedbdtv](https://www.youtube.com/thedbdtv)

# BEACH VOLLEYBALL

Host City: **Duisburg**

Competition venue: **Sportpark Duisburg**

FISU Games debut: **2011**

Past appearances: **2**

Compulsory sport? **No**

## 2 Medal events

Men's tournament / Women's tournament

## The sport

Beach volleyball is a dynamic sport in which teams of two players compete on an 8 x 16 metres sand court divided by a net. Points are scored by landing the ball in the opponents' half, or when the opponents fail to return the shot. Unlike indoor volleyball and most other team sports, there are no substitutes in beach volleyball, turning top level contests into a 'survival of the fittest'. The first two sets are played to 21 points (or higher until a two-point lead is established). If each team wins one set, a deciding set is played to 15 points.



## Origins

Beach volleyball was most likely first played on Waikiki Beach in Honolulu, Hawaii, in 1915, when George David Center strung a fishing net between two coconut trees and invited his friends to play volleyball on sand for the first time. The new sport soon reached mainland United States, taking root in the coastal communities of California and most notably in Santa Monica, where the first inter-club competitions were staged in 1924. Although its popularity grew rapidly, it had to wait until 1992 before entering the Olympic Games in one of the world's greatest beach cities: Barcelona.

## Beach volleyball and FISU

Beach volleyball has featured on the FISU programme since 2002, when the French overseas territory of Guadeloupe in the Caribbean hosted the inaugural World University Beach Volleyball Championship. An optional pick at the Universiades in Shenzhen (2011) and Kazan (2013), beach volleyball is making its third FISU Games appearance – again as an optional sport.

## Fun Fact

Chicken wings are not just for the kitchen - they are also the name of a special defence technique in beach volleyball. If a defending player is faced with a spike to their upper body, a common way of playing the ball with minimal reaction time is to lift a bent arm (looking like a chicken wing).

## Glossary

- Dig** a move in which the defender (the teammate who is not at the net) retrieves the ball before it touches the ground.
- Over on one** (aka ›Laser‹ / ›The Ludwig‹) a play made famous by the legendary Laura Ludwig, in which a defender reads the attacker's intentions and skilfully returns the ball to the opponent's backcourt, showcasing a high level of game intelligence and defensive prowess.
- Side Out** situation when the receiving team wins the point and gains the right to serve the ball. In the side-out situation, you have the first chance to attack and score a point.

## Fédération Internationale de Volleyball

- [www.fivb.com](http://www.fivb.com)
- [www.instagram.com/VolleyballWorld](https://www.instagram.com/VolleyballWorld)
- [www.facebook.com/VolleyballWorld](https://www.facebook.com/VolleyballWorld)
- [www.twitter.com/FIVBVolleyball](https://www.twitter.com/FIVBVolleyball)
- [www.youtube.com/volleyballworld](https://www.youtube.com/volleyballworld)

## German Volleyball Federation

- [www.volleyball-verband.de](http://www.volleyball-verband.de)
- [www.instagram.com/dvv\\_volleyball](https://www.instagram.com/dvv_volleyball)
- [www.facebook.com/DVV.Volleyball](https://www.facebook.com/DVV.Volleyball)
- [www.twitter.com/DVV\\_Volleyball](https://www.twitter.com/DVV_Volleyball)
- [www.youtube.com/DVV\\_Volleyball](https://www.youtube.com/DVV_Volleyball)

# DIVING



Host City: **Berlin**

Competition venue: **Schwimm- und Sprunghalle  
im Europasportpark (SSE)**

FISU Games debut: **1961**

Past appearances: **28**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 13 Medal events

1m Springboard (men, women) / 3m Springboard (men, women, men synchro, women synchro, mixed synchro) / Platform (men, women) / 10m Platform (men synchro, women synchro, mixed synchro)

**Team Event:** Men's Team Award (no competition, only medals) / Women's Team Award (no competition, only medals)

## The sport

Diving involves jumping into a deep pool of water as elegantly as possible from different heights and using various techniques. At the Olympic and FISU World University Games, competitors execute their dives from a lower springboard or a higher fixed platform. Dives are judged on criteria including complexity, execution and entry into the water, and - for the synchronised events - on how closely the two divers mirror one another.

