**Terrorism**

**Terrorism** is defined, at its simplest, as: any act designed to cause terror.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-1) Despite its name, not all actions that are *terrifying* or *terrible* are described as *terrorism*. There is no universal consensus as to what is or is not included (see [Definitions of terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Definitions_of_terrorism)), but terrorism is generally understood to feature a political objective, whether that means the politics of [nationalism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationalism), [ethnicity](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnicity), [religion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion), [ideology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ideology) or [social class](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_class), amongst others. Definitions as to which acts of violence are considered terrorism will be more often subjective than objective. Since the terrorist act is the symptom of a struggle that has a national, religious or social cause, then the response to it is also often determined by ethnicity, beliefs or class. Furthermore, since attitudes to nationalism, religion, and social status tend to evolve over the course of time, it follows that acts of terrorism, and the individuals or organisations engaging in that terrorism, may - and often are - re-examined retrospectively, being either legitimised or criminalised according to the subsequent prevailing political perspectives.[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-2)[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-3)[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-4)

One definition describes terrorism as: violent acts (or the threat of violent acts) intended to create fear ([terror](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terror)), perpetrated for an economic,[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-5) religious, political, or ideological goal, and which deliberately target or disregard the safety of [non-combatants](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-combatant) (e.g., [neutral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neutrality_%28international_relations%29) [military personnel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_personnel) or [civilians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civilians)). Another common definition sees terrorism as: [political](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_violence), ideological or [religious violence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_violence) by [non-state actors](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-state_actor). Some definitions now include acts of [unlawful](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law) [violence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violence) and [war](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War). The use of similar tactics by criminal organizations for [protection rackets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protection_racket) or to enforce a [code of silence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Code_of_silence) is usually not labeled terrorism, although these same actions may be labeled terrorism when done by a politically motivated group. Usage of the term has also been criticized for its frequent undue equating with [Islamism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamism) or [jihadism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jihadism), while ignoring non-Islamic organizations or individuals.[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-6)[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-7)[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-8) In the [international community](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_community), terrorism has no legally binding, [criminal-law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criminal_law) [definition](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Definition_of_terrorism#In_international_law).[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Martyn-9)[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-10)

The word "terrorism" is politically loaded and emotionally charged,[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism" \l "cite_note-Hoffman-1998-p31-11) and this greatly compounds the difficulty of providing a precise definition. A study on political terrorism examining over 100 definitions of "terrorism" found 22 separate definitional elements (e.g. violence, force, fear, threat, victim-target differentiation).[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-12)[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-13) In some cases, the same group may be described as "freedom fighters" by its supporters and as "terrorists" by its opponents, a phenomenon giving rise to the cliché, "one man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist."[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-14)[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-15) The concept of terrorism may be controversial as it is often used by state authorities (and individuals with access to state support) to delegitimize political or other opponents,[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janx33225-16) and potentially legitimize the state's own use of armed force against opponents (such use of force may be described as "terror" by opponents of the state).[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janx33225-16)[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jan757-17) At the same time, the reverse may also take place when states perpetrate or are accused of perpetrating [state terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_terrorism).[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-18) The usage of the term has a controversial history, with individuals such as [ANC](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_National_Congress) leader [Nelson Mandela](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nelson_Mandela) at one point also branded a terrorist.[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-19)

A broad array of political organizations has practised terrorism to further their objectives. It has been practiced by both right-and left-wing political parties, nationalist groups, religious groups, revolutionaries, and ruling governments.[[20]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-britannica-20) The [symbolism of terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symbolism_of_terrorism) can exploit human fear to help achieve these goals.[[21]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-21)

## Origin of term

"Terrorism" comes from the French word *terrorisme*,[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism" \l "cite_note-etymonline-22) and originally referred specifically to [state terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_terrorism) as practiced by the French government during the 1793–1794 [Reign of terror](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reign_of_terror). The French word *terrorisme* in turn derives from the [Latin verb](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin_verbs) [*terreō*](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/en:terreo#Latin) meaning "I frighten".[[23]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janrdw-23) The *terror cimbricus* was a panic and state of emergency in [Rome](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rome) in response to the approach of warriors of the [Cimbri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cimbri) tribe in 105 BC. The [Jacobins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacobin_Club) cited this precedent when imposing a [Reign of Terror](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reign_of_Terror) during the French Revolution.[[24]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janr987-24)[[25]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jane435-25) After the Jacobins lost power, the word "terrorist" became a term of abuse.[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janx33225-16) Although "terrorism" originally referred to acts committed by a government, currently it usually refers to the killing of innocent people[[26]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism" \l "cite_note-tws11jan1q22-26) for political purposes in such a way as to create a media spectacle. This meaning can be traced back to [Sergey Nechayev](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sergey_Nechayev), who described himself as a "terrorist".[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Crenshaw77-27) Nechayev founded the Russian terrorist group "People's Retribution" (Народная расправа) in 1869.[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-28)

