



Glossary of Sikh Terms

Aad Granth	compilation of Sikh hymns of the first five Gurus
Ahankaar	ego - one of the five vices
Akal	the immortal Lord (lit.)
Akali	worshippers of the immortal Lord, bands of Khalsa fighters
Akali Dal	political party in Punjab
Akal Sena	God's Army (lit.) name of the pre-Khalsa army under the sixth Guru
Akal Takht	Sikh parliament
Amrit	nectar (lit.) Sikh baptism
Amritdhari	one who is baptised or initiated into the Khalsa
Amrit Sanskar	initiation or baptism ceremony
Anand Karaj	marriage ceremony
Antam Sanskar	death ceremony
Ardas	supplication said at end of prayers
Bahadur	brave (lit.)
Bhai Sahib	term of respect for a senior Sikh
Charan Pahul	water blessed by the feet of the Guru, in essence the initiation ceremony for Sikhs until the Vaisakhi of 1699
Chardi Kala	high spirits or morale (lit.)
Chotta Khalukara	small holocaust (lit.), around 7,000 Sikhs killed in one night in 1746
Chuni	scarf worn by women to cover their heads
Dal Khalsa	unified structure or confederacy of the Sikhs
Damalla	a traditional round turban
Dasam Granth	compilation of writings by Guru Gobind Singh
Dastaar	Sikh name for a Turban, meaning 'Crown'
Dastaar Bandhan	turban tying ceremony
Dharamsala	places of Sikh practice and worship, precursor to the Gurdwara
Divali	festival celebrated in November
Doab	land between each of the rivers in the Punjab: Bari doab between the Ravi and Beas, Jullunder doab between the Beas and Sutlej, Rachna between the Chenab and Ravi, Chaj between the Jhelum and Chenab, and Sind Sagar between the Indus and Jhelum.
Giani	one who has knowledge of Sikh scripture
Gurdwara	Sikh place of worship, not to be called a temple
Gurmat	Guru's teachings (lit.)
Gurmantar	the Guru's chant (lit.) is the name of God - Vaheguru
Gurmata	edict issued by a group of initiated Sikhs or from the Akal Takht
Gurmukhi	language of the Sikh Scriptures



Harimandir Sahib	official name of the <i>Golden Temple</i> in Amritsar
Hukamnama	command taken from Sikh Scriptures by opening it to a random part
Jaap Sahib	first prayer in the Dasam Granth, and second prayer of the Sikh initiation ceremony and daily routine
Janam Sanskar	birth Ceremony
Japji Sahib	First prayer in Guru Granth Sahib, composed by Guru Nanak
Jatha	band or group of Sikhs
Kaam	lust – one of the five vices
Kaur	a name all Sikh women affix to their first name, meaning 'princess'
Kara	an iron bangle, one of the 5 K's (rest listed beneath)
Karah Prashad	sweet pudding served at the Gurdwara
Kaccherra	cotton underwear
Kakkar	sacred symbols (lit.) refers to the 5 K's of: Kes, Kangha, Kaccherra, Kara, Kirpaan
Kirtan Sohila	Prayer which Sikhs perform before sleep or at a funeral
Kangha	wooden comb
Kes	unshorn hair
Khalsa	brother of the Pure (lit.) the name of the order of initiated Sikhs
Khanda	double-edged sword
Khande Di Pahul	baptism nectar made with the stirring of the double-edged sword
Kirpaan	small ceremonial dagger
Kirat Kamai	principle of earning an honest living
Krodh	anger - one of the five vices
Kurta	Punjabi shirt which can stretch to the knee
Langar	free communal kitchen, found in a Gurdwara
Lavaa	wedding hymns
Lobh	greed - one of the five vices
Lungi	colourful cloth worn around the waist
Maharaja	great king (lit.)
Moh	attachment - one of the five vices
Mool Mantar	first stanza of Sikh Scriptures, found at the beginning of Japji Sahib
Miri	military qualities, one half of <i>miri-piri</i>
Misl	a band of warriors
Nawab	a title similar to a Baron
Nishan Sahib	Sikh flag, often orange but can be blue
Padishah	means king
Panth	brotherhood (lit.)
Panj Pyare	Five beloved ones (lit.) who were the first to take Khalsa baptism. Also refers to five initiated Sikhs who represent the original five in administering <i>amrit</i> or conducting ceremonial duties.



Patka	head covering tied like a bandana
Pir	prophet (lit)
Piri	saintly qualities, one half of <i>miri-piri</i>
Pugaree	colourful turban, also called <i>pug</i>
Punjab	home of Sikhs, currently split in half between India and Pakistan
Raag	classical Indian melodies
Ragis	musicians who sing from the Sikh scriptures
Rakhi	protection (lit.)
Rehat	conduct
Rehatnama	code of conduct
Rehraas Sahib	evening prayer
Salvar Kameez	traditional Punjabi female dress
Sangat	congregation
Sarbat Khalsa	direct form of democracy, were Sikhs gather at Amritsar to vote
Sardar	term of respect for a turbaned Sikh
Sardarji	title of respect for a Sardar
Sarkaar	government (lit.)
Saroop	physical form (lit.)
Sat Nam	Truth is his Name (lit) second line from the beginning of the Sikh Scriptures
Shabad	teachings of the Guru contained in Sikh Scriptures the Guru Granth
Sikh	disciple or learner (lit.)
Singh	a name all Sikh men affix to their first name, meaning 'lion'
Singh Sahib	title of respect for Sikh men
Singhnian	female Sikhs
Vada Khalukara	large holocaust in 1762, around 25,000 Sikhs massacred
Vaheguru	name of God meaning "Wonderful Enlightener" (also spelt Waheguru)
Vaisakhi	anniversary of the creation of the Khalsa during the harvest month of April
Vidya Sanskar	education ceremony