

Eastern Religions Knowledge Organiser



Hinduism



Key facts

- Hinduism is the 3rd most popular religion in the world. It began in India and is the oldest of the six major world religions. It is suggested Hinduism is at least 5000 years old.
- There are lots of different interpretations of Hinduism, making it a very tolerant and accepting religion.
- Hinduism can be considered a polytheistic religion as there are many Gods and Goddesses representing different parts of the supreme / ultimate power called Brahman. The three main Gods representing Brahman are Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, known together as the Trimurti.

Founder/s

- Hinduism is a way of life developed over many years, so there isn't one single founder.

Place of worship

- The Hindu building for communal worship is called a **Mandir**. Some of the features inside / outside a Mandir include:
 - ❖ **Haveli** - this means courtyard. It is a big assembly hall for gathering as a community.
 - ❖ **Sadhus** - Hindu monks who live at the temple. They perform many of the rituals of worship. E.g. Puja / provide guidance.
 - ❖ **Shikara** - the Spire. It represents the realm in which the Gods live. It reminds Hindus they will have to climb an upward path.
 - ❖ **Mandap** - the flat area at the top of the steps leading to the Mandir. Ringing the bell there alerts God of their presence.
 - ❖ **Murtis** - a sacred image of a God / Goddess. Worshipers believe they can connect to God through the statues.
 - ❖ **Hindu Swastika** - a symbol with four arms. It represents goodness from four corners of the world.

Holy book

- There are various sacred texts in Hinduism, but the main ones are called the Vedas, written in the ancient language Sanskrit.

Festival/s

- Diwali is one of the most widely celebrated festivals in Hinduism. It remembers the story of Rama and Sita, as well as good triumphing over evil.
- Throughout the festival Hindus decorate their homes, Mandirs and other buildings with rows of lights. In the past, small clay lamps called divas were used, which gives the festival its name. People also give each other presents and share meals with their family and friends. There are also firework displays and bonfires, with singing and dancing.

Key words

- Diwali**: festival of light remembering the story of Rama and Sita.
- Mandir**: Hindu temple.
- Murti**: image of a god or goddess which has been blessed.
- Polytheistic**: the belief in or worship of more than one God.
- Puja**: worship of a god or goddess.



Sikhism



Key facts

- Sikhism was founded in 16th Century in the Punjab region of India.
- Sikhs only worship one God, so their religion is monotheistic.
- There are approximately 20 million Sikhs in the world. The vast majority live in India. There are about 336,000 Sikhs in the UK.

Founder/s

- Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak and it is based on his teachings and the 9 Gurus who followed him.

Place of worship

- Sikhs worship in a building called a Gurdwara. There are about 300 Gurdwaras in the UK. Some of the features inside / outside a Gurdwara include:
 - ❖ **The Guru Granth Sahib** - the Sikh Holy Book. The Guru Granth Sahib is kept in a large hall called 'Darbar Sahib'. The Guru Granth Sahib is always kept in a high place.
 - ❖ **Nishan Sahib** - a triangular orange flag with the Sikh symbol of a Khanda in the middle of it.
 - ❖ **Langar** - or free kitchen is the part of a Gurdwara where meals are served to the worshippers who have come to pray. As a tradition, worshippers are expected to sit on the floor. It represents the values of the Sikh faith.
 - ❖ **Sangat** - holy congregation of people.
 - ❖ **Golak** - is known as the collection box that is normally found in front of the Guru Granth Sahib, where worshippers put their offerings of coins or paper notes, before bowing / kneeling down to the Guru Granth Sahib.

Holy book

- The Sikh holy book is called the Guru Granth Sahib.

Festival/s

- The most widely celebrated festival in Sikhism is Baisakhi/Vaisakhi. It celebrates Sikh New Year and the founding of the Sikh community in 1699, known as the Khalsa.
- To celebrate Sikhs go to the Gurdwara in the morning for a service. Next, they have a procession through the streets with singing, chanting and colourful clothes. In the evening, Sikhs have a meal with family and friends.

Key words

- Equality**: being equal.
- Granthi**: person who leads services.
- Gurdwara**: Sikh place of worship.
- Guru**: means 'teacher.'
- Guru Granth Sahib**: Sikh holy book.
- Langar**: free meal which ends Sikh services.
- Monotheistic**: the belief in or worship of one God.
- Sewa**: "service" helping others.



Buddhism



Key facts

- Buddhism is one of the world's major religions. It is the world's 4th largest religion, with about 327 million followers.
- Buddhists are the people who follow Buddhism. They follow the teachings of a man named Siddhartha Gautama, who became known as the Buddha. The name 'Buddha' means 'the enlightened one' or 'the one who knows.'
- Most Buddhists live in Asia.

Founder/s

- Buddhists are the people who follow Buddhism. They follow the teachings of a man named Siddhartha Gautama, who became known as the Buddha. The Buddhist teachings are known as Dhamma. They include the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold-Path.

Place of worship

- Buddhists worship either in temples or at home, often sitting or kneeling facing a shrine of Buddha.
- They may listen to monks reciting religious texts, take part in chanting or meditate.

Holy book

- The holy book in Buddhism is called Tipitaka. The Tipitaka is believed to be Buddha's teachings. It is written in an ancient Indian language known as Pali. It is a very large book that takes up about forty volumes when translated into English! The Tipitaka is made up of three sections of wisdom.

Festival/s

- Wesak is the most important of all the Buddhist festivals. In Britain it is sometimes called Buddha Day. It celebrates the three most important events in the Buddha's life – his birth, his Enlightenment and his passing away.
- In Many Buddhists give each other cards and presents to celebrate the festival.

Key words

- Buddha**: "the Enlightened one"
- Dhamma**: "Natural laws" – teachings of the Buddha.
- Enlightenment**: Understanding the truth about the way things are.
- Monk**: Man who dedicates his life to his religion.
- Pali**: Ancient language.
- Tipitaka**: Collection of the Buddha's teachings.
- Lotus Flower**: Flower of the water lily family.
- Theravada**: teachings of the elders (school of Buddhism)
- Mahayana**: "great vehicle" (school of Buddhism)