

National sports

1 Work with a partner. Match the national sports in box A with the countries in box B.

A alpine skiing • baseball • kickboxing
rugby • table tennis

B China • New Zealand • the US
Thailand • Slovenia

2a Read the fact files. Which sport originated in the country where it is still played?



NATIONAL SPORTS AROUND THE WORLD

Argentina



National sport: pato
Sporting category: team, ball, outdoor, equestrian
Equipment: leather ball with six large handles, hoop, helmet
No. of players: four per team
Venue: field
Object of game: Two teams on horseback try to get possession of a ball and score by throwing it through a vertical hoop. The winner is the team with the most goals at the end of play.
Length of game: 48 minutes
History: A sport which has been played since the 17th century, when it began as a game between gauchos to occupy the time between watching their cattle in the fields.

Did you know? The sport was originally played with a duck inside a basket instead of a ball! Pato means 'duck' in Spanish, which gives the sport its name.

National sport: bandy (Russian hockey)
Sporting category: team, winter, ball, outdoor
Equipment: stick, ball, skates, goal, protective gear
No. of players: 11 per team
Venue: ice rink
Object of game: Two teams of skaters use sticks to hit a ball into the other team's goal. The winner is the team with the most goals at the end of play.
Length of game: 90 minutes
History: A game similar to modern bandy was being played in Russia by the 18th century, although the origins of the sport are thought to come from *bando*, a game played in Wales at least 200 years ago which was probably the predecessor of hockey.



Russia

Did you know? Bandy is not to be confused with ice hockey. It uses a ball instead of a puck, and the rink is much larger (about the size of a football pitch).



National sport: taekwondo
Sporting category: individual, combat, indoor
Equipment: helmet and guards for chest, arms, shins and mouth for competitions
Venue: gym
Object of game: A system of body exercises designed for self-defence which combines movements of the hands and feet (kicks, punches, open-handed strikes and throws) to defend against an opponent in unarmed combat. It also uses concentration, combat philosophy and physical fitness to triumph over the challenger.
Length of game: three rounds of one minute
History: It developed during the 1940s and 1950s from Japanese and Chinese martial arts, but similar martial arts have been practised in Korea for thousands of years.

South Korea

Did you know? In 2000, taekwondo became an official sport in the Olympics.

National sport: cricket
Sporting category: team, ball, outdoor
Equipment: bat, ball, protective gear
No. of players: 11 per team
Venue: field
Object of game: A bowler delivers the ball to the batsman on the other team who hits the ball away from the fielders so that he can score runs. The winner is the team with the most runs at the end of play.
Length of game: six hours or more for one-day games
History: An early form of the sport was first played in 16th century England, and the game was brought to Jamaica in the late 19th century.

Jamaica



Did you know? A cricket ball can travel at speeds of up to 140 km per hour so protective gear is very important.

2b Read the fact files again. Then read the sentences and write the sports.

- 1 Its origins were probably in the UK.
- 2 There aren't many players in a team.
- 3 You compete against one other person.
- 4 It's one of the longest games in sport.
- 5 It involves a series of movements to defend oneself.
- 6 You need special equipment for the feet.
- 7 A different version of the sport was originally played without a ball.
- 8 It requires an object with which to hit the ball.

2c Complete the table with a tick (✓) or a cross (X).

	pato	bandy	taekwondo	cricket
1 It's a ball sport.	✓			
2 You score goals.				
3 You usually wear a helmet.				
4 It's played on a field.				
5 It has 11 players per team.				
6 You don't use a stick or a bat.				

Speaking**3a Work with a partner and discuss the questions.**

- 1 Are any of the sports in the fact files played in your country? Which of these sports would you like to try?
- 2 What other sports are popular in your country?
- 3 Do you know your country's national sport? Why is it the national sport? What are its origins?
- 4 Do you think it's important for a country to identify with a national sport?

PROJECT**3b You are going to prepare fact files for the national sports of your country and a country of your choice. Read the questions and prepare your project research.**

Work in pairs. Do some research on the Internet to find out about the national sports of your own country and the country you have chosen. Make notes on the following:

- what type of sport it is
- where it is played
- what equipment is needed
- how many people play
- what the object of the sport is
- how long a game lasts
- the history of the sport
- any other interesting information.

3c When you have done your research, prepare your fact files. Present a fact file each to the rest of the class. Compare the national sports of different countries and discuss those that you find most interesting.