

Sikhism Glossary

Preferred Form	Main Variant	Explanation
Akal Purakh		<i>The Eternal One.</i> A designation frequently used of God by Guru Nanak.
Akal Takht	Akal Takhat	<i>Throne of the Eternal,</i> throne of the Timeless One. Building facing the Golden temple in Amritsar where Sikhs gather for political purposes.
Akhand Path		Continuous reading of the Guru Granth Sahib from beginning to end.
Amrit		<i>Nectar.</i> Sanctified liquid made of sugar and water, used in initiation ceremonies.
Amrit ceremony	Amrit Sanskar	The Sikh rite of initiation into the Khalsa. Baptism should not be used.
Ardas		<i>Prayer.</i> The formal prayer offered at most religious acts.
Baisakhi	Vaisakhi	A major Sikh festival celebrating the formation of the Khalsa in 1699 CE.
Chanani	Chandni	Canopy over the scriptures, used as a mark of respect.
Chauri	Chaur	Fan waved over scriptures, made of yak hairs or nylon. A symbol of the authority of the Guru Granth sahib. It should not be called a 'fly whisk'.
Dasam Granth		Collection of compositions, some of which are attributed to the tenth Sikh Guru, compiled some years after his death.

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Granthi		Reader of the Guru Granth Sahib, who officiates at ceremonies.
Grihasti	Grihastha	Living life as a householder earning one's own living. Not being a forest dwelling hermit.
Gurdwara	Gurudwara	Sikh place of worship. Literally the ' <i>doorway to the Guru</i> '.
Gurmat		The Guru's guidance.
Gurpurb	Gurpurab	A Guru's anniversary (birth or death). Also used for other anniversaries, e.g. of the installation of the Adi Granth, 1604 CE.
Guru		<i>Teacher.</i> In Sikhism, the title of Guru is reserved for the ten human Gurus and the Guru Granth Sahib.
Guru Arjan		The fifth Guru who was the first Sikh martyr (1563 – 1606).
Guru Gobind Singh	Guru Govind Singh (original name Guru Gobind Rai)	Tenth Sikh Guru. It is important to note that the title 'Guru' must be used with all the Gurus' names. Sikhs usually use further terms of respect, e.g. Guru Gobind Singh Ji or Guru Nanak Dev Ji.
Guru Granth Sahib	Adi Granth	Primal collection of Sikh scriptures, compiled by Guru Arjan and given its final form by Guru Gobind Singh.
Guru Har Gobind	Guru Hargobind	Sixth Sikh Guru.
Guru Har Krishan	Guru Harkrishan	Eighth Sikh Guru.
Guru Nanak		The first Guru and the founder of the Sikh faith (1469 – 1539).

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Guru Tegh Bahadur		The ninth Guru who was martyred for the principle of religious tolerance (1622 – 1675).
Haumai		<i>Egoism</i> . The major spiritual defect.
Hola Mahala		Early spring festival celebrating martial arts and harvest.
Hukum	Vak	Random reading taken for guidance from the Guru Granth Sahib. God's will.
Ik Onkar		<i>There is only one God</i> . The first phrase of the Mool Mantar. It is also used as a symbol to decorate Sikh objects.
Japji Sahib		A morning prayer, composed by Guru Nanak, which forms the first chapter of the Guru Granth Sahib.
Jivan Mukht	Jivan Mukht	Enlightened while in the material body. A spiritually enlightened person, freed from worldly bonds.
Kachera	Kach	Traditional underwear resembling shorts. One of the five K's.
Kangha	Kanga	Comb worn in the hair. One of the five K's.
Kara		Steel band worn on the right wrist. One of the five K's.
Karah parshad	Karah prasad	Sanctified food distributed at Sikh ceremonies.
Kaur		<i>Princess</i> . Name given to all Sikh females by Guru Gobind Singh.

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Kesh	Kes	Uncut hair. One of the five K's.
Khalsa		<i>The community of the pure.</i> The Sikh community.
Khanda		Double-edged sword used in the initiation ceremony. Also used as the emblem on the Sikh flag.
Kirat Karna		The principle that you should earn your living honestly. Earning one's living by one's own efforts.
Kirpan		Sword. One of the five K's. 'Dagger' should be avoided.
Kirtan		Devotional singing of the compositions found in the Guru Granth Sahib.
Kirtan Sohila		A prayer said before retiring for sleep. It is also used at the cremation ceremony and when the Guru Granth Sahib is laid to rest.
Kurahit		Prohibitions. Things which are banned according to the Sikh code of discipline e.g. intoxicants.
Langar	Guru ka Langar	<i>Guru's kitchen.</i> The gurdwara dining hall and the food served in it.
Mela	Manji Sahib	<i>Fair.</i> Used of Sikh festivals which are not gurpurbs.
Manji		Small platform on which the scripture is placed.
Manmukh		Munmukh

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Mool Mantar	Mul Mantar	<i>Basic teaching.</i> Essential teaching. The basic statement of belief at the beginning of the Guru Granth Sahib.
Nam Simran	Nam Simaran Naam Simran	Meditation on the divine name, using passages of scripture.
Nishan Sahib		Sikh flag flown at gurdwaras.
Panj Kakke		<i>The five K's.</i> The symbols of Sikhism worn by Sikhs.
Panj piare	Panj Pyare	<i>The five beloved ones.</i> Those first initiated into the Khalsa. Those who perform the rite today.
Panth		The Sikh community.
Ragi		Sikh musician who sings compositions from the Guru Granth.
Raheguru		Waheguru. <i>Wonderful Lord.</i> A Sikh name for God.
Rahit Maryada	Rehat Maryada	Sikh Code of Discipline.
Sadhsangat	Sangat	Congregation or assembly of Sikhs.
Sewa	Seva	Service in order to help the Sikh congregation, or the gurdwara, but also humanity in general.
Vand chhakna		Sharing one's time, talents and earnings with the less fortunate.