

Adolfo López Mateos,
President of Mexico
from 1958 to 1964 and
first chairman of the
Organization
Committee of the 1968
Summer Olympics

- The introduction of doping tests resulted in the first disqualification because of doping: Swedish pentathlete Hans-Gunnar Liljenwall was disqualified for alcohol use (he drank several beers just prior to competing).^[16]
- John Stephen Akhwari of Tanzania became internationally famous after finishing the marathon, in the last place, despite a dislocated knee.^[17]
- This was the first of three Olympic participation by Jacques Rogge. He competed in yachting and would later become the president of the IOC.^[18]
- Norma Enriqueta Basilio de Sotelo of Mexico became the first woman to light the Olympic cauldron with the Olympic flame.
- It was the first games at which there was a significant African presence in men's distance running. Africans won at least one medal in all running events from 800 meters to the marathon, and in so doing they set a trend for future games. Most of these runners came from high-altitude areas of countries like Kenya and Ethiopia, and they were well-prepared for the 2240 m elevation of Mexico City.
- Kipchoge Keino of Kenya, competing in spite of unexpected bouts of severe abdominal pain later diagnosed as a gall bladder infection, finished the 10,000 meters in spite of collapsing from pain with two laps to go, won silver in the 5000, and won gold in the 1500 meters.^{[19][20]}
- It was the first Olympic games in which the closing ceremony was transmitted in color to the world, as well as the events themselves.^[21]

Controversies

South Africa

After being banned from participating in 1964, South Africa - under its new leader John Vorster - had made diplomatic overtures to improve relations with neighboring countries and internationally, suggesting legal changes to allow South Africa to compete with an integrated, multiracial team internationally. The nominal obstacle behind South Africa's exclusion thus removed, the country was thus provisionally invited to the Games, on the understanding that all segregation and discrimination in sport would be eliminated by the 1972 Games. However, African countries and African American athletes promised to boycott the Games if South Africa was present, and Eastern Bloc countries threatened to do likewise. In April 1968 the IOC conceded that "it would be most unwise for South Africa to participate".^[22] It was thus the first Olympics where South Africa was positively excluded, which continued until the Olympics of 1992.

Tlatelolco massacre

Responding to growing social unrest and protests, the government of Mexico had increased economic and political suppression, against labor unions in particular, in the decade building up to the Olympics. A series of protest marches in the city in August gathered significant attendance, with an estimated 500,000 taking part on 27 August. President Gustavo Díaz Ordaz ordered the police occupation of the National Autonomous University of Mexico in September, but protests continued. Using the prominence brought by the Olympics, students gathered in Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Tlatelolco to call for greater civil and democratic rights and showed disdain for the Olympics with slogans such as *¡No queremos olimpiadas, queremos revolución!* ("We don't want Olympics, we want revolution!").^{[23][24]}

Ten days before the start of the Olympics, the government ordered the gathering in Plaza de las Tres Culturas to be broken up. Some 5000 soldiers and 200 tankettes surrounded the plaza. Hundreds of protesters and civilians were killed and over 1000 were arrested. At the time, the event was portrayed in the national media as the military suppression of a violent student uprising, but later analysis indicates that the gathering was peaceful prior to the army's advance.^{[25][26][27]}

Black Power salute

On 16 October 1968, African American sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos, the gold and bronze medalists in the men's 200-meter race, took their places on the podium for the medal ceremony wearing human rights badges and black socks without shoes, lowered their heads and each defiantly raised a black-gloved fist as "The Star Spangled Banner" was played, in solidarity with the Black Freedom Movement in the United States. Both were members of the Olympic Project for Human Rights. International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Avery Brundage deemed it to be a domestic political statement unfit for the apolitical, international forum the Olympic Games were intended to be. In response to their actions, he ordered Smith and Carlos suspended from the US team and banned from the Olympic Village. When the US Olympic Committee refused, Brundage threatened to ban the entire US track team. This threat led to the expulsion of the two athletes from the Games.^[28]

