



Buddhism

Buddhism is the name of the religion and its followers are known as Buddhists. Buddhists follow the teachings of the Buddha, which means 'enlightened one'. The Buddha was a man called Siddhartha Gautama, Buddhism started in about 5-600 BCE in Nepal (India). Buddhists are neither *monotheistic* nor *polytheistic* they are **non-theistic**.

1. Beliefs – Stop wanting things as this will lead to stopping suffering
2. Worship – Don't worship statues these help believers to focus the mind on the Buddha's teachings
3. Holy Book – Tripitakah
4. Dress – Monks and nuns wear autumn colours. Buddhist wear white to show purity of the mind
5. Food – In Buddhism it is taught that they must never kill anything, so some Buddhist are vegetarian



Religious symbol

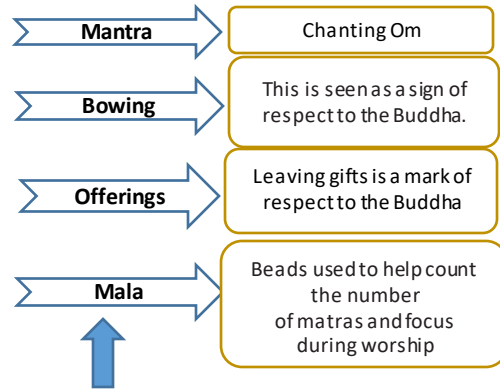
The wheel of dharma, is widely used as the symbol of Buddhism. It shows a wheel with eight spokes, representing the Noble Eightfold Path and the teachings of the Buddha.

Karma:
At his enlightenment, the Buddha learned that everything which happens is the result of a preceding cause. This law of cause and effect is called karma, which means "action with intention"

This is known as **devotional** practice and its purpose is to enable Buddhists to express how grateful they are to the Buddha for what he taught. This allows them to show respect for his teachings.

Puja is the name for ceremonies that involve offerings, or gifts. During these ceremonies, there will also be **meditation** and prayer.

Karma - law of cause and effect
Punna Karma: Skilful or good action - those performed with awareness and kindness.
Pappa Karma: Unskilful or bad actions - those performed with greed, hatred and unawareness
 For Buddhists karma does not mean that if you do something bad you will immediately have something bad happen back to you.



Four Noble Truths

1. The first - **suffering (Dukkha)** was real and happens all the time
2. The second - **suffering has a cause**. Buddha said that the real **cause** of all suffering was **desire** or wanting something.
3. The third - **end suffering and reach** a point where you never suffer and you have an everlasting happiness. This is called **Nirvana**.
4. The fourth - instructions on how to **avoid suffering**. It says that you need to avoid the two **extremes, too much too little**.

Sangha

- The Buddhist community is known as the Sangha. It is made up of lay members and ordained members of the community (monks or nuns).
- Someone becomes a Buddhist by "going for refuge" to the Buddha, the Dharma (teachings of the Buddha) and the Sangha.
- They then accept the 5 precepts or vows which give guidelines for living.

8 Fold Path

Meditation is centrally important to Buddhists and links to these three spokes of the **Eight Fold Path**.

- Right Effort:** a conscious attempt to prevent unskilful states of mind e.g. calmness not anger.
- Right mindfulness:** the development of concentration, so that the meditator is more aware of her/his thoughts and more able to nurture healthy states of mind.
- Right concentration:** Deep states of concentration bring calmness and awareness. This practice helps meditators to concentrate on healthy thoughts and attitudes, concentrating deeply enough to step away from the mind and grasp the truth of dukkha (suffering)

Nirvana literally means "**blowing out**" - that is blowing out and **being freed from the three fires of greed, ignorance and hate**.