## Origins

Diving developed as a competitive sport in Germany and Sweden in the early 1800s, when gymnasts began performing acrobatics while jumping into the water. The first competitions in front of spectators were held in Halle in the east of Germany, when competitors jumped from bridges into the Saale River. Towards the end of the 1800s, Swedish divers began showcasing their skills at the National Graceful Diving Competition in Great Britain – the first world championship event in high diving. This led to the establishment of the Amateur Diving Association in 1901 and, three years later, to the debut of diving at the Olympic Games.

## Diving and FISU

Diving entered the programme of the summer Universiade in Sofia, Bulgaria, in 1961 and has since featured at all but two Universiades and FISU World University Games. Great Britain led the medals table in Sofia with USA, Germany, Japan and Russian Federation all prominent over the next two decades before People's Republic of China began a spell of dominance in 1981 which continues to this day.

## Fun Fact

Modern diving springboards are made from a single-piece extrusion of aircraft-grade aluminium.

## Glossary

<b>Shredding pit</b>	A dry jump facility containing thousands of foam shreds which prevent injuries to divers practising various exercises including somersaults and twists.
<b>Pike</b>	A position in which the diver bends their legs at the waist up toward their head so that the legs are straight, and the toes are pointed..
<b>Immersion phase</b>	The final element of a jump scored by judges, with higher marks awarded to vertical entries creating minimal splash.

## World Aquatics

- [www.worldaquatics.com](http://www.worldaquatics.com)
- [www.instagram.com/world\\_aquatics](https://www.instagram.com/world_aquatics)
- [www.facebook.com/WorldAquatics](https://www.facebook.com/WorldAquatics)
- [www.twitter.com/WorldAquatics](https://www.twitter.com/WorldAquatics)
- [www.youtube.com/@WorldAquatics](https://www.youtube.com/@WorldAquatics)

## German Swimming Federation

- [www.dsv.de](http://www.dsv.de)
- [www.instagram.com/deutscher\\_schwimm\\_verband](https://www.instagram.com/deutscher_schwimm_verband)
- [www.facebook.com/dsvschwimmen](https://www.facebook.com/dsvschwimmen)
- [www.youtube.com/@DeutscherSchwimmVerbandeV](https://www.youtube.com/@DeutscherSchwimmVerbandeV)

# FENCING

Host City: **Essen**

Competition venue: **Messe Essen (Halle 5)**

FISU Games debut: **1959**

Past appearances: **30**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 12 Medal events

Epee (men, women, men's team, women's team) / Foil (men, women, men's team, women's team) /

Sabre (men, women, men's team, women's team)

## The sport

Fencing is a fast, dynamic sport in which the aim of every bout is to hit your opponent without being hit yourself. Individual and team events are held in three disciplines: épée, foil and sabre. In épée and foil, fencers only score when they strike their opponent with the point of their weapon, but with the sabre, valid hits can be made with the tip or the whole blade. In all three versions, the target area on the opponent's body differs. Compliance with the conventions and the legality of a hit is judged by the referee. For the team events, three fencers compete individually in bouts against the three fencers from the other team.



## Origins

Fencing developed from being a form of military training into a sport in Germany and Italy in the 1300s or 1400s. With the invention of a weapon with a flattened tip, a mask made of wire mesh and the creation of a set of rules, fencing grew in popularity during the 1600s. Fencing has been an Olympic sport since 1896.

## Fencing and FISU

Fencing is one of the compulsory sports of the FISU World University Games and has been on the programme of every edition since 1959.

## Fun Fact

The Iron Maiden singer Bruce Dickinson is an active fencer and competes in veteran competitions (for fencers over 60 years of age).

## Glossary

- En garde** a request to the fencers to take their positions before a match or after a break in the fight.
- Flèche** A short running attack in foil and épée fencing (the move is illegal in sabre). Flèche means ›arrow‹ in French.
- Touché** the word used to confirm a hit with which a fencer has scored a point.

## International Fencing Federation

- [www.fie.org](http://www.fie.org)
- [www.instagram.com/fencing\\_fie](https://www.instagram.com/fencing_fie)
- [www.facebook.com/fie.org](https://www.facebook.com/fie.org)
- [www.twitter.com/fie\\_fencing](https://www.twitter.com/fie_fencing)
- [www.youtube.com/user/FIEvideo](https://www.youtube.com/user/FIEvideo)

## German Fencing Federation

- [www.fechten.org](http://www.fechten.org)
- [www.instagram.com/DFBFechten](https://www.instagram.com/DFBFechten)
- [www.facebook.com/fechten.org](https://www.facebook.com/fechten.org)
- [www.twitter.com/DFBFechten](https://www.twitter.com/DFBFechten)
- [www.youtube.com/@dfbfechten](https://www.youtube.com/@dfbfechten)