Peter Norman, the Australian sprinter who came second in the 200-meter race, also wore an Olympic Project for Human Rights badge during the medal ceremony. Norman was the one who suggested that Carlos and Smith wear one glove each. His actions resulted in him being ostracized by Australian media^[29] and a reprimand by his country's Olympic authorities. He was not sent to the 1972 games, despite several times making the qualifying time,^[30] though opinions differ over whether that was due to the 1968 protest.^[31] When Australia hosted the 2000 Summer Olympics, he had no part in the opening ceremony, though the significance of that is also debated.^[31] In 2006, after Norman died of a heart attack, Smith and Carlos were pallbearers at Norman's funeral.^[32]



Gold medalist Tommie Smith (center) and bronze medalist John Carlos (right) showing the raised fist on the podium after the 200 m race

Věra Čáslavská and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia

In another notable incident in the gymnastics competition, while standing on the medal podium after the balance beam event final, in which Natalia Kuchinskaya of the Soviet Union had controversially taken the gold, Czechoslovakian gymnast Věra Čáslavská quietly turned her head down and away during the playing of the Soviet national anthem. The action was Čáslavská's silent protest against the recent Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. Her protest was repeated when she accepted her medal for her floor exercise routine when the judges changed the preliminary scores of the Soviet Larisa Petrik to allow her to tie with Čáslavská for the gold. While Čáslavská's countrymen supported her actions and her outspoken opposition to Soviet control (she had publicly signed and supported Ludvík Vaculík's "Two Thousand Words" manifesto), the new regime responded by banning her from both sporting events and international travel for many years and made her an outcast from society until the fall of communist regime in Czechoslovakia.^[33]





















Venues

- Agustín Melgar Olympic Velodrome – Cycling (track)
- Arena México – Boxing
- Avándaro Golf Club – Equestrian (eventing)

- [Campo Marte](#) – Equestrian (dressage, jumping individual)
- [Campo Militar 1](#) – Modern pentathlon (riding, running)
- [Club de Yates de Acapulco](#) – Sailing
- [Estadio Azteca](#) – Football (final)
- [Estadio Cuauhtémoc](#) – Football preliminaries
- [Estadio Nou Camp](#) – Football preliminaries
- [Estadio Olímpico Universitario](#) – Athletics (also 20 km and 50 km walk), Ceremonies (opening/ closing), Equestrian (jumping team)
- [Fernando Montes de Oca Fencing Hall](#) – Fencing, Modern pentathlon (fencing)
- [Francisco Márquez Olympic Pool](#) – Diving, Modern pentathlon (swimming), Swimming, Water polo
- [Arena Insurgentes](#) – Wrestling
- [Insurgentes Theatre](#) – Weightlifting
- [Jalisco Stadium](#) – Football preliminaries
- [Juan de la Barrera Olympic Gymnasium](#) – Volleyball
- [Juan Escutia Sports Palace](#) – Basketball, Volleyball
- [Municipal Stadium](#) – Field hockey
- [National Auditorium](#) – Gymnastics
- [Arena Revolución](#) – Volleyball
- [Satellite Circuit](#) – Cycling (individual road race, road team time trial)
- [University City Swimming Pool](#) – Water polo
- [Vicente Suárez Shooting Range](#) – Modern pentathlon (shooting), Shooting
- [Virgilio Uribe Rowing and Canoeing Course](#) – Canoeing, Rowing
- [Zócalo](#) – Athletics (marathon start)

Sports

The 1968 Summer Olympic program featured 172 events in the following 18 sports:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| ▪ Aquatics | ▪  Cycling | ▪  Field hockey (1) |
| ▪  Diving (4) | ▪ Road (2) | ▪  Modern pentathlon (2) |
| ▪  Swimming (29) | ▪ Track (5) | ▪  Rowing (7) |
| ▪  Water polo (1) | ▪  Equestrian | ▪  Sailing (5) |
| ▪  Athletics (36) | ▪ Dressage (2) | ▪  Shooting (7) |
| ▪  Basketball (1) | ▪ Eventing (2) | ▪  Volleyball (2) |
| ▪  Boxing (11) | ▪ Jumping (2) | ▪  Weightlifting (7) |
| ▪  Canoeing (7) | ▪  Fencing (8) | ▪  Wrestling |
| | ▪  Football (1) | ▪ Freestyle (8) |
| | ▪  Gymnastics (14) | ▪ Greco-Roman (8) |

