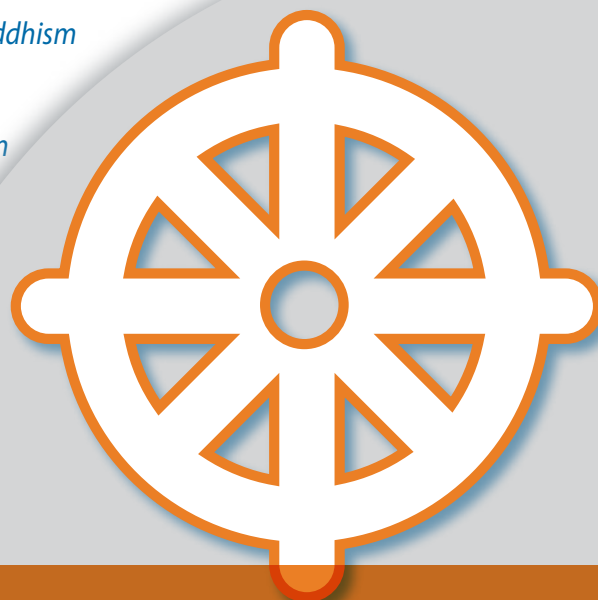


Buddhism - Issues for Sport & Physical Activity

Key Facts	
Origins	Buddhism is over 2,500 years old and is the story of one man's journey to Enlightenment. Siddhartha Gautama (The Buddha) was born around 580 BCE in what is now Nepal.
Theism	<p>Buddhism is not a single monolithic religion. It teaches that all life is interconnected, so compassion is natural and important. At the heart of the Buddha's teaching lie the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path which lead the Buddhist towards the path of enlightenment. There is no belief in a personal God.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>One of the five precepts of Buddhism for lay people is not to cause harm by physical actions. This may cause difficulty in participation in some sports such as boxing where the aim is to disable your opponent so he cannot continue. This would be in conflict with Buddhist philosophy.</i> ■ <i>Where other skills are used e.g. do not harm or take life such as martial arts, these are usually deemed appropriate.</i>
Major sects	<p>Buddhism is divided into a number of sects. They accept many of the same fundamental teachings and perhaps the best way to regard them is as alternative paths on the way to enlightenment. These include:</p> <p>Theravada - sometimes called Southern Buddhism and is one of the largest groupings.</p> <p>Mahayana - not a single group but a collection of Buddhist traditions.</p> <p>Korean Zen - focuses on the enlightenment of a sudden awakening.</p> <p>Nichiren - focuses on this world, and in its view that it is the only correct tradition.</p> <p>Pure Land - offers a different way to enlightenment for people who can't handle the subtleties of meditation or endure long rituals.</p> <p>Tibetan - a religion in exile forced from its homeland by the Chinese.</p> <p>Zen - its essence is achieving enlightenment by seeing one's original mind (or original nature) directly.</p> <p>The New Kadampa Tradition - some regard this as a cult but it has continued to grow.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Sports psychology has been influenced by Zen Buddhism e.g; the Inner Game series.</i> ■ <i>Many people use Buddhism to help cope with anxieties about life and death e.g; Jonny Wilkinson stated Buddhism helped when he was going through his injury trauma.</i>
Place of worship	Buddhists can worship both at home and at a temple.



Sacred texts	Buddhist sacred texts are thought of as guides on the path to truth, not truth itself. There are many sacred texts in Buddhism but not all texts are accepted by all schools. The main texts include the Tripitaka , the Pali Canon and the Mahayana Sutras .
Original language	Theravada Buddhism uses Pali as its main liturgical language, and prefers its scriptures to be studied in the original Pali. Canonical texts of Mahayana Buddhism in its Indian stage were written in Sanskrit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Buddhists may speak a variety of languages including English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Thai, Sinhala, Tamil, and Hindi.</i>
Spiritual leader	The Dalai Lama is the head monk of Tibetan Buddhism and traditionally has been responsible for the governing of Tibet. Thich Nhat Hanh is today's best known Buddhist teacher after the Dalai Lama.
Symbols	The eight auspicious signs are very meaningful religious symbols of Buddhism revealing progress along the path to enlightenment. These symbols are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Umbrella ▪ The Fish ▪ The Vase ▪ The Lotus ▪ The Conch Shell ▪ The Knot of Eternity ▪ The Victory Banner ▪ The Dharma Wheel
Buddhism and its followers	
Worldwide adherents	There are currently 376 million followers worldwide.
UK population	The UK Census 2001 recorded around 152,000 people who cited Buddhism as their religion.
Faith requirements and holy days	
Diet	The Buddhist diet is primarily vegetarian, in order to keep with the general Buddhist precept of refraining from killing sentient beings. However, meat can be eaten by one who does (1) not see, (2) hear of, (3) or doubt about the animal having been killed purposely for him to eat, (4) but is certain that it either died naturally, (5) or that its flesh had been abandoned by birds of prey. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Vegetarian food should be available for post match refreshments.</i> ▪ <i>Some Buddhists may practice fasting when meals are not taken after noon time but small amounts of liquid are allowed. Others may reduce the amount of food they eat.</i>
Dress	Ordinary people wear whatever clothes are fashionable in their own country. Buddhist monks wear a simple robe, belts, the felt, hats, boots, aprons and jewellery or metal adornments. For the most part the robes of the monks depended on the dye that was available in the region and also helps distinguish which sect/tradition/school of Buddhism the monk follows.
Major festivals	Festivals play a big part in the lives of many Buddhists. Most Buddhists, use the Lunar calendar. The dates of Buddhist festivals and the way they are celebrated vary from country to country, and between Buddhist traditions. The main festivals are Dharma Day , Kathina , Losar , Parinirvana Sangha Day and Wesak . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Consideration needs to be given to events or activities which take place during religious festivals.</i>

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