

The Five Ks

For Preview Only





The Five Ks

Everyone who is a full member of the Sikh religion must wear five symbols which show that they are Sikhs. They are called the Five Ks. The Five Ks were introduced by the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh. Each of them reminds Sikhs of something about their religion.





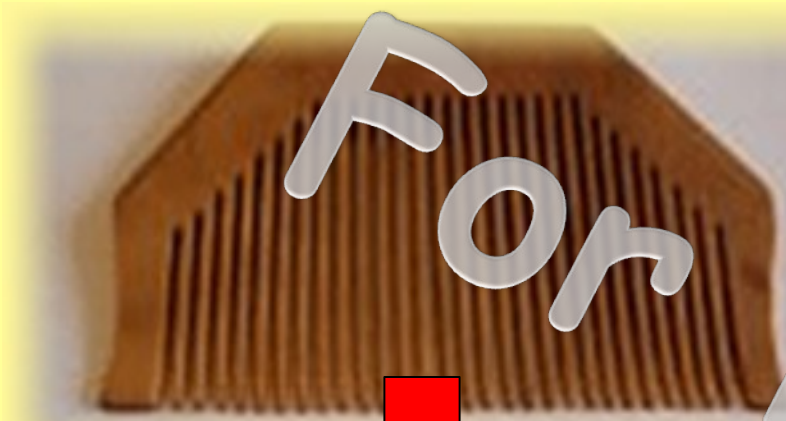
Kesh



Kesh means uncut hair. Guru Gobindh Singh said that hair should be allowed to grow naturally. For men, this includes not shaving. Hair should be allowed to grow, but it should be kept clean and combed at least twice a day. For Sikhs, growing hair is an acceptance of God's will.



Kangha



The kangha is a small wooden comb. It keeps the hair fixed in place, and is a symbol of cleanliness. For Sikhs, keeping clean and tidy hair is part of their religion. Combing their hair reminds them that their lives should be tidy and organized too.



Kirpan

The kirpan is a short sword. It reminds Sikhs that it is their duty to fight against evil. A kirpan should never be used for attack, only for defence. It may be up to a metre long, but most Sikhs today carry one which is about 10cm long. It is usually kept in a special wooden case, fixed to a strap over the person's shoulder.





Kara

The kara is a plain steel bangle worn on the right wrist. It is worn as a symbol, not as jewellery. It is a complete circle, which reminds Sikhs that there is one God and one truth, without beginning or end. The steel reminds them of the strength they must have when fighting for what is right.



Kachera



Kachera are short trousers, worn as underwear. At the time of Guru Gobind Singh, most people in India wore long, loose clothes. Guru Gobind Singh said that the change in style was a symbol that people were leaving behind old ideas and following better ones. Kachera were also more practical, especially in battle.

