

The  
*Ultimate*  
Guide

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# Introduction

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If you don't think golfer Arnold Palmer, astronaut Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin, country crooner Brad Paisley and race car driver Sam Hornish, Jr. have anything in common besides celebrity, you need the Shriner Primer.

If you think that "Potentate" is the strength of hot sauce that lies somewhere between "mild" and "hot" at your favorite burrito joint, you need the Shriner Primer.

And if you think the only thing Shriners - those guys in the odd-looking, tasseled, red hats in your local Independence Day parade - do is ride around in tiny cars, you really need the Shriner Primer.

Consider the following 20 pages our version of the CliffsNotes® on Shriners International. Spend a few minutes perusing this booklet, and we hope you'll have a better insight into the Shriners fraternity and Shriners Hospitals for Children. At the very least, you'll be able to amaze your friends with your knowledge of trivia. At the very most, you'll be inclined to continue learning more!

# Shriners of the Times

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Shriners International, simply put, is a fraternity.

It all started in Manhattan back in 1870, when some members of what's widely considered the world's oldest fraternity, Masonry, were hanging out at their favorite tavern. The guys felt like their band of brothers needed a little spicing up. They thought Masonry, which traces its roots to stonemasons and craftsmen of the Middle Ages (more on page 4), was a tad too focused on ritual. These guys wanted a fraternity that stressed fun and fellowship.

Leave it up to an analytical mind - Walter M. Fleming, M.D. - and an artistic type - Billy Florence, an actor - to take that idea and run with it. Florence conceptualized the idea for a Near East-themed organization after attending a party thrown by an Arabian diplomat. Fleming added the structure to Florence's proposed pomp-and-circumstance, drafting the fraternity's name, initiation rites, rituals and rules. Together, the men designed the

new fraternity's emblem, devised a salutation and determined the red fez with a black tassel would be the group's official headgear. And local Shriners chapters, it was decided, would be called "temples."

The first such chapter, Mecca Shriners, met in New York City in 1872. Thanks to a pretty good public relations campaign on behalf of the new fraternity's governing body - known tongue-twistingly as The Imperial Council of the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine - word about the group spread fairly quickly, even without the Internet, PDAs and cell phones. Membership grew rapidly across the United States in the early 1900s and even spread to Canada, Mexico and Panama.

Today, there are approximately 350,000 Shriners, belonging to 191 temples in the U.S., Mexico, Canada and the Republic of Panama.

# Shriners vs. Masons

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Becoming a Shriner isn't as simple as walking into a temple, paying dues and donning a fez. To become a Shriner, a man first must be a Master Mason.

Why? Let's back up.

The fraternity of Freemasonry is the oldest, largest and most widely known fraternity in the world. It's impossible to Google the exact date Freemasonry began, but we do know it dates back hundreds of years to when stonemasons and other craftsmen gathered after work in shelter houses, or lodges. Over time, the men organized into Masonic guilds, and the tools of their trade - the square and compass - became the symbol of their brotherhood.

Time passed, and the need for Masons declined. So, Masonry evolved into an organization that began to accept members who weren't craftsmen. Today, Masonry is built upon a foundation of improving character and strengthening

communities, though the square and compass are still the symbols of the fraternal brotherhood.

Just as Shriners have temples, Masonry has a basic organizational unit called the Blue Lodge or Craft Lodge. (Groups of Lodges are organized under governing bodies known as Grand Lodges.)

Members of the Lodges are required to read up on their fraternity and earn a series of Masonic degrees. Once they've completed the third and final degree, members are titled Master Masons. Of course, for those men wishing to delve deeper into Freemasonry - in essence, continuing their Masonic education - there are additional courses of study, known as the Scottish Rite and York Rite.

Once a Mason earns the Master Mason title, he can join the Shriners fraternity. In short, all Shriners are Masons... but not all Masons are Shriners.

# Shriners Terms & Titles

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Non-Shriners often have a hard time wrapping their heads around some of the rituals, symbols and terminology used in the Shriners fraternity. What's an Imperial Potentate? How about a Divan? And what's up with the fezzes?

## *Fez-iquette*

Let's start with the fez - the rhombus-shaped, tasseled, red hat most commonly associated with Shriners. The fez was adopted as the official headgear of Shriners in 1872. Named after the town of Fez, Morocco, where it originated, the hat seemed to portray the Near East theme the original founders of the fraternity were looking for.

Today, the fez is worn at Shriners functions and in parades and outings as an effective way of gaining exposure for the fraternity. It's not unlike wearing a baseball cap to support your favorite team. Only, in this case, the fez draws attention to the fraternity, helps recruit new members and spreads the word

about the Shriners' philanthropy, Shriners Hospitals for Children (more on page 14).

There are strict rules when it comes to the fez, though. Only certain ranking Shriners may have their titles on their fez, and the tassel can only be secured with two pins or clasps on the left side of the fez. Additional pins or adornments are off-limits!