In November 2004, a [United Nations Secretary General](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Secretary_General) report described terrorism as any act "intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act".[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-29)

## Definition

The [definition of terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Definition_of_terrorism) has proved controversial. Various legal systems and government agencies use different [definitions of terrorism in their national legislation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-terrorism_legislation). Moreover, the [international community](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_community) has been slow to formulate a universally agreed, legally binding definition of this crime. These difficulties arise from the fact that the term "terrorism" is politically and emotionally charged.[[30]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Hoffman-1998-p32-30) In this regard, Angus Martyn, briefing the Australian Parliament, stated,

The international community has never succeeded in developing an accepted comprehensive definition of terrorism. During the 1970s and 1980s, the United Nations attempts to define the term floundered mainly due to differences of opinion between various members about the use of violence in the context of conflicts over national liberation and self-determination.[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Martyn-9)

These divergences have made it impossible for the [United Nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations) to conclude a [Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Definition_of_terrorism#Proposed_Comprehensive_Convention_on_International_Terrorism) that incorporates a single, all-encompassing, legally binding, criminal law definition of terrorism.[[31]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-31) The international community has adopted a series of [sectoral conventions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Definition_of_terrorism#The_sectoral_approach) that define and criminalize various types of terrorist activities.

Since 1994, the [United Nations General Assembly](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_General_Assembly) has repeatedly condemned terrorist acts using the following political description of terrorism:

Criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them.[[32]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-32)

U.S. Code Tittle 22 Chapter 38, Section 2656f(d) defines terrorism as: “Premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents, usually intended to influence an audience.”[[33]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-33)

[Bruce Hoffman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruce_Hoffman), a scholar, has noted:

It is not only individual agencies within the same governmental apparatus that cannot agree on a single definition of terrorism. Experts and other long-established scholars in the field are equally incapable of reaching a consensus. In the first edition of his magisterial survey, 'Political Terrorism: A Research Guide,' Alex Schmid devoted more than a hundred pages to examining more than a hundred different definitions of terrorism in an effort to discover a broadly acceptable, reasonably comprehensive explication of the word. Four years and a second edition later, Schmid was no closer to the goal of his quest, conceding in the first sentence of the revised volume that the "search for an adequate definition is still on". Walter Laqueur despaired of defining terrorism in both editions of his monumental work on the subject, maintaining that it is neither possible to do so nor worthwhile to make the attempt.[[34]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-34)

Hoffman believes it is possible to identify some key characteristics of terrorism. He proposes that:

By distinguishing terrorists from other types of criminals and terrorism from other forms of crime, we come to appreciate that terrorism is :

* ineluctably political in aims and motives
* violent – or, equally important, threatens violence
* designed to have far-reaching psychological repercussions beyond the immediate victim or target
* conducted by an organization with an identifiable chain of command or conspiratorial cell structure (whose members wear no uniform or identifying insignia) and
* perpetrated by a subnational group or non-state entity.[[35]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-35)

A definition proposed by Carsten Bockstette at the [George C. Marshall Center for European Security Studies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_C._Marshall_Center_for_European_Security_Studies), underlines the psychological and tactical aspects of terrorism:

Terrorism is defined as political violence in an asymmetrical conflict that is designed to induce terror and psychic fear (sometimes indiscriminate) through the violent victimization and destruction of noncombatant targets (sometimes iconic symbols). Such acts are meant to send a message from an illicit clandestine organization. The purpose of terrorism is to exploit the media in order to achieve maximum attainable publicity as an amplifying force multiplier in order to influence the targeted audience(s) in order to reach short- and midterm political goals and/or desired long-term end states.[[36]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Bockstette2008-36)