# JUDO

Host City: **Essen**

Competition venue: **Messe Essen (Halle 4)**

FISU Games debut: **1967**

Past appearances: **14**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 15 Medal events

**Men:** -60kg / -66kg / -73kg / -81kg / -90kg / -100kg / +100kg

**Women:** -48kg / -52kg / -57kg / -63kg / -70kg / -78kg / +78kg

Mixed team

## The sport

Judo is a traditional Japanese martial art in which competitors named Judoka face each other in single combat. In Japanese, the word 'judo' means 'the gentle way', but in practise the sport relies on core strength, and the person who dominates the grip is usually in the best position to dominate the fight. Judo is built upon a philosophical principle of maximising efficiency and minimising effort, which remains fundamental to the sport.



## Origins

Judo is derived from jiu-jitsu, the hand-to-hand combat technique of ancient samurai warriors. Japanese in origin, Dr Jigoro Kano is credited with opening the first judo school (dojo) in Tokyo in 1882. The first martial art widely practised outside of Japan, judo joined debuted at Olympic Games Tokyo 1964 and has been an ever present on the Olympic programme since Munich 1972.

## Judo and FISU

Following the success of its Olympics debut, Judo was included as an optional sport at the Tokyo 1967 Universiade. It was as an optional pick on five more occasions before the sport became a compulsory element in time for the Bangkok 2007 Universiade.

## Fun Fact

Numbers game: Laura Vargas-Koch, who won a silver medal in the women's 70kg category at the Shenzhen 2011 Universiade and a bronze medal at Olympic Games Rio 2016, is now the professor for mathematics at the University of Bonn.

## Glossary

<b>Judoka</b>	The name given to a competitor in judo
<b>Judogi</b>	the formal Japanese name for the traditional uniform used for Judo practice and competition by the judoka
<b>Ippon</b>	the highest score in judo, enough to win the fight outright

## International Judo Federation

- [www.ijf.org](http://www.ijf.org)
- [www.instagram.com/judogallery](https://www.instagram.com/judogallery)
- [www.facebook.com/judo](https://www.facebook.com/judo)
- [www.twitter.com/judo](https://www.twitter.com/judo)
- [www.youtube.com/judo](https://www.youtube.com/judo)

## German Judo Federation

- [www.judobund.de](http://www.judobund.de)
- [www.instagram.com/judo/?locale=de\\_DE](https://www.instagram.com/judo/?locale=de_DE)
- [www.facebook.com/fechten.org](https://www.facebook.com/fechten.org)
- [www.youtube.com/deutscherjudobund](https://www.youtube.com/deutscherjudobund)

# RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS



Host City: **Essen**

Competition venue: **Messe Essen (Halle 4)**

FISU Games debut: **1991**

Past appearances: **14**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 8 Medal events

Individual All-Around / Individual Hoop / Individual Ball / Individual Clubs / Individual Ribbon / Group All-Around / Group 5 Ribbons / Group 3 Balls and 2 Hoops

## The sport

A women-only discipline, Rhythmic gymnastics combines elements of traditional dance and artistic gymnastics and can best be described as 'expression through movement'. In the individual events, gymnasts perform four routines using a ribbon, hoop, ball, and clubs. Each performance is set to music and must be 75 to 90 seconds in duration. The group event sees a team of five gymnasts all performing twice. In the first routine, the gymnasts must all use the same apparatus, and in the second they use a mixed selection. Routines are evaluated using a combination of the D-score (difficulty / content of the exercise), the A score (Artistry), and the E score (execution).

## Origins

Rhythmic gymnastics evolved from the mass gymnastics popularised in Europe from the late 1800s. The Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG) recognised rhythmic gymnastics as a discipline in 1961, two years before the first world championships were held in Budapest, Hungary. Rhythmic joined the Olympic programme at the 1984 Games in Los Angeles, USA.

## Rhythmic gymnastics and FISU

The sole women-only discipline in the FISU programme, rhythmic gymnastics made its debut at the Sheffield 1991 Universiade. Russian Federation lead the all-time medals table, followed by Ukraine. These two countries account for over half of the 315 medals won in the event to date.

## Fun Fact

At the age of only 16, Germany's Darja Varfolomeev won all five individual events at the 2023 World Championships in Valencia. For her hoop choreography, she chose the soundtrack from ›The Man from U.N.C.L.E.«.