Demonstration sports

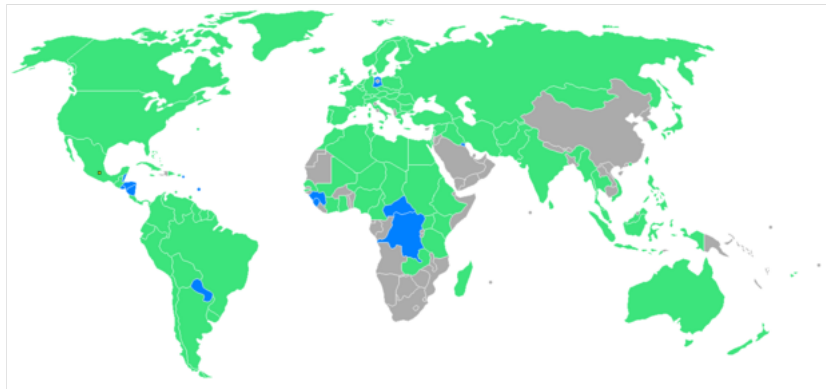
- [Basque pelota](#)
- [Tennis](#)

The organizers declined to hold a [judo](#) tournament at the Olympics, even though it had been a full-medal sport [four years earlier](#). This was the last time judo was not included in the Olympic games.

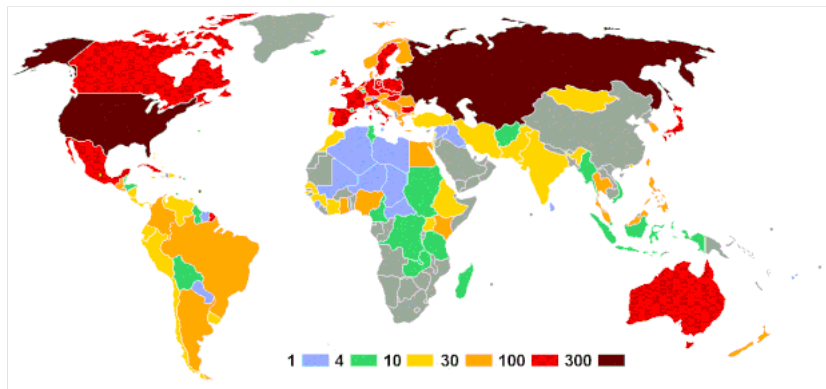
[Baseball](#) had been featured as a demonstration sport at the 1964 Tokyo Games, but not in 1968, despite Mexico's [baseball heritage](#). Instead, a separate [international tournament](#) was held in Mexico City, shortly after the conclusion of the Olympic Games.

Participating National Olympic Committees

[East Germany](#) and [West Germany](#) competed as separate entities for the first time at a Summer Olympiad, and would remain so through 1988. [Barbados](#) competed for the first time as an independent country. Also competing for the first time in a Summer Olympiad were [British Honduras](#) (now [Belize](#)), [Central African Republic](#), the [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#) (as [Congo-Kinshasa](#)), [El Salvador](#), [Guinea](#), [Honduras](#), [Kuwait](#), [Nicaragua](#), [Paraguay](#), [Sierra Leone](#), and the [United States Virgin Islands](#). [Singapore](#) returned to the Games as an independent country after competing as part of the Malaysian team in 1964. [Suriname](#) and [Libya](#) actually competed for the first time (in 1960 and 1964, respectively, they took part in the Opening Ceremony, but their athletes later withdrew from the competition). The [People's Republic of China](#) last competed at the [1952 Summer Games](#) but had since withdrawn from the IOC due to a dispute with the [Republic of China](#) over the right to represent China.^[34]






























































































