

# Dharma

There is no one way to be a Hindu, but all Hindus share the same main beliefs.

## Reincarnation

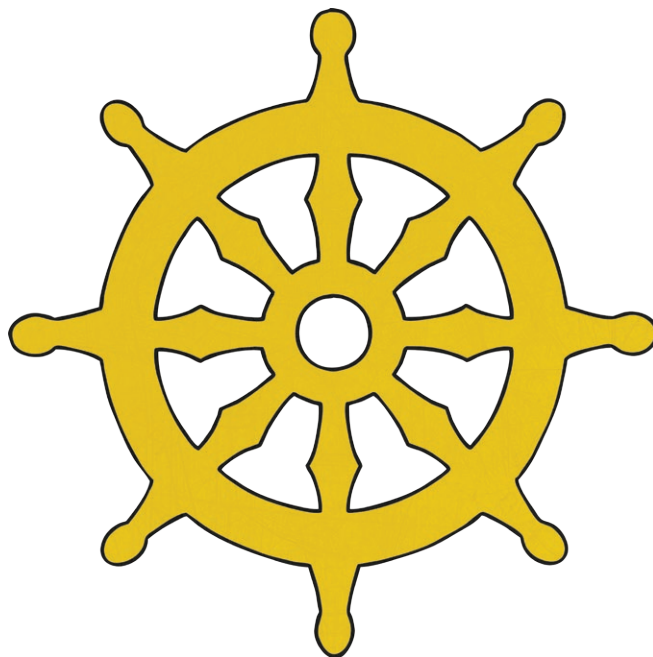
Hindus believe that all living things have a soul. When something dies, it does not just disappear. Instead, Hindus believe in reincarnation. This means that the soul lives inside the body but when this body dies, the soul enters a new living thing.

Karma, good and bad actions done during someone's life, affects what will happen to a person in the next life. For example, Hindus believe it is possible for a human soul to be reborn as a cat.

## Dharma

In Hinduism, 'dharma' means religion and responsibility. It is an important part of a Hindu's life. Hindus believe that there are right and wrong ways to behave, but they must always behave in the right ways. For example, a pupil's dharma is to work hard at school and the dharma of the police is to protect others. At different times in a Hindu person's life, their dharma will change.

It is everyone's dharma to be kind, honest, religious and a good person. Hindus believe that if they follow their dharma, they will feel happy. If a Hindu follows their dharma, they can expect to be reincarnated into a higher form in the next life, or good luck will come their way.



# Questions

1. Which religion is this text about?

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2. What is the name given to those who follow this religion?

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3. What is reincarnation?

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4. What does dharma mean?

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5. What happens if a Hindu follows their dharma?

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It is every Hindu's dharma, no matter how old they are, to be what four things?

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# Answers

1. Which religion is this text about?

**This text is about Hinduism.**

2. What is the name given to those who follow this religion?

**Those who follow Hinduism are called Hindus.**

3. What is reincarnation?

**Reincarnation means that the soul lives inside the body, but when a living thing dies, it enters a new living thing.**

4. What does dharma mean?

**Dharma means religion and responsibility.**

5. What happens if a Hindu follows their dharma?

**Hindus believe that if they follow their dharma, they will feel happy. They can expect to be reincarnated into a higher form in the next life or good luck will come their way.**

6. It is every Hindu's dharma, no matter how old they are, to be what four things?

**It is every Hindu's dharma to be kind, honest, religious and a good person.**

# Dharma

Hinduism is a religion which has mixed together many different traditions and practices. However, all Hindus share similar core beliefs.

## Reincarnation

Hindus believe that all living things have a soul, and that it cannot be destroyed. Instead, Hindus believe in reincarnation, which means that the soul lives inside the body until this body dies. The soul then enters a new living thing.

Karma, good and bad actions carried out during your life, affects which living thing the soul will be reborn into. For example, Hindus think it is possible for a human soul to be reborn as a cat.

## Moksha

Moksha means freedom of the soul from the cycle of death and rebirth. For a Hindu, this is the end goal.

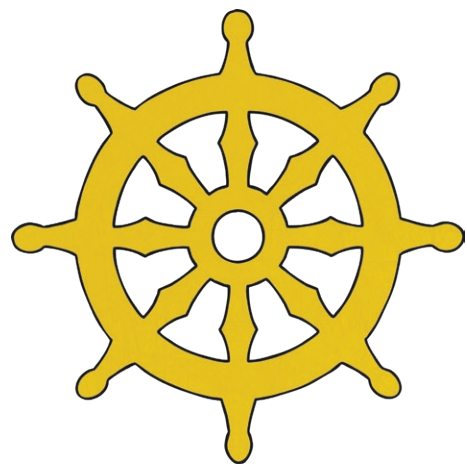
## Dharma

In Hinduism, 'dharma' means religion and duty; it is a very important part of a Hindu's everyday life. Hindus believe that there are right and wrong ways to behave: they must behave correctly; follow the moral law (and not just do what they feel like doing); and take their duties seriously. According to this belief, Hindus must always do the right thing. For example, a student's dharma is to work hard at school, and the dharma of the police is to protect others. At different times in a Hindu's life, their dharma will change; however, it is everyone's dharma to be kind, honest, religious and to be a good person. Hindus believe that when they follow their dharma, they feel good about themselves. Not to act in accordance with your dharma is believed to be wrong and called 'adharma'.