## Glossary

<b>Code of Points</b>	The criteria by which judges evaluate routines in major international competitions, including world championships and the Olympics.
<b>Formation</b>	The arrangement of gymnasts in a group routine; a minimum of six different formations is required.
<b>Snake</b>	A move whereby the ribbon's rippling movement resembles the slithering of a snake.

## Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique

[www.gymnastics.sport](http://www.gymnastics.sport)

[www.instagram.com/figymnastics](https://www.instagram.com/figymnastics)

[www.facebook.com/fig.gymnastics](https://www.facebook.com/fig.gymnastics)

[www.twitter.com/gymnastics](https://www.twitter.com/gymnastics)

[www.youtube.com/user/figchannel](https://www.youtube.com/user/figchannel)

## German Gymnastics Federation

[www.dtb.de](http://www.dtb.de)

[www.instagram.com/deutscherturnerbund](https://www.instagram.com/deutscherturnerbund)

[www.facebook.com/DeutscherTurnerBund](https://www.facebook.com/DeutscherTurnerBund)

[www.twitter.com/dtb\\_online](https://www.twitter.com/dtb_online)

[www.youtube.com/dtbonline](https://www.youtube.com/dtbonline)

# ROWING

Host City: **Duisburg**

Competition venue: **Regattabahn Duisburg**

FISU Games debut: **1987**

Past appearances: **6**

Compulsory sport? **No**

## 11 Medal events

Single scull (men and women) / Double scull (men and women) / Coxless pairs (men and women) / Coxless fours (men and women) / Mixed Quadruple Scull (mixed) / Coxed eight (men and women)

## The sport

Competitive rowing involves crews of one, two, four or eight people propelling a boat using fixed oars while sitting with their backs to the direction of travel. This makes rowing one of the few sports where competitors cross the finish line facing backwards. In some races such as the eight, crews include a coxswain, who steers the boat and directs the crew. Rowers have one oar each except in sculling, when each rower has two oars or 'sculls', one on each side of the boat.



## Origins

Originally a practical mode of transport in ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome, rowing developed into a sport in England around the start of the 1700s. The annual Oxford and Cambridge University Boat Race began on the River Thames in London in 1829. Even though World Rowing was the first international sport federation to join the modern Olympic movement, bad weather on the open water course meant all races at Athens 1896 were cancelled and the sport did not officially enter the Olympic Games until four years later in Paris. Women's events were not added to the Olympic programme until Montreal 1976.

## Rowing and FISU

An official World University Championship sport since 1984, rowing has also appeared as an optional sport on the programme of several Universiades (1987, 1989, 1993, 2013, 2015) and at Chengdu 2021. Despite not being a compulsory part of the FISU World University Games programme, nearly half of all rowers taking part in domestic rowing competitions are either university students or are associated with a university.

## Fun Fact

A competitive rower can burn calories at a rate of up to 1,200 per hour, making it one of the most physically exerting sports.

## Glossary

<b>Shell</b>	Another name for the boat
<b>Bow</b>	The rower closest to the front of a shell. In coxless boats, the rower in this position usually keeps an eye on the water behind the boat, to avoid accidents.
<b>Engine room</b>	The middle rowers in an eight-person shell, who are generally the biggest and strongest rowers and will provide most of the power to the boat.

## World Rowing

- [www.worldrowing.com](http://www.worldrowing.com)
- [www.instagram.com/worldrowingofficial](https://www.instagram.com/worldrowingofficial)
- [www.facebook.com/WorldRowing](https://www.facebook.com/WorldRowing)
- [www.twitter.com/WorldRowing](https://www.twitter.com/WorldRowing)
- [www.youtube.com/@worldrowingofficial](https://www.youtube.com/@worldrowingofficial)

## German Rowing Federation

- [www.rudern.de](http://www.rudern.de)
- [www.instagram.com/rudern.de](https://www.instagram.com/rudern.de)
- [www.facebook.com/rudern.de](https://www.facebook.com/rudern.de)
- [www.youtube.com/@rudern](https://www.youtube.com/@rudern)

# SWIMMING

Host City: **Berlin**

Competition venue: **Schwimm- und Sprunghalle  
im Europasportpark (SSE)**

FISU Games debut: **1959**

Past appearances: **29**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 42 Medal events

**Individual events for men and women:** / Freestyle: 50m, 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m / Backstroke: 50m, 100m, 200m / Breaststroke: 50m, 100m, 200m / Butterfly: 50m, 100m, 200m / Individual Medley: 200m, 400m

**Relays for men and women:** 4x100m freestyle / 4x200m freestyle / 4x100m medley

**Mixed relays:** 4x100m freestyle / 4x100m medley

## The sport

Swimming competitions consist of individual and relay races over distances from 50 to 1500 metres, usually in a 50-metre indoor pool. Events are divided among four different strokes, which are then combined in the medleys. The fastest stroke is freestyle (typically front crawl), followed by butterfly, backstroke and finally breaststroke. Swimmers must qualify from heats through semi-finals until the fastest eight swimmers compete for the medals in the final.



