

Hinduism

Hinduism is one of the world's oldest and most diverse religions, with roots dating back thousands of years in the Indian subcontinent, with more than 900 million adherents around the world. More info: [World Religions](#); [Religion Facts](#).

Core Beliefs:

- **Dharma:** This concept encompasses duty, righteousness, and the natural order of the universe. It guides individual actions and social behavior.
- **Karma:** Actions have consequences, both in this life and in future incarnations. Good deeds lead to positive outcomes, while negative actions result in suffering.
- **Reincarnation:** The soul is immortal and transmigrates after death into a new body, human or animal, based on one's karma.
- **Moksha:** Liberation from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. This is the ultimate goal of life, achieved through various paths such as devotion (bhakti), knowledge (jnana), and selfless action (karma yoga).
- **Brahman:** The ultimate reality, the supreme spirit that pervades all existence.

Practices and Rituals:

- **Puja:** Rituals of worship involving offerings, prayers, and chanting.
- **Aarti:** A devotional ceremony involving waving lighted lamps before deities.
- **Yoga:** A system of physical, mental, and spiritual practices aimed at achieving union with the divine.
- **Meditation:** Various forms of meditation are practiced to still the mind and connect with the inner self.
- **Festivals:** Numerous festivals are celebrated throughout the year, such as Diwali (Festival of Lights), Holi (Festival of Colors), and Navratri (celebration of the Divine Feminine).

Places of Worship:

- **Temples:** Temples are dedicated to specific deities and serve as centers for worship, rituals, and community gatherings.
- **Homes:** Many Hindus have small shrines in their homes for personal devotion.

Leadership Structure:

- **Gurus:** Spiritual teachers who guide disciples on their path to spiritual enlightenment.
- **Priests:** Perform rituals and ceremonies in temples.
- **Brahmins:** In traditional Hindu society, the Brahmin caste is traditionally associated with religious and intellectual pursuits.

Main Symbols:

- **Om (ॐ):** A sacred syllable considered the primordial sound of the universe.
- **Lotus:** A symbol of purity, enlightenment, and beauty.
- **Swastika:** An ancient symbol of good luck and prosperity (different from the Nazi symbol).