

What to expect from the 2012 summer olympics in london



The Summer Olympics are a big, expensive event requiring years of preparation on the part of the host country—and it just gets bigger and bigger with time. The 2008 Beijing Olympics were the most expensive of all time, and it's widely believed that the Chinese government lost money, or at best broke even when you take national glory and public-relations points into account. Even so, hosting the games is considered a great privilege, and agreeing to do so comes with big responsibilities and, of course, big spending.

Soon after London was awarded the games in 2005, the gears of site development were set in motion. The city has worked on constructing the new Olympic Park, a large complex in East London that will contain several smaller venues, including the Olympic Stadium, the Aquatics Centre, a Basketball Arena, and the London Velopark. It will also contain the Olympic Village, which will house the athletes. Meanwhile, other venues are being constructed across the city, including the so-called “O2” complex, located in Canary Wharf, that will house the gymnastics competitions.

Security is a major concern in the planning of the 2012 Olympic games. This is due to the tumultuous history of the games, plus the fact that London was hit with the largest terrorist attack in its history less than 24 hours after the city was awarded the games. Officials don't believe that there was any connection between the announcement and the attacks, but we can't blame Londoners for associating the two. Of course, the Beijing games were plagued by security threats as well, but there were no major issues in the event. As for the games themselves, fans can expect to see everything that

was included in the Beijing games, with the exception of baseball and softball, which the IOC voted to drop.

Although the committee considered adding a number of new sports—including squash, golf, karate, rugby, and roller sports—none were approved for inclusion in these games. Golf and rugby sevens, however, will be part of the 2016 games in Rio de Janeiro. Organizers of the London games have indicated that there will be about 8 million tickets available. Sign-ups for ticket eligibility began in March of 2010, and the tickets are set to go on sale in the spring of 2011.

If you're lucky enough to be able to make it to the games, all London public transportation will be free to ticket-holders on the day of a ticketed event.