## Origins

The earliest records of swimming have been found in Stone Age paintings dated to around 10,000 years ago. Written references date from 2000 BC, but it was not until the early 1800s that Europeans began building the first indoor swimming pools. The formation of the first swimming federations throughout Europe in the 1880s and 1890s was followed by the inclusion of the sport at the reborn Olympic Games in Athens in 1896. A women's competition was added in 1912, and the sport has remained on the Olympic programme ever since.

## Swimming and FISU

Swimming debuted at the Turin 1959 Universiade and has only missed two FISU Games since: 1975 in Rome and 1989 in Duisburg. USA leads the all-time table in swimming, with over 700 medals. For the Rhine-Ruhr 2025 FISU World University Games, the events will be held at the gargantuan Schwimm- und Sprunghalle im Europasportpark (SSE), the largest swimming facility in Europe with a main competition pool known throughout the world for its ›fast‹ water and potential for record breaking performances.

## Fun Fact

How do long-distance swimmers keep count of their laps? Technology is little use to them underwater, so on the side opposite the start, turning boards are held up for each athlete, showing the number of laps they still have to swim.

## Glossary

- Feel for the water** The key principle of a swimmer's ›feel‹ for the water is based on the interplay between propulsion and resistance – creating the ›right‹ form of drag. Also, every pool water feels different, and a little relearning of the ›feel‹ is needed.
- Turns** In swimming, there are two types of turns: one is rolling forward (flip turn) and the other is tilting sideways (open turn).
- Touch** The final touch of the wall to finish the race. For international meets, these are registered with automatic touch pads installed on the wall of the pool.

## World Aquatics

- [www.worldaquatics.com](http://www.worldaquatics.com)
- [www.instagram.com/World\\_Aquatics](https://www.instagram.com/World_Aquatics)
- [www.facebook.com/WorldAquatics1908](https://www.facebook.com/WorldAquatics1908)
- [www.twitter.com/WorldAquatics](https://www.twitter.com/WorldAquatics)
- [www.youtube.com/@WorldAquatics](https://www.youtube.com/@WorldAquatics)

## German Swimming Federation

- [www.dsv.de](http://www.dsv.de)
- [www.insta.com/deutscher\\_schwimm\\_verband\\_](https://www.insta.com/deutscher_schwimm_verband_)
- [www.facebook.com/dsvschwimmen](https://www.facebook.com/dsvschwimmen)
- [www.twitter.com/schwimmDM](https://www.twitter.com/schwimmDM)
- [youtube.com/DeutscherSchwimmVerbandV](https://youtube.com/DeutscherSchwimmVerbandV)

# TABLE TENNIS

Host City: **Essen**

Competition venue: **Messe Essen (Halle 1)**

FISU Games debut: **2001**

Past appearances: **9**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 7 Medal events

Men's and women's singles / Men's and women's doubles / Mixed doubles / Men's team and women's team

## The sport

Table tennis is played by individuals or pairs hitting a very light ball over a low net strung across the middle of a table measuring 2.74 × 1.52 metres. The small rackets are wooden with short handles and a rubberised playing surface glued to each side. The rules are very simple: players must land the ball on the opposite side of the table and force their opponents into a miss or false shot to win the rally. At the FISU Games, matches are played as a ›best-of-seven‹ sets, with each set won by two clear points at 11 points or over.



## Origins

Table tennis originated in England towards the end of the 1800s, when it was played as an after-dinner parlour game by the upper classes. Originally referred to by the trade name ›ping pong‹, the current name was adopted in 1921–22. The International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) was founded in 1926 by England and Wales plus Austria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, India, and Sweden. The sport was first included on the Olympic programme at Olympic Games Seoul 1988.

## Table tennis and FISU

Table tennis debuted at the Beijing 2001 Universiade and has historically been dominated by People's Republic of China, who claimed all seven gold medals last time out at Chengdu 2021.

