

Sport has played an important role in our lives for many centuries. Millions of people all over the world are fond of sports and games. Sport keeps us fit, makes us healthy, more organized, better disciplined. It gives us a lot of pleasure, makes us stronger, and prolongs our life. It unites people of different classes and nationalities. For some it seems as necessary and natural as eating and sleeping, for others it is just an entertainment. Undoubtedly, many people's favourite hobby is sport. They spend much of their spare time playing team games like football or baseball, games for two or four people, like tennis or golf or practicing an individual sport like running, parachuting or swimming. All necessary facilities are provided for them: stadiums, sport grounds, swimming pools, skating rings, skiing stations, football fields, etc. But the great amount of people - both men and women don't realize the importance of sport in their life and keep ignoring them and continue (for instance) smoking and ruining their health and, finally, their lives. During the 1980s and later there was a great increase in interest in getting fit and staying healthy. A lot of people started running and jogging in their spare time. Aerobics classes opened in every town. The number of sports centers for dance and movement increased. Physical exercises of any kind became people's favourite pastime. Today people continue leading sedentary life and many of them would like to change it. Since our life no longer provides enough exercise we should include it deliberately into our everyday routines. The man or woman who takes regular sport or exercise will stay physically fit, retain youthful vigour, and perhaps, most important to many people, keep a youthful shape and stamina. There are some exercises to suit everyone. It may be a daily exercise session that takes up little time or planned exercises which improve a problem area. But fitness comes not just from some exercises done now and then but from the way you live all the time. Good eating habits, wise drinking habits, regular sleeping habits and plenty of fresh air are all important parts of the way to keep fit. All kinds of sport can be divided into different groups: indoor and outdoor sports, summer and winter sports. The most popular outdoor winter sports are shooting, hunting, hockey, snow-skating, skiing. Some people greatly enjoy figure-skating and ski-jumping. Summer affords excellent opportunities for swimming, boating, yachting, cycling and many other sports. Among outdoor games football takes the first place in public interest. This game is played in all the countries of the world. The other favourite games in different countries are golf, tennis, cricket, volleyball, basketball and so on. It should be said that sport is a world of its own and it can't mean the same to everybody. Some people do amateur sports and some are professionals. Some people like one game and some like others. There are sports preferred by men and those preferred by women. Professional sport is an exciting creative sphere of hard work and competition, a sphere where men and women want to surpass themselves. There is no general opinion about the participation in different competitions. Some people think it's no good that competitions and records have become an aim in itself in the world of sports. Participation is more important than formal results. Others think that

sport can't do without competition, which is a part of sport.