



All About the Winter Olympics



Opening and Closing Ceremonies at the Olympic Games

There is nothing more exciting and spectacular than to watch the opening ceremony that begins the Olympic Games. Many of the rituals performed were established at the 1920 Summer Olympics. The opening ceremony begins with the raising of the host country's flag while its national anthem is being played. Spectators are then entertained with artistic displays of music, singing, dancing, and theatre that represents the culture of the host country. Each year these presentations have become larger and more grand as each host country tries to provide a more memorable ceremony than the previous host countries have. These ceremonies often cost millions of dollars to organize and costume.

After the entertainment, the most important part of the ceremony begins. This event is called the "Parade of Nations" and during it most of the participating athletes march into the stadium country by country. Greece enters first due to its historical importance as the ancestors of the Olympics. The other countries enter in alphabetical order according to the host country's alphabet. The host country enters last. This is a very emotional and patriotic event to witness as each country's delegation is led by a sign bearing the country's name followed by its national flag. The flag bearer is usually one of the country's most notable athletes competing in the Olympic Games. The athletes, who follow the flag bearer, are usually dressed in outfits that represent their country's colours and style of dress.

Once all of the countries have assembled in the stadium, the president of the organizing committee makes a speech which is then followed by the IOC president's speech. The IOC president then asks the host country's official representative to declare the Games open by reciting the following words:

"I declare open the Games of (Host City) celebrating (number of the Olympiad) Olympiad of the modern era (number of Winter Olympics) Olympics Winter Games."

The Olympic flag is then carried horizontally into the stadium and raised as the Olympic Anthem is played. For the entire duration of the Olympic Games, the Olympic flag flies on a flagpole placed in a prominent position in the main stadium. The flag bearers then circle a platform where one athlete and one judge stand to say the Olympic Oath declaring they will compete and judge according to rule.

At the end of the ceremony, the Olympic Torch is carried into the stadium and passed from athlete to athlete until it reaches the last carrier. The athlete chosen to light the Olympic Flame in the stadium's cauldron is usually a well-known and successful athlete from the host nation. The flame is lit and the games begin.





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The closing ceremony is held after all the sporting competitions have taken place. This ceremony is not as formal as the opening ceremony. The flag bearers from all the competing nations enter the stadium single file and behind them all the athletes flow in, mixing with other countries.

Three national flags are raised on flagpoles while each country's national anthem is played. The flag of Greece is raised first on the middle pole to honour the birthplace of the Olympic Games. The flag, of the host country, is raised next on the left hand pole and the flag of the country to host the next Summer or Winter Olympics is raised on the right hand pole.

The president of the organizing committee makes his closing speech. The IOC president then follows with the following statement to close the Olympic Games.

"I declare the Games of the (ordinal number) Olympiad (ordinal number) Olympic Winter/Summer Games closed and, in accordance with tradition, I call upon the youth of the world to assemble four years from now in (name of host city) to celebrate the Games of the (ordinal number) Olympiad (ordinal number) Olympic Winter/Summer Games."

The Olympic Flame is extinguished while the Olympic Anthem is played. The Olympic flag is then lowered on the flagpole and carried horizontally out of the stadium. Then the transfer of the special Olympic flag takes place. The mayor of the city that organized the Games gives the Special Olympic Flag to the president of the IOC. The president then passes the flag to the mayor of the city hosting the next Olympic games. The mayor receiving the flag waves it eight times. After this ceremony, the next host nation has a special artistic display of dance and theatre representative of the country's culture. At the end of the ceremony, the athletes and spectators leave with wonderful memories of their visit to the Olympic Games.





The opening ceremony begins when the host country's _____ is _____ while its national _____ is being played. The people are then entertained with a _____ filled with singing, dancing, and music.

After the show is the most important part, _____. The _____ from each _____ march in behind its name and flag. The athletes are dressed in _____ that represent their country's _____ and the way the people _____. The flag bearer is often one of the country's _____ athletes who is competing in the games. _____ comes in first and all the other nations march in alphabetically. The _____ country comes in last.

The opening of the games is announced, the _____ flag is carried in and _____. An athlete and a judge say the Olympic _____ for all the athletes and judges.

At the end of the ceremony, the Olympic _____ is carried into the stadium and an athlete _____ the Olympic _____ in the _____.

Use the words in the Word Box to complete the sentences.

outfits	host	show	colours	lights
Greece	Olympic	cauldron	famous	torch
flag	dress	raised	flame	oath
anthem	athletes	country	The Parade of Nations	



Olympic Winter Games

Olympic Closing Ceremony

The closing ceremony is held _____.
all the events are _____. Flag bearers
from all the countries _____ in first.
Then all the _____ from different
_____ walk in together.



Three flags _____ are on flag
poles. Greece's flag is raised _____ on the middle pole. The host
country's flag is raised on the _____ pole, and the flag of the country
to host the _____ Olympics is raised on the _____ pole.

The games are declared _____. The Olympic flame in the
cauldron is put _____. The Olympic flag is _____ and is
_____ out of the stadium. The mayor of the host city gives an
_____ flag to the mayor of the next host city. The new host mayor
_____ it eight times. The ceremony ends with a wonderful show and
_____ display.

Use the words in the Word Box to complete the sentences.

closed	out	parade	athletes	after
countries	raised	over	waves	lowered
first	Olympic	carried	left hand	right hand
fireworks	next			



Olympic Opening Ceremony (Page 1)

Order of the missing words in the blanks:

Paragraph #1: flag, anthem, show

Paragraph #2: The Parade of Nations, athletes, country, outfits, colours, dress, famous, Greece, host

Paragraph #3: Olympic, raised, oath

Paragraph #4: Torch, lights, flame, cauldron

Olympic Closing Ceremony (Page 2)

Order of missing words in the blanks:

Paragraph #1: after, over, parade, athletes, countries

Paragraph #2: raised, first, left hand, next, right hand

Paragraph #3: closed, out, lowered, carried, Olympic, waves, fireworks