### *The Emblem*

Just like Mercedes-Benz is known for its three-pointed-star symbol, Shriners International is known for its Crescent, or "Jewel of the Order." Carrying on the Near East theme, the emblem is composed of the claws of a tiger, united in the middle with the head of a sphinx. On the back of the emblem are a pyramid, urn and star. Additionally, the emblem bears the motto "Robur et Furor," which means "Strength and Fury." The Crescent hangs from a scimitar, while a five-pointed star dangles from the sphinx.

Just as Mercedes' star represents something - domination of land, sea and air - so does the Shriners' emblem. The scimitar stands for the backbone

of the fraternity, its members. The two claws are for the Shriners fraternity and its philanthropy, Shriners Hospitals for Children. The sphinx is representative of the governing body of the Shriners, while the star hanging beneath it represents the thousands of children helped by the philanthropy every year.

### *Greetings and Salutations*

Since 1872, Shriners have used the salutation "Es Selamu Aleikum," Arabic for "Peace be with you!" The response: "Aleikum Es Selamu," or "With you be peace."

### *The Chain of Command*

Now on to the Shriner hierarchy.

To better understand it all, it helps to begin at the local chapter level. The group of elected officers who run the temples is called the Divan. Granted, the number-one definition of divan is a long, backless sofa, but a Divan also refers to a government bureau.

The top dog in the Divan is known as the Potentate, defined as "one who has the

power and position to rule over others.”  
The second in command is called the Chief Rabban.

Within each chapter there can be any number of “clubs” or “units” formed for a certain purpose. The best-known examples are the units of clowns and motor patrols (the “little-car” guys), often the most visible in the community. There are also clubs and units for people with various other interests, as well. From golfing and boating, to classic cars and motorcycles—there truly is something for everyone!

Just like the countries of North America are governed by representative bodies, so are the 191 temples. The group of representatives, called the Imperial Council, convenes once a year to make policy decisions and legislation regarding the fraternity and philanthropy.

Representatives strive to become one of the 13 members of the Imperial Divan, Shriners’ international governing body. The chief executive officer of Shriners International is the Imperial Potentate, who serves a one-year term.

## *Women and Shriners*

Alongside most Shriners is a strong woman. While it's true that women aren't eligible to join Shriners International, there are several organizations for women that support the fraternity and the philanthropy, Shriners Hospitals for Children. In most cases, these organizations are open to the wives, widows, daughters, granddaughters, sisters and nieces of Shriners. They include Daughters of the Nile, Ladies Oriental Shrine of North America, Shrine Guilds of America, and Order of the Eastern Star.

- Daughters of the Nile contributes to Shriners Hospitals for Children in a number of ways, including donating prostheses, quilts, toys and volunteer hours. Since the group was founded in 1913, Daughters of the Nile has contributed millions of dollars to Shriners Hospitals for Children.
- Ladies Oriental Shrine of North America was founded in 1903 for the purpose of extending good fellowship among families of Shriners. The ladies provide financial support and assistance to Shriners Hospitals for Children, with an emphasis

on the hospital fund, hospital sewing and special projects.

- Shrine Guilds of America, established in 1947, provides independent support and aid to Shriners Hospitals for Children and concentrates on the education of children during their hospitalization.
- Order of the Eastern Star, started in the mid-1800s, is the largest fraternal organization for men and women in the world. The organization strives to strengthen the moral and social character of its members, and it contributes to numerous charities.

### *Kids Count, Too*

Not to be left out, children have opportunities to get in on Shriners fun by participating in groups like DeMolay International, International Order of Job's Daughters and the International Order of the Rainbow for Girls.

- DeMolay International is a Masonic-sponsored organization for young men ages 12-21 that focuses on developing civic awareness, personal responsibility and leadership skills.

- The International Order of Job's Daughters is an organization of young women ages 10-20 who are related to a Master Mason. Members participate in social activities, service projects and charitable works. Job's Daughters actively supports the Hearing Impaired Kids Endowment Fund, which purchases hearing-assistive devices for children.

- The International Order of the Rainbow for Girls, originally founded by a member of the Masonic Lodge, is now open to girls ages 11-20, regardless of Masonic affiliation. Members participate in service projects and fundraisers.

## Shrining Stars

Many famous faces have proudly worn the red fez of the Shriners fraternity. These include entertainers, heads of government, business leaders and sports legends. A few Shriners you may have heard of include:



*Buzz Aldrin*  
Astronaut



*Arnold Palmer*  
Golfer



*Sam Hornish, Jr.*  
Race Car Driver



*Brad Paisley*  
Country Singer



*Richard Tyson*  
Actor

## Join the Fraternity

For information about joining Shriners International, please visit [www.shrinershq.org](http://www.shrinershq.org), e-mail [membership@shrinenet.org](mailto:membership@shrinenet.org) or call **(800) 537-4746**.