Participating countries



























Number of athletes per country


































Participating National Olympic Committees

-  [Afghanistan](#) (5 athletes)
-  [Algeria](#) (3)
-  [Argentina](#) (89)
-  [Australia](#) (128)
-  [Austria](#) (43)
-  [Bahamas](#) (16)
-  [Barbados](#) (9)
-  [Belgium](#) (82)
-  [Bermuda](#) (6)
-  [Bolivia](#) (4)
-  [Brazil](#) (76)
-  [British Honduras](#) (7)
-  [Bulgaria](#) (112)
-  [Burma](#) (4)
-  [Cameroon](#) (5)
-  [Canada](#) (138)
-  [Central African Republic](#) (1)
-  [Ceylon](#) (3)
-  [Chad](#) (3)
-  [Chile](#) (21)
-  [Colombia](#) (43)
-  [Congo-Kinshasa](#) (5)
-  [Costa Rica](#) (18)
-  [Cuba](#) (115)
-  [Czechoslovakia](#) (121)
-  [Denmark](#) (64)
-  [Dominican Republic](#) (18)
-  [Ecuador](#) (15)
-  [Egypt](#) (30)
-  [El Salvador](#) (60)
-  [Ethiopia](#) (18)
-  [Fiji](#) (1)
-  [Finland](#) (66)
-  [France](#) (200)
-  [East Germany](#) (226)
-  [West Germany](#) (275)
-  [Ghana](#) (31)
-  [Great Britain](#) (225)
-  [Greece](#) (44)
-  [Guatemala](#) (48)
-  [Guinea](#) (15)
-  [Guyana](#) (5)
-  [Honduras](#) (6)
-  [Hong Kong](#) (11)
-  [Hungary](#) (167)
-  [Iceland](#) (8)
-  [India](#) (25)
-  [Indonesia](#) (6)
-  [Iran](#) (14)
-  [Iraq](#) (3)
-  [Ireland](#) (31)
-  [Israel](#) (29)
-  [Italy](#) (167)
-  [Ivory Coast](#) (10)
-  [Jamaica](#) (25)
-  [Japan](#) (171)
-  [Kenya](#) (39)
-  [South Korea](#) (54)
-  [Kuwait](#) (2)
-  [Lebanon](#) (11)
-  [Libya](#) (1)
-  [Liechtenstein](#) (2)
-  [Luxembourg](#) (5)
-  [Madagascar](#) (4)
-  [Malaysia](#) (31)
-  [Mali](#) (2)
-  [Malta](#) (1)
-  [Mexico](#) (275) (**host**)
-  [Monaco](#) (2)
-  [Mongolia](#) (16)
-  [Morocco](#) (24)
-  [Netherlands](#) (107)
-  [Netherlands Antilles](#) (5)
-  [New Zealand](#) (52)
-  [Nicaragua](#) (11)
-  [Niger](#) (2)
-  [Nigeria](#) (36)
-  [Norway](#) (46)
-  [Pakistan](#) (15)
-  [Panama](#) (16)
-  [Paraguay](#) (1)
-  [Peru](#) (28)
-  [Philippines](#) (49)
-  [Poland](#) (177)
-  [Portugal](#) (20)
-  [Puerto Rico](#) (58)
-  [Romania](#) (82)
-  [San Marino](#) (4)
-  [Senegal](#) (21)
-  [Sierra Leone](#) (3)
-  [Singapore](#) (4)
-  [Soviet Union](#) (312)
-  [Spain](#) (122)
-  [Sudan](#) (5)
-  [Suriname](#) (1)
-  [Sweden](#) (100)
-  [Switzerland](#) (85)
-  [Syria](#) (2)
-  [Taiwan](#) (43)
-  [Tanzania](#) (4)
-  [Thailand](#) (41)
-  [Trinidad and Tobago](#) (19)
-  [Tunisia](#) (7)
-  [Turkey](#) (29)
-  [Uganda](#) (11)
-  [United States](#) (357)
-  [Uruguay](#) (27)
-  [Venezuela](#) (23)
-  [Vietnam](#) (9)
-  [Virgin Islands](#) (6)
-  [Yugoslavia](#) (69)
-  [Zambia](#) (7)

