Who are the Sikhs?
Common Misconception

**Fiction:** Sikhs are Muslim because they wear a turban and have a beard.

**Fact:** Turbans are worn in many countries as a cultural dress. However, the turban is **required** to be worn by a Sikh, and it is a **religious article of faith.**
**Common Misconception**

*Fiction:* Sikhism is a blend of Hinduism and Islam.

*Fact:* Sikhism is not a blend of Hinduism and Islam. It has its own scriptures, gurus, and houses of worship. Sikhism is a separate faith, and is not a branch of any other religion.
Sikhs came to America more than 100 years ago

- West Coast and later in New York
- Farming & Lumber Industry
- Pioneers
  - Immigration Policy
  - Citizenship Reform
  - Representation in Federal Government
Sikhism in Brief

Sikhism is the fifth largest world religion.

5. Sikhism – 23 million
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1. Christianity – 2.2 billion

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3. Hinduism – 900 million
4. Buddhism – 500 million
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6. Judaism – 15 million
Core Sikh Beliefs
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  - Loves and sustains all humanity
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- All are equal in the eyes of God
  - Respect for all genders, religions, races, etc.
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  - Sikhs are supposed to work and live honestly
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  - Fasting, superstitions, ritualism, caste system
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- **Sikhism prohibits:**
  - Smoking, drinking alcohol, or taking any intoxicants
Vaisakhi

- Khalsa – community of initiated Sikhs
  - Commitment to this faith
  - Can be done at any time in one’s life

- What Does It Mean?
  - Distinct external appearance
  - Keep Singh/Kaur as last name
The 5 “Ks”
The 5 “Ks”

Iron Bracelet (Kara)
GOOD DEEDS
The 5 “Ks”

1. **Iron Bracelet (Kara)**
   - **GOOD DEEDS**

2. **Sword (Kirpan)**
   - **PROTECTION**
The 5 “Ks”

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Long Underpants (Kachera)
SELF DISCIPLINE
The 5 “Ks”

Iron Bracelet (Kara)  
GOOD DEEDS

Sword (Kirpan)  
PROTECTION

Long Underpants (Kachera)  
SELF DISCIPLINE

Uncut Hair (Kesh)  
SPIRITUALITY
The 5 “Ks”

- Iron Bracelet (Kara) - Good Deeds
- Sword (Kirpan) - Protection
- Long Underpants (Kachera) - Self Discipline
- Uncut Hair (Kesh) - Spirituality
- Comb (Kanga) - Cleanliness
The Sikh Turban

- 99% of the people wearing a turban in the U.S. are Sikhs
- It is a religious obligation for Sikhs
- Can always be recognized and are duty bound to offer help
- Under no circumstances can the turban be forcibly removed
Turbans Illustrated

Sikh Turban

Sikh Turban

Sikh Turban

Sikh Turban

Non-Sikh Turban

Afghan Turban

Palestinian Turban

Indian Turban

Iranian Turban
Guru – A Spiritual Guide

Gu Ru

- 10 Sikh Gurus
- Mission
  - Love for God
  - Social justice for humanity
  - Freedom from superstitions and rituals
- Their ideals and teachings were preserved through their writings and actions
Guru – “Spiritual Guide”

The Guru Granth Sahib (holy scripture) and the Guru Panth (community of initiated Sikhs) are the present Guru.

Guru Granth Sahib

- 1430 pages written in poetry
- Considered the living Guru of the Sikhs
- Teaches you how to be kind, tell the truth, love and respect everyone
- Sikh services consist of singing from the scripture
Gurdwara

- Place of learning and worship
- Everyone welcome
- Services typically held on weekends
- Community Kitchen for all (Langar)
Most Sikhs Speak Punjabi

- Over 80 million people speak Punjabi
- Punjabi is written from left to right
- The Punjabi alphabet contains 35 letters
Sikhs can be found in many different professions today!
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Artists
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Artists

Actor
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Artists

Actor

Basketball Player

www.sikhcoalition.org
Sikhs can be found in many different professions today!

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- Artists
- Actor
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- Scientist
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Doctor

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- Farmer