# Shriners Hospitals for Children

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As membership in the Shriners fraternity grew in the early 1900s, so did the call for establishing an official charity. In 1919, the Imperial Potentate-elect pitched the idea of establishing a hospital to provide free care for children with orthopaedic problems. The idea was mulled over and, in 1920, a committee was established to explore the idea. This committee concluded that there shouldn't just be one hospital; there should be a health care system throughout North America that provide medical care without financial obligation to patients or their families. It was an idea that appealed to Shriners, who, as we know, like to do things in a big way. The first hospital opened in Shreveport, La., in 1922.

*Orthopaedic, Burn, Spinal Cord Injury,  
and Cleft Lip and Palate Care*

Today, there are 22 Shriners Hospitals for Children, 19 of which specialize in orthopaedic care, treating injuries and problems of the bones, joints and muscles,

as well as complicated conditions, such as brittle bone disease, spina bifida and cerebral palsy.

Additionally, four hospitals specialize in providing medical care to kids with burn injuries. Shriners Hospitals for Children entered the field of burn care in the 1960s after recognizing a lack of medical expertise in the field. The health care system treats children with acute, fresh burns; conducts reconstructive and restorative surgeries on kids with healed burns; treats children with severe scarring that limits mobility; and also helps kids with scarring or facial deformities caused by burns.

Spinal cord injury care is provided at three Shriners Hospitals for Children. These hospitals provide long-term rehabilitation and intensive physical, occupational and recreation therapies for children with spinal cord injuries.

Shriners Hospitals for Children established a cleft lip and palate program in 2005. This program provides lip and palate repair, nasal reconstruction, facial work and dental procedures, as well as audiological, speech and psychological services.

## Outstanding Research

“Today’s research is tomorrow’s patient care” is a well-known saying at Shriners Hospitals for Children.

All 22 Shriners Hospitals for Children are involved in some form of research. Shriners Hospitals for Children has research affiliations with major universities. Generally, these investigations focus on improving and expanding treatments for severe burns, understanding complex musculoskeletal disorders, and improving techniques used to treat both mobility problems and spinal cord injuries.

## Teaching Opportunities

Shriners Hospitals for Children takes an active role in medical education. Over the past 20 years, more than 8,000 physicians have received residency education or postgraduate fellowship education at Shriners Hospitals for Children. Most of our hospitals have residency or teaching affiliations with other hospitals or universities. Shriners Hospitals for Children also provide training in other medical areas, including nursing, physical and occupational therapy, and orthotics and prosthetics.

While there are many elements to Shriners Hospitals for Children, there is only one purpose: to improve the lives of children.

### *Applying for Care*

Children up to age 18 are eligible for care at Shriners Hospitals for Children if, in the opinion of our physicians, there is a reasonable possibility they can benefit from the specialized services available. Acceptance is based solely on a child's medical needs. A family's income or insurance status are not criteria for a child's acceptance as a patient.

### *No Barriers to Care*

At Shriners Hospitals for Children, all care and services are provided without financial obligation to patients or their families, thanks to our generous donors.

### *How You Can Help*

Shriners Hospitals for Children needs your help! Learn more about making a one-time gift, recurring gift or a planned gift by visiting **[www.donate2shc.org](http://www.donate2shc.org)** or by calling **(800) 241-GIFT**.

# Hospital Locations

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## **Boston**

51 Blossom St.  
Boston, MA 02114

## **Canada**

1529 Cedar Ave.  
Montreal, Quebec,  
Canada H3G 1A6

## **Chicago**

2211 North Oak  
Park Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60707

## **Cincinnati**

3229 Burnet Ave.  
Cincinnati, OH 45229

## **Erie**

1645 W. 8th St.  
Erie, PA 16505

## **Galveston**

815 Market St.  
Galveston, TX 77550

## **Greenville**

950 West Faris Rd.  
Greenville, SC 29605

## **Honolulu**

1310 Punahou St.  
Honolulu, HI 96826

## **Houston**

6977 Main St.  
Houston, TX 77030

## **Lexington**

1900 Richmond Rd.  
Lexington, KY 40502

## **Los Angeles**

3160 Geneva St.  
Los Angeles, CA 90020

## **Mexico City**

Av. del Imán No. 257  
Col. Pedregal de  
Santa Ursula  
Deleg. Coyoacán  
Mexico, D.F., 04600

**Northern  
California**

2425 Stockton Blvd.  
Sacramento, CA 95817

**Philadelphia**

3551 N. Broad St.  
Philadelphia, PA 19140

**Portland**

3101 S.W. Sam  
Jackson Park Rd.  
Portland, OR 97239

**Salt Lake City**

Fairfax Road at  
Virginia St.  
Salt Lake City,  
UT 84103

**Shreveport**

3100 Samford Ave.  
Shreveport, LA 71103

**Spokane**

911 W. Fifth Ave.  
Spokane, WA 99204

**Springfield**

516 Carew St.  
Springfield, MA 01104

**St. Louis**

2001 S. Lindbergh Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63131

**Tampa**

12502 USF Pine Dr.  
Tampa, FL 33612

**Twin Cities**

2025 East River Pkwy.  
Minneapolis, MN 55414





**Shriners International**



**Shriners Hospitals**  
for Children™

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