Number of athletes by National Olympic Committees

IOC Letter Code	Country	Athletes
AFG	 Afghanistan	5
ALG	 Algeria	3
ARG	 Argentina	89
AUS	 Australia	128
AUT	 Austria	43
BAH	 Bahamas	16
BAR	 Barbados	9
BEL	 Belgium	82
BER	 Bermuda	6
BOL	 Bolivia	4
BRA	 Brazil	76
HBR	 British Honduras	7
BUL	 Bulgaria	112
BIR	 Burma	4
CMR	 Cameroon	5
CAN	 Canada	138
CAF	 Central African Republic	1
CEY	 Ceylon	3
CHA	 Chad	3
CHI	 Chile	21
COL	 Colombia	43
COK	 Congo-Kinshasa	5

CRC	 <u>Costa Rica</u>	18
CUB	 <u>Cuba</u>	115
TCH	 <u>Czechoslovakia</u>	121
DEN	 <u>Denmark</u>	64
DOM	 <u>Dominican Republic</u>	18
ECU	 <u>Ecuador</u>	15
EGY	 <u>Egypt</u>	30
ESA	 <u>El Salvador</u>	60
ETH	 <u>Ethiopia</u>	18
FIJ	 <u>Fiji</u>	1
FIN	 <u>Finland</u>	66
FRA	 <u>France</u>	200
GDR	 <u>East Germany</u>	226
FRG	 <u>West Germany</u>	275
GHA	 <u>Ghana</u>	31
GBR	 <u>Great Britain</u>	225
GRE	 <u>Greece</u>	44
GUA	 <u>Guatemala</u>	48
GUI	 <u>Guinea</u>	15
GUY	 <u>Guyana</u>	5
HON	 <u>Honduras</u>	6
HKG	 <u>Hong Kong</u>	11
HUN	 <u>Hungary</u>	167
ISL	 <u>Iceland</u>	8
IND	 <u>India</u>	25
INA	 <u>Indonesia</u>	6
IRI	 <u>Iran</u>	14
IRQ	 <u>Iraq</u>	3
IRL	 <u>Ireland</u>	31
ISR	 <u>Israel</u>	29
ITA	 <u>Italy</u>	167
CIV	 <u>Ivory Coast</u>	10
JAM	 <u>Jamaica</u>	25
JPN	 <u>Japan</u>	171
KEN	 <u>Kenya</u>	39
KOR	 <u>South Korea</u>	54
KUW	 <u>Kuwait</u>	2
LIB	 <u>Lebanon</u>	11
LBA	 <u>Libya</u>	1
LIE	 <u>Liechtenstein</u>	2
LUX	 <u>Luxembourg</u>	5
MAD	 <u>Madagascar</u>	4
MAS	 <u>Malaysia</u>	31
MLI	 <u>Mali</u>	2
MLT	 <u>Malta</u>	1
MEX	 <u>Mexico</u>	275
MON	 <u>Monaco</u>	2
MGL	 <u>Mongolia</u>	16
MAR	 <u>Morocco</u>	24
NED	 <u>Netherlands</u>	107
AHO	 <u>Netherlands Antilles</u>	5
NZL	 <u>New Zealand</u>	52
NCA	 <u>Nicaragua</u>	11
NIG	 <u>Niger</u>	2
NGR	 <u>Nigeria</u>	36

