

Sikhism

Common words and meanings

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WORD	PRONUNCIATION	MEANING
Adi Granth	(<i>Adhi Granthh</i>)	The 'first book' – the most important book for Sikhs
Ajuni	(<i>Adjunee</i>)	Meaning 'Not incarnated' / having no shape (one of the attributes of God, listed in Mool Mantar)
Akal Murat	(<i>Ah-kal Moorat</i>)	Meaning 'Beyond time' / having no picture (one of the attributes of God, listed in Mool Mantar)
Akal Purakh	(<i>Ah-kal Poorrk</i>)	Meaning 'The Eternal One' / not man
Akal Takht	(<i>Ah-kal Tahkt</i>)	Highest seat / building which sits in front of the causeway leading to the Golden Temple in Armritsar
Akhand Path	(<i>Ah-kand-e Paht</i>)	A continuous reading of the Gurus' scriptures, used on special occasions; takes 48 hrs to complete
Amrit	(<i>Am-rit</i>)	'Water of life' or 'holy nectar'; made up of water and sugar. Prepared by Panj Piarre, Guru Granth Sahib present
Amrit ceremony		Sikh Baptism. Initiation ceremony usually organised at Baisaikhi. Those who take amrit wear the 5 'K's
Anand Karaj	(<i>Anand-e karge</i>)	Marriage ceremony / the ceremony of joy
Anandpur	(<i>Anand-e poorr</i>)	Place where Guru Gobind Singh founded Khalsa
Armritsar	(<i>Arm-rits-ar</i>)	Meaning 'Pool of nectar'. Holy place of the Sikhs; located in the northern Indian state of Punjab
Baisakhi	(<i>Ba-sack-ee</i>)	The day on which the Khalsa were born and Sikhs were given clear identity; a Sikh festival, Sikh New Year
Baja	(<i>Badgah</i>)	Harmonium
Bhangra	(<i>Bungera</i>)	Form of folk dancing for Punjabi culture

Besant	<i>(B' sant-e)</i>	Spring; when yellow flowers appear
Chakra	<i>(Chach'r)</i>	Circle symbolising continuity and eternity
Chauri	<i>(Chorr)</i>	Fan / whisk waved in respect over the Guru Granth Sahib
Darbar Sahib	<i>(Der-barr Sa'eeb)</i>	Prayer hall inside gurdwara where Guru Granth Sahib is placed
Daya Ram	<i>(Deya Ram)</i>	First of the Five Pure Ones (Panj Piare), first members of Sikh Khalsa. Became Daya Singh
Dharma Das	<i>(Durrham Das)</i>	Second of the Five Pure Ones (Panj Piare), first members of Sikh Khalsa. Became Dharma Singh
Diwali / Diwali	<i>(Deewahlee)</i>	Five day festival of light which signifies the victory of good over evil within an individual
Dustar Bandi	<i>(Dustarr Ban-dee)</i>	Special celebration of when a boy begins to wear his (and sometimes 'her') turban
Granth	<i>(Granth)</i>	Any large book
Granthi	<i>(Grantee)</i>	Person who leads worship and oversees care of Guru Granth Sahib / Sikh priest
Gurdwara	<i>(Goorrd wara)</i>	Sikh temple. Literally means 'the door of the Guru'
Gurmurkhi	<i>(Goor mookee)</i>	The writing in the scriptures and modern Panjabi
Gur Parshad	<i>(Goor parshad)</i>	Meaning 'Made known by the grace of the Guru' / blessed by the Guru (one of the attributes of God, listed in Mool Mantar)
Gurpurb	<i>(Goor puurrb)</i>	A festival to mark an anniversary of the birth or death of a guru
Guru	<i>(G'roo)</i>	One of the ten teachers and guides of the Sikhs

Guru Granth Sahib	<i>(G'ru grant sa'eeb)</i>	Sikh scriptures / the divine word. Treated with respect as a 'living Guru'
Gutka	<i>(Goot kah)</i>	Prayer book which contains sections of the Guru Granth Sahib. Used for personal devotions
Harimandir	<i>(Harry man der)</i>	'Temple of God', Golden temple at Armritsar
Himmat Rai	<i>(Himmat rye)</i>	Fourth of the Five Pure Ones (Panj Piare), first members of Sikh Khalsa. Became Himmat Singh
Hola Mohalla	<i>(Hola Mohallah)</i>	Meaning 'charge of an army'. Sikh festival (in spring) which lasts for a week with camping, fighting games and music
Hukamnama	<i>(Hookam namma)</i>	Now used to refer to the shabd (hymn) read after ardas prayer is said in presence of Sikh holy scripture Opening of the Guru Granth Sahib at random (general)
Ik Onkar	<i>(Eek onkar)</i>	Meaning 'One God'. First letters of first word of Mool Mantar
Jorri	<i>(Jorree)</i>	Pair of drums
Kachera	<i>(Cashaira)</i>	Undershorts - symbol of readiness to fight / protect weak and to defend Sikh faith (one of 5 'k's)
Kangha	<i>(Kanga)</i>	Comb – symbolises discipline; helps to keep uncut hair tidy (one of 5 'k's)
Kara	<i>(Karrah)</i>	Steel band worn on right wrist – symbol of oneness of God; circle – unity of Khalsa (one of 5 'k's)
Kara Parshad	<i>(Kara Parshad)</i>	Sweet food blessed at kartan service.
Karta Purakh	<i>(Karta Poorrk)</i>	Meaning 'Creator' (one of the attributes of God, listed in Mool Mantar)