Each act of terrorism is a "performance" devised to have an impact on many large audiences. Terrorists also attack national symbols,[[37]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism" \l "cite_note-tws11janbgfv-37) to show power and to attempt to shake the foundation of the country or society they are opposed to. This may negatively affect a government, while increasing the prestige of the given [terrorist group](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_designated_terrorist_groups) and/or [ideology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ideology) behind a terrorist act.[[38]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-38)

Terrorist acts frequently have a political purpose.[[39]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janwq32-39) This is often where the inter-relationship between [terrorism and religion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_terrorism) occurs. When a political struggle is integrated into the framework of a religious or "cosmic"[[40]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-40) struggle, such as over the control of an ancestral homeland or holy site such as [Israel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel) and [Jerusalem](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jerusalem), failing in the political goal (nationalism) becomes equated with spiritual failure, which, for the highly committed, is worse than their own death or the deaths of innocent civilians.[[41]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jang555-41)

Their suffering accomplishes the terrorists' goals of instilling fear, getting their message out to an audience or otherwise satisfying the demands of their often radical religious and political agendas.[[42]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-42)

Some official, governmental definitions of terrorism use the criterion of the illegitimacy or unlawfulness of the act.[[43]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-43)[[*better source needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:NOTRS)] to distinguish between actions authorized by a government (and thus "lawful") and those of other actors, including individuals and small groups. For example, firebombing a city, which is designed to affect civilian support for a cause, would not be considered terrorism if it were authorized by a government.[*[original research?](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:No_original_research" \o "Wikipedia:No original research)*] This criterion is inherently problematic and is not universally accepted,[[*attribution needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Attribution_needed)] because: it denies the existence of [state terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_terrorism);[[44]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jan6yu-44) the same act may or may not be classed as terrorism depending on whether its sponsorship is traced to a "legitimate" government; "legitimacy" and "lawfulness" are subjective, depending on the perspective of one government or another; and it diverges from the historically accepted meaning and origin of the term.[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-etymonline-22)[[45]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-45)[[46]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-46)[[47]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-47)

According to Ali Khan, the distinction lies ultimately in a [political](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics) judgment.[[48]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-48)

An associated, and arguably more easily definable, but *not equivalent* term is [violent non-state actor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violent_non-state_actor).[[49]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jan4eer-49) The semantic scope of this term includes not only "terrorists", but while excluding some individuals or groups who have previously been described as "terrorists", and also explicitly excludes [state terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_terrorism).

[Barack Obama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama), commenting on the [Boston Marathon bombings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boston_Marathon_bombings) of April 2013, declared "Anytime bombs are used to target innocent civilians, it is an act of terror."[[50]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-50) Various commentators have pointed out the distinction between "act of terror" and "terrorism", particularly when used by the White House.[[51]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-51)[[52]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-52)[[53]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-53)

## Pejorative use

The terms "terrorism" and **"terrorist"** (someone who engages in terrorism) carry strong negative connotations.[[54]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jangkll-54) These terms are often used as political labels, to condemn violence or the threat of violence by certain actors as immoral, indiscriminate, unjustified or to condemn an entire segment of a population.[[55]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-55)[[56]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-56) Those labeled "terrorists" by their opponents rarely identify themselves as such, and typically use other terms or terms specific to their situation, such as [separatist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Separatist), [freedom fighter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_fighter), liberator, [revolutionary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolutionary), [vigilante](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vigilante), [militant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Insurgent), [paramilitary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paramilitary), [guerrilla](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrilla_warfare), [rebel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rebellion), patriot, or any similar-meaning word in other languages and cultures. [Jihadi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jihad), [mujaheddin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mujaheddin), and [fedayeen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fedayeen) are similar Arabic words that have entered the English lexicon. It is common for both parties in a conflict to describe each other as terrorists.[[57]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janbcvc-57)

On whether particular terrorist acts, such as killing non-combatants, can be justified as the lesser evil in a particular circumstance, philosophers have expressed different views: while, according to David Rodin, [utilitarian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utilitarian) philosophers can (in theory) conceive of cases in which the evil of terrorism is outweighed by the good that could not be achieved in a less morally costly way, in practice the "harmful effects of undermining the convention of non-combatant immunity is thought to outweigh the goods that may be achieved by particular acts of terrorism".[[58]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Robin-58) Among the non-utilitarian philosophers, [Michael Walzer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Walzer