NOR	 Norway	46
PAK	 Pakistan	15
PAN	 Panama	16
PAR	 Paraguay	1
PER	 Peru	28
PHI	 Philippines	49
POL	 Poland	177
POR	 Portugal	20
PUR	 Puerto Rico	58
ROU	 Romania	82
SMR	 San Marino	4
SEN	 Senegal	21
SLE	 Sierra Leone	3
SIN	 Singapore	4
URS	 Soviet Union	312
ESP	 Spain	122
SUD	 Sudan	5
SUR	 Suriname	1
SWE	 Sweden	100
SUI	 Switzerland	85
SYR	 Syria	2
ROC	 Taiwan	43
TAN	 Tanzania	4
THA	 Thailand	41
TRI	 Trinidad and Tobago	19
TUN	 Tunisia	7
TUR	 Turkey	29
UGA	 Uganda	11
USA	 United States	357
URU	 Uruguay	27
VEN	 Venezuela	23
VIE	 Vietnam	9
ISV	 Virgin Islands	6
YUG	 Yugoslavia	69
ZAM	 Zambia	7

Total 5,516

Calendar

All dates are in [Central Time Zone \(UTC-6\)](#)

OC	Opening ceremony	•	Event competitions	1	Gold medal events	CC	Closing ceremony
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October 1968		12th Sat	13th Sun	14th Mon	15th Tue	16th Wed	17th Thu	18th Fri	19th Sat	20th Sun	21st Mon	22nd Tue	23rd Wed	24th Thu	25th Fri	26th Sat	27th Sun	Events
Ceremonies		OC															CC	—
Aquatics	Diving						•	1	•	1		•	1	•	•	1		33
	Swimming						2	•	4	3	3	3	4	4	3	3		
	Water polo			•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	1		
Athletics			1	4	4	7	6	5	2	7								36
Basketball			•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	1					1
Boxing			•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•		11		11
Canoeing												•	•	•	7			7
Cycling	Road cycling				1								1					7
	Track cycling						1	1	1	•	2							
Equestrian								•	•	•	2		1	1	1		1	6
Fencing					•	1	1	•	1	1	1	1	•	1	1			8
Field hockey			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	1		1
Football			•	•	•	•	•	•		•		•		•		1		1
Gymnastics											•	•	2	2	4	6		14
Modern pentathlon			•	•	•	•	2											2
Rowing			•		•		•	•	7									7
Sailing				•	•	•	•		•	•	5							5
Shooting								2	1		1	1	2					7
Volleyball			•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•		•	•	•	2		2
Weightlifting			1	1	1	1	1	1	1									7
Wrestling							•	•	•	8			•	•	•	8		16
Daily medal events			2	5	6	9	13	10	17	20	14	5	12	8	16	34	1	172
Cumulative total			2	7	13	22	35	45	62	82	96	101	113	121	137	171	172	
October 1968		12th Sat	13th Sun	14th Mon	15th Tue	16th Wed	17th Thu	18th Fri	19th Sat	20th Sun	21st Mon	22nd Tue	23rd Wed	24th Thu	25th Fri	26th Sat	27th Sun	Total events

Boycotting countries

North Korea withdrew from the 1968 Games because of two incidents that strained its relations with the IOC. First, the IOC had barred North Korean track and field athletes from the 1968 Games because they had participated in the rival Games of the New Emerging Forces (GANEFO) in 1966. Secondly, the IOC had ordered the nation to compete under the name "North Korea" in the 1968 Games, whereas the country itself would have preferred its official name: "Democratic People's Republic of Korea".^[35]

Medal count

These are the top ten nations that won medals at the 1968 Games. Host Mexico won nine medals in total.

Rank	Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	 United States	45	28	34	107
2	 Soviet Union	29	32	30	91
3	 Japan	11	7	7	25
4	 Hungary	10	10	12	32
5	 East Germany	9	9	7	25
6	 France	7	3	5	15
7	 Czechoslovakia	7	2	4	13
8	 West Germany	5	11	10	26
9	 Australia	5	7	5	17
10	 Great Britain	5	5	3	13
Totals (10 entries)		133	114	117	364

See also



- 1968 Summer Paralympics
- 1968 Winter Olympics
- List of IOC country codes
- 1968 Olympics Black Power salute

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External videos

 Full Olympic Film - Mexico City 1968 Olympic Games (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVsQYRZgb10>) on YouTube

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