Kartarpur	<i>(Guit-tarrpoor)</i>	Town in which rests the very first copy of the Guru Granth Sahib
Kaur	<i>(Core)</i>	Meaning 'Princess'. Term given to all Sikh females.
Kesh	<i>(Caish)</i>	Uncut hair symbol of dedication (one of 5 'k's)
Keski	<i>(Keski)</i>	Small turban - symbol of wisdom. Used to cover Sikh's uncut hair.
Khalsa	<i>(Khalsa)</i>	The 'Pure Ones' – forming a group of specially dedicated Sikhs
Khanda	<i>(K'nda)</i>	Double-edged sword symbolic of the almighty power of the creator
Kirat karna	<i>(Kiert-e kar<u>na</u>)</i>	Earning living by honest means
Kirpan	<i>(Kerpan)</i>	Sword – symbol Sikh dignity, self-respect and of being ready to fight for what is right (one of 5 'k's)
Kirtan	<i>(Kierten)</i>	Devotional singing
Kurahit	<i>(Coor a hit)</i>	The prohibitions which Sikhs must follow
Langar	<i>(Lang'rr)</i>	Community kitchen where food is shared / served to everyone
Lavan	<i>(Llama)</i>	A hymn always sung at weddings
Manji	<i>(M'njee)</i>	Small bed /Large stool on which to place the Guru Granth Sahib
Mardana	<i>(Marr-e danna)</i>	One of Guru Nanak's Muslim friends who put Guru Nanak's poems to music
Melas	<i>(Mela)</i>	Fairs (Baisaikhi, Divali, Besant, Hola Mohalla)

Miri	(<i>Meeree</i>)	Political / royal power
Moksha	(<i>Moksh</i>)	Spiritual liberation
Mool Mantar	(<i>Mool Mant'r</i>)	Opening verses of the Guru Granth Sahib written by first guru, Guru Nanak
Mukham Chand	(<i>Mohookham Chand</i>)	Third of the Five Pure Ones (Panj Piare), first members of Sikh Khalsa. Became Mukham Singh
Nam Japna	(<i>Nam japna</i>)	Remembering / meditating on God; prayer
Nir Bhau	(<i>Near beau</i>)	Meaning 'Fearless' (one of the attributes of God, listed in Mool Mantar)
Nir Vair	(<i>Near vair</i>)	Meaning 'Without hatred' (one of the attributes of God, listed in Mool Mantar)
Nishan Sahib	(<i>Nish-ahn Sa'eeb</i>)	Saffron coloured flag with khanda on it. Flies outside Sikh place of worship and langar.
Palki	(<i>Pal kee</i>)	Arched structure / canopy which covers the manji (stool for Guru Granth Sahib)
Panj Kakke	(<i>Pang-e kakarr</i>)	The 5 'k's (kesh, kara, kirpan, kangha, kachera)
Panj Piarre	(<i>Pange Pee ar ay</i>)	The Five Pure Ones, first members of the Sikh Khalsa
Panjabi	(<i>P'njabee</i>)	The language used by Sikhs and others from the Punjab – sometimes spelled Punjabi
Panth	(<i>Pantth</i>)	Sikh nation / group of Sikhs (universal also)
Patka	(<i>Pattekah</i>)	A cloth used to secure the hair
Piri	(<i>Peeree</i>)	Spiritual power
Prakash Karna	(<i>Sat-e Nam</i>)	Ceremony in which Guru Granth Sahib is taken from overnight resting place to Durbar Sahib

Punjab	(Punjab)	Meaning five rivers; a place in northern India
Ragis	(<i>Raggee</i>)	Musicians
Rahit Maryada	(<i>Rah h't maaryada</i>)	Official set of guidelines to provide code of conduct for Sikh life and living
Reincarnation		Rebirth of the soul in a new body
Romallas	(Romalla)	Decorative cloths to cover the Guru Granth Sahib; may be given as an offering
Saibhang	(<i>Saybang</i>)	Meaning 'Self-existent' (one of the attributes of God, listed in Mool Mantar)
Sahib	(<i>Sa'eeb</i>)	Term of respect
Sahib Chand	(<i>Sa'eeb chand</i>)	Fifth of the Five Pure Ones (Panj Piare), first members of Sikh Khalsa. Became Sahib Singh
Sangat	(<i>Sangg't</i>)	The Sikh congregation assembled for worship
Satnam	(<i>Sat-e nam</i>)	Meaning 'Truth' (one of the attributes of God, listed in Mool Mantar)
Sewa	(<i>Say va</i>)	Selfless service
Shishya	(<i>Sheeshyah</i>)	Pupil of a Guru
Sikh	(<i>Seek</i>)	From the Punjabi word 'Shishya' meaning 'to learn'
Sikh Dharam	(<i>Seek Durrham</i>)	The Sikh faith / way of life
Singh	(<i>Singh</i>)	Meaning 'Lion'. Term given to all Sikh males
Sitar	(<i>Seetarr</i>)	A stringed musical instrument

Such Khand	<i>(Sutch Kand)</i>	Where Guru Gobind Singh had last breath; where Guru Granth Sahib is placed overnight
Sukh Aasan	<i>(Sook Aah s'n)</i>	The ceremony of putting to rest the Guru Granth Sahib; when the Guru Granth Sahib is closed
Tabla	<i>(Tabela)</i>	A small pair of drums
Takht	<i>(Takkt)</i>	Raised platform for the Guru Granth Sahib
Turban	<i>(Turban)</i>	(Also known as pagg). Symbol of wisdom. Used to cover Sikh's uncut hair. Made from cloth over 4.5m long
Vak	<i>(Wahk)</i>	A daily spiritual message to help people through the day
Vak Laina	<i>(Wahk laina)</i>	Guru's message for the day when Guru Granth Sahib is opened at random (can be for individual)
Vand Chakraa	<i>(Wand-e chack)</i>	Sharing time, talents and earnings with others
Waheguru	<i>(Waheg'roo)</i>	Meaning 'Wonderful Lord'