Karma is the law that every action has a reaction in the future. Therefore, actions in accordance with dharma will have good reactions. If a Hindu follows their dharma, they can expect to be reincarnated into a higher form in the next life, or good luck will come their way.

## Did You Know?

Hinduism is often referred to as Sanātana Dharma, a Sanskrit phrase meaning 'the eternal law'.



# Questions

1. How is Hinduism described in the text?

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2. What is reincarnation?

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3. What is karma?

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4. What does moksha mean?

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5. Find one piece of evidence to show why Hindus believe a soul cannot be destroyed

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6. To not act in accordance with your dharma is called what?

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7. Why do Hindus want to try and live in accordance with their dharma?

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8. What does Sanātana Dharma mean?

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# Answers

1. How is Hinduism described in the text?

**Hinduism is described in the text as a religion which has mixed together many different traditions and practices.**

2. What is reincarnation?

**Reincarnation means that the soul lives inside the body until a living thing dies. It then enters a new living thing.**

3. What is karma?

**Karma, good and bad actions carried out during your life, affects which living thing the soul will be reborn into. Karma is the law that every action has a reaction in the future.**

4. What does moksha mean?

**Moksha means freedom of the soul from the cycle of death and rebirth.**

5. Find one piece of evidence to show why Hindus believe a soul cannot be destroyed.

**Hindus believe that the soul cannot be destroyed due to the cycle of birth and rebirth/when a living thing dies its soul enters a living thing. For example, Hindus think it is possible for a human soul to be reborn as a cat.**

6. Not to act in accordance with your dharma is called what?

**To not act in accordance with your dharma is called 'adharma'.**

7. Why do Hindus want to try and live in accordance with their dharma?

**Hindus want to try and live in accordance with their dharma so that they feel good about themselves. Also, if a Hindu follows their dharma, they can expect to be reincarnated into a higher form in the next life or good luck will come their way.**

8. What does Sanātana Dharma mean?

**Sanātana Dharma means 'the eternal law' and it also used to refer to Hinduism.**

# Dharma

Hinduism is a religion which has fused many different traditions and practices. There is no one way to be a Hindu, nevertheless, there are certain fundamental principles that all Hindus share:



- Truth is eternal: Hindus feel that they must pursue knowledge and understanding of the truth.
- Reincarnation: Hindus feel that all forms of life have a soul (atma). They think that the soul cannot be destroyed. Instead, Hindus believe in reincarnation, which means that the soul exists in the body until the living thing dies. It then enters a new living thing.
- Karma: Good and bad actions carried out during someone's life, affects which living thing the soul will be born into next. For example, Hindus think it is possible for a human soul to be reborn as a cat.
- Moksha: Moksha means liberation of the soul from the cycle of death and rebirth. It occurs when the soul reunites with the god Brahma. For a Hindu, this is the end goal.

In Hinduism, 'dharma' means duty, religion, virtue and morality; it is a central part of a Hindu's daily life. Hindus believe that there are right and wrong ways to behave so they must behave correctly, follow the moral law and take their duties seriously. According to dharma, it is best to do the right thing at all times. For example, a pupil's dharma is to work hard at school; the parents' dharma is to raise and support their family; and the dharma of the police is to protect others. At different stages of a Hindu's life, their dharma will change, however, it is everyone's dharma to be kind, honest, religious and to be a good person in society. Hindus believe that following their dharma allows them to feel happy and live a rewarding life. Not acting in accordance with your dharma is believed to be wrong and called 'adharma'.