## Fun Fact

The ball only touches the racket for 1/1000th of a second and deforms by up to 20% when hit, instantly regaining its shape (elastic deformation). When picked up and squeezed, however, the ball deforms permanently (plastic deformation).

## Glossary

<b>Chop Block</b>	Best executed against incoming topspin shots, a chopped return propels the ball upwards off the racket with an enormous amount of spin, usually dropping short over the net and creating problems for the opponent.
<b>Shakehand/Penhold</b>	The two most common racket grips. The ›penhold‹ position has traditionally been used in Asia but is under threat from the shakehand variant popularised in Europe.
<b>Rubber</b>	The outermost covering of both sides of a bat. These do not have to be the same and will affect the speed and power of the shots.

## International Table Tennis Federation

- [www.ittf.com](http://www.ittf.com)
- [www.instagram.com/ITTFWorld](https://www.instagram.com/ITTFWorld)
- [www.facebook.com/ITTFWorld](https://www.facebook.com/ITTFWorld)
- [www.twitter.com/WTTGlobal](https://www.twitter.com/WTTGlobal)
- [www.youtube.com/@ITTFWorld](https://www.youtube.com/@ITTFWorld)

## German Table Tennis Federation

- [www.tischtennis.de](http://www.tischtennis.de)
- [www.instagram.com/ttindeutschland](https://www.instagram.com/ttindeutschland)
- [www.facebook.com/tischtennis.de](https://www.facebook.com/tischtennis.de)
- [www.twitter.com/DTTBnews](https://www.twitter.com/DTTBnews)
- [youtube.com/tischtennisbund](https://youtube.com/tischtennisbund)

# TAEKWONDO

Host City: **Essen**

Competition venue: **Messe Essen (Halle 6)**

FISU Games debut: **2003**

Past appearances: **9**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 24 Medal events

**Poomsae:** Men's and women's individual / Men's and women's team / Mixed pair

**Kyorugi (men):** -54kg / -58kg / -63kg / -68kg / -74kg / -80kg / -87kg / +87kg

**Kyorugi (women):** -46kg / -49kg / -53kg / -57kg / -62kg / -67kg / -73kg / +73kg

Men's and Women's Team / Mixed Team

## The sport

Taekwondo is one of the most systematic and scientific Korean traditional martial arts, that teaches more than physical fighting skills. Basic techniques are the blocks, strikes, kicks and stances, often demonstrated in a flowing movement. Competitions consist of individual and team events in two disciplines: poomsae and kyorugi. Poomsae involves fixed – and, in the final round, freestyle – sequences of attack and defence techniques performed against an imaginary opponent. The kyorugi competition, by contrast, sees two fighters in protective equipment compete over two or three rounds, with bouts decided on points awarded by a panel of judges.



## Origins

While the exact origins of the sport are unclear, a form of taekwondo is thought to have been practised in Korea around 2,000 years ago as a means of strengthening the mind and body. When taekwondo became a modern sport in the 1900s, it preserved the spirit, force and appeal of this martial art, and settled on Seoul as its spiritual home city. The first taekwondo school (Kwan) was started there in 1945 and the international federation followed in 1973. When the Republic of Korea capital hosted the Olympic Games in 1988, taekwondo was the obvious choice of new sport on the programme.

## Taekwondo and FISU

Although taekwondo joined the compulsory programme of the FISU Summer Universiade only in 2017, it had been an optional sport since the Daegu 2003 Universiade and was absent in only Kazan in 2013.

## Fun Fact

The name ›Taekwondo‹ translates from Korean to English as ›the art of kicking and punching‹.

## Glossary

<b>Chung, Hong!</b>	A call made by the referee to summon the blue and red competitors to the court – an 8-metre diameter octagon.
<b>Shijak</b>	The starting signal for kyorugi and poomsae.
<b>Kal-yeo</b>	The referee's order to break, after which the competitors are not allowed to attack each other.

## World Taekwondo

- [www.worldtaekwondo.org](http://www.worldtaekwondo.org)
- [www.instagram.com/WorldTaekwondo](https://www.instagram.com/WorldTaekwondo)
- [www.facebook.com/WorldTaekwondo](https://www.facebook.com/WorldTaekwondo)
- [www.twitter.com/WorldTaekwondo](https://www.twitter.com/WorldTaekwondo)
- [www.youtube.com/@WorldTaekwondo](https://www.youtube.com/@WorldTaekwondo)

