

# Olympic Athletes to Compete in Winter Games February 12-28



The Olympic torch is making its way across Canada. It is on its way to the city of Vancouver where it will be used to light the Olympic flame on February 12. Once the flame is lit, the Winter Olympic Games will get underway. More than 2,500 athletes from more than 80 countries will compete.

They will vie for gold, silver, and bronze medals in 86 events in 15 winter sports.

This year marks the 21st time that nations of the world will come together to compete in the Winter Olympics. The Winter Games were first held in France in 1924. That year, 258 athletes from 16 nations competed in 16 events. This year's Olympics will mark the second time that Canada has played host to the Games. The last time was in 1988.

In order to prepare for the Games, many new buildings have been built in and around Vancouver. New train lines were constructed to shuttle people between the airport and downtown Vancouver. Roads had to be widened between Vancouver and the mountains where many events will take place. Getting ready for and holding the Olympic Games will cost about \$1.8 billion.

## NEWS WORDS

shuttle    ceremony  
route    disabilities  
vie    underway

## MORE FACTS ABOUT THE 2010 WINTER GAMES

- This year, for the first time, the Opening Ceremony of the Olympics will be held *indoors*.
- Vancouver will be the warmest place the Winter Olympics have ever been held. The average February temperature in downtown Vancouver is 41 degrees.
- The Olympic torch is traveling 27,000 miles as it makes its way around Canada to Vancouver. About 12,000 Canadians are taking part in the torch relay. Each person is carrying the torch over a short part of the route.
- At least six nations -- Ghana, Cayman Islands, Colombia, Peru, Montenegro, and Serbia -- will compete in the Winter Olympics for the first time. Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica will return to the games after missing the 2006 Winter Olympics.
- The 2010 Paralympic Games -- for athletes with physical and visual disabilities -- will take place in Vancouver this March. Athletes will participate in six different sports.

## THINK ABOUT THE NEWS

Which Winter Olympic event is your favorite to watch? Why?  
If you could compete in a Winter Olympic sport, which sport would that be? Why?