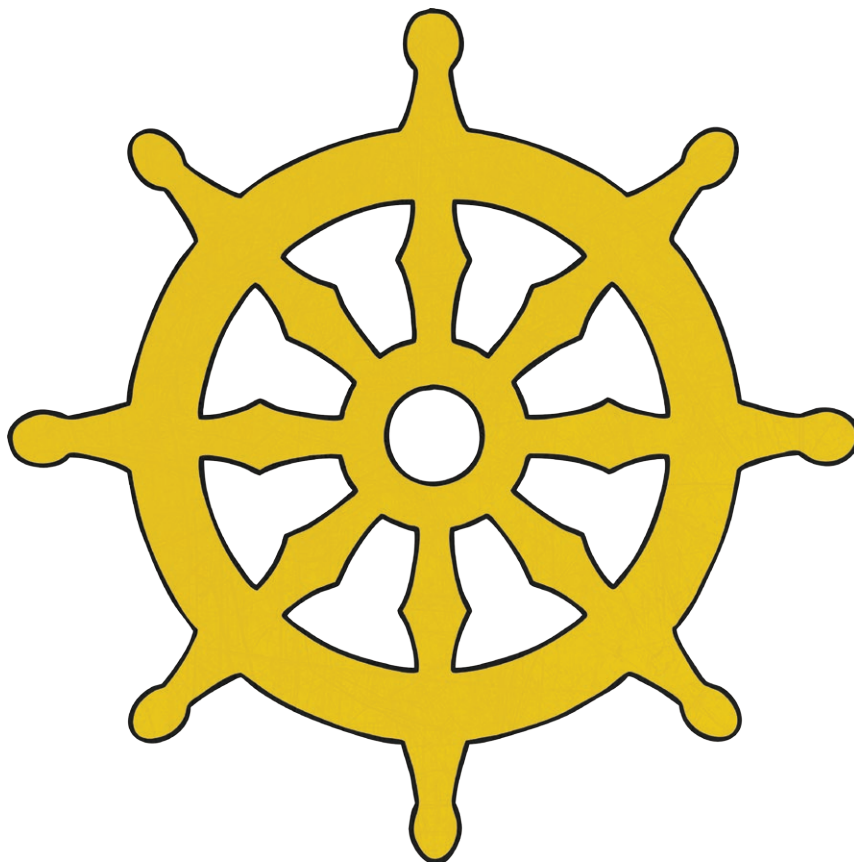
Karma refers to the law that every action has a reaction in the near or distant future. Therefore, actions in accordance with dharma will have good reactions. If a Hindu follows the dharma, they can expect to be reincarnated into a higher form in the next life or good luck will come their way.

## Did you know?

Hinduism is often referred to as Sanātana Dharma, a Sanskrit phrase meaning 'the eternal law'.

There are two main categories of the Hindu scriptures known as Shruti and Smriti. Smriti is composed of traditional texts, including the Dharma Shastras (legal and ethical texts), the Puranas and the folk legends known as the Mahabharata and Ramayana.

The word dharma also means the ancient teachings of the Buddha in relation to Buddhism. Many of the Buddha's teachings come from Hinduism.





# Questions

1. How does the text describe Hinduism?

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2. Find two pieces of evidence to show why Hindus believe a soul cannot be destroyed.

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3. Not to act in accordance with your dharma is called what?

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4. What do Hindus believe happens to a soul when a living thing dies?

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5. In your own words, explain karma.

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6. Why might a Hindu's dharma change during their life?

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7. In the text, it lists the dharma of a student, parents and a police officer. Can you think of another example to add to this?

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8. What do Hindus believe can happen if they do not act in accordance with their dharma?

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# Answers

1. How does the text describe Hinduism?

**The text describes Hinduism as a religion which has fused many different traditions and practices.**

2. Find two pieces of evidence to show why Hindus believe a soul cannot be destroyed.

**Hindus believe that the soul cannot be destroyed due to the cycle of birth and rebirth because when a living thing dies its soul enters a living thing. For example, Hindus think it is possible for a human soul to be reborn as a cat.**

3. Not to act in accordance with your dharma is called what?

**To not act in accordance with your dharma is called 'adharma'.**

4. What do Hindus believe happens to a soul when a living thing dies?

**Hindus believe that the soul exists in the body until the living thing dies. It then enters a new living thing.**

5. In your own words, explain karma.

**Various answers which must touch on the following ideas: Karma, good and bad actions carried out during someone's life, affects which living thing the soul will be born into next. For example, Hindus think it is possible for a human soul to be reborn as a cat. Karma refers to the law that every action has a reaction in the near or distant future.**

6. Why might a Hindu's dharma change during their life?

**A Hindu's dharma will change during their life because as a child, their dharma will be to work hard at school, however, when he or she grows up, they may raise children. In this instance, their dharma would be to raise and support their children.**

7. In the text, it lists the dharma of a student, parents and a police officer. Can you think of another example to add to this list?

**Various answers**

8. What do Hindus believe can happen if they do not act in accordance with their dharma?

**Hindus believe that if they don't act in accordance with their dharma, they won't feel happy or live a rewarding life. Furthermore, they can't expect to be reincarnated into a higher form in the next life or have good luck.**

9. Which facts show that Hinduism and Buddhism are linked?

**The fact that many of the Buddha's teachings come from Hinduism shows that the two religions are linked.**