## German Taekwondo Federation

- [www.dtu.de](http://www.dtu.de)
- [www.instagram.com/ger\\_taekwondo](https://www.instagram.com/ger_taekwondo)
- [www.facebook.com/deuschetakwondounion](https://www.facebook.com/deuschetakwondounion)
- [www.twitter.com/DTUtkd](https://www.twitter.com/DTUtkd)
- [youtube.com/deuschetakwondounione.v693](https://youtube.com/deuschetakwondounione.v693)

# TENNIS

Host City: **Essen**

Competition venue: **ETUF Tennisanlage**

FISU Games debut: **1959**

Past appearances: **29**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 7 Medal events

Men's and women's singles / Men's and women's doubles / Mixed doubles / Men's team / Women's team

## The sport

Tennis is a racket sport played between individuals (singles) or pairs (doubles) on a court marked out in white on either a grass, clay or hard surface. The object of the game is to hit the ball over a dividing net so that the opponent is unable to return the ball. The court is always 23.77 metres in length but measures 8.23 metres wide for singles matches and 10.97 metres wide for doubles. Four points win a game, six games win a set, and two (or sometimes three) sets win the match.



## Origins

Although the precise origins of tennis are unclear, the sport could have its roots in a ball game played by monks in France in the 1100s called ›jeu de paume‹, meaning ›game of the hand‹. Consequently, the name ›tennis‹ could be derived from the French ›tenez‹, which means ›take this‹ or ›be ready‹. Rackets were first used instead of hands in the 1500s and in 1530, King Henry VIII of England built a court at Hampton Court Palace outside London. The All England Club created the first international tennis competition at Wimbledon in 1877 and the sport was on the programme for the rebirth of the Olympic Games at Athens in 1896.

## Tennis and FISU

As one of the world's most popular pastimes, tennis has a long tradition in university sport and has since 1959 been a regular feature of the FISU World University Games, appearing in all but the 1975 and 1989 Universiades.

## Fun Fact

Ion Tiriac won two gold and three bronze medals across the Sofia 1961 and Budapest 1965 Universiades but he is unique among all student-athletes for what he did in between: play for the Romanian ice hockey team at Olympic Winter Games Innsbruck 1964. Nicknamed the ›Braşov Bulldozer‹ after the city of his birth, Tiriac's professional tennis career peaked with the men's doubles title at the 1970 French open.

## Glossary

- Tweener** Difficult shot where the player hits the ball between their legs, usually while running away from the net towards the baseline.
- Tiebreak** A one-off game to decide the winner of a set when two players have won six games apiece.
- Golden Set** Winning 24 points in a row to take a ›perfect‹ set, 6-0.

## International Tennis Federation

- [www.itftennis.com](http://www.itftennis.com)
- [www.instagram.com/itftennis](https://www.instagram.com/itftennis)
- [www.facebook.com/InternationalTennisFederation](https://www.facebook.com/InternationalTennisFederation)
- [www.twitter.com/ITFTennis](https://www.twitter.com/ITFTennis)
- [www.youtube.com/@ITF.Tennis](https://www.youtube.com/@ITF.Tennis)

## German Tennis Federation

- [www.tennis.de/dtb](http://www.tennis.de/dtb)
- [www.instagram.com/deutscher\\_tennis\\_bund](https://www.instagram.com/deutscher_tennis_bund)
- [www.facebook.com/DeutscherTennisBund](https://www.facebook.com/DeutscherTennisBund)
- [www.twitter.com/tennisbund](https://www.twitter.com/tennisbund)
- [youtube.com/DeutscherTennisBund](https://youtube.com/DeutscherTennisBund)

# VOLLEYBALL

Host City: **Berlin**

Competition venues: **Max-Schmeling Halle**  
**Sportforum Große Sporthalle**  
**Ballsporthalle Köpenick**  
**Horst-Korber Sportzentrum**

FISU Games debut: **1959**

Past appearances: **29**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 2 Medal events

Men's tournament / Women's tournament

### The sport

Volleyball is a dynamic team sport characterised by powerful ›spikes‹ and desperate defensive dives, with high jumping, strong teamwork and communication the essential ingredients for success. In standard competitions, two teams of six players face each other on a court divided by a net hung at 2.43 metres for men's competitions and 2.24 metres for women's. A maximum of three touches are allowed before a team must return the ball to the other site of the net and to score a point, the ball must touch the ground in the opposition half or land out after an opponent has touched it last. Matches are won when a team gains three sets, each played to 25 points (or higher until a two-point lead is established). If both teams have won two sets, a deciding set is played to 15 points.



### Origins

Volleyball dates to 1895, when William G Morgan developed the sport as a non-contact alternative to basketball and handball. Morgan had previously played American Football under the tutelage of James Naismith - the inventor of basketball - at the International YMCA Training School in Springfield, Massachusetts. For his new sport, Morgan chose the name ›Mintonette‹ - a derivation of ›badminton‹ - but this was soon changed to ›volley ball‹, only officially becoming one word in 1952. The international volleyball federation (FIVB) was founded in 1941 and volleyball was included on the Olympic programme for the first time at Tokyo 1964.

### Volleyball and FISU

Volleyball was included in the first Universiade held in Turin in 1959 and has missed only two Universiades or FISU Games since - in 1975 and 1989.

### Fun Fact

You love pancakes for breakfast? We also love them as technique of defending in volleyball. In a pancake defence, you put the flat of your hand (as flat as a pancake) between the ground and the ball just before the ball touches the ground.

### Glossary

- Libero** A defensive specialist who is not allowed to serve or be rotated into the frontline positions. Liberos wear a different coloured kit to their teammates and can be substituted into the game an unlimited number of times for any player in the backline.
- Spike** A ball hit with downward force by a jumper. When executed to maximum effect, a spike will kill the point by landing the ball in the opposition side of the court. A spike is usually made possible by a teammate's ›set‹.
- Block** A defensive play by one or more players designed to intercept and return a spiked ball back to the hitter's court.

### Fédération Internationale de Volleyball

- [www.fivb.com](http://www.fivb.com)
- [www.instagram.com/VolleyballWorld](https://www.instagram.com/VolleyballWorld)
- [www.facebook.com/VolleyballWorld](https://www.facebook.com/VolleyballWorld)
- [www.twitter.com/FIVBVolleyball](https://www.twitter.com/FIVBVolleyball)
- [www.youtube.com/@volleyballworld](https://www.youtube.com/@volleyballworld)

### German Volleyball Federation

- [www.volleyball-verband.de](http://www.volleyball-verband.de)
- [www.instagram.com/dvv\\_volleyball](https://www.instagram.com/dvv_volleyball)
- [www.facebook.com/DVV.Volleyball](https://www.facebook.com/DVV.Volleyball)
- [www.twitter.com/DVV\\_Volleyball](https://www.twitter.com/DVV_Volleyball)
- [youtube.com/@DVV\\_Volleyball](https://youtube.com/@DVV_Volleyball)

# WATER POLO

Host City: **Duisburg**

Competition venues: **ASC Duisburg**

FISU Games debut: **1959**

Past appearances: **29**

Compulsory sport? **Yes**

## 2 Medal events

Men's tournament / Women's tournament

### The sport

Water polo is a competitive team sport played both outdoors and indoors between two teams of seven players. Matches comprise eight-minute quarters and are won by the team scoring the most goals. If there is a tie, the winner will be decided by penalty shootout. A fiercely competitive sport, common fouls include holding, sinking, or pulling back a player who is not holding the ball – all resulting in a 15-second exclusion. Other fouls such as taking the ball underwater are penalised with a free throw. Unlike most team sports, there is versatility in the positional play; outfield players will often fill several positions throughout the game as situations demand.



### Origins

Water polo was first played on the rivers and lakes of mid-1800s England as an aquatic version of rugby. While today the sport is known for its physicality, the early, unregulated encounters could be brutal. In 1870 the London Swimming Association formalised a set of rules and the sport expanded, transitioning to indoor pools and broadening its appeal worldwide. Water polo has featured on the Olympic programme since 1900.

### Water polo and FISU

The first university men's water polo tournament was played in Dortmund in 1953. The steady growth of the sport led to its inclusion on the programme of the first summer Universiade held in 1959 in Turin. A women's tournament has been included since Belgrade 2009.

### Fun Fact

With the first watertight balls made from Indian rubber, it is thought the name ›water polo‹ is based on the English pronunciation of the Balti word for ›ball‹ (pulu).

### Glossary

#### Eggbeater kick

A downward thrust which gives players the power to climb high out of the water, overcome their opponent and shoot the ball

#### Swim-off

A race to the centre of the pool after the referee has dropped the ball onto the water at the start of a period.

#### Treading the water

Since the pool is too deep for the players to stand up, they use this technique for holding their position in the water.

#### World Aquatics

[www.worldaquatics.com/water-polo](http://www.worldaquatics.com/water-polo)

#### German Swimming Federation

[www.dsv.de/wasserball](http://www.dsv.de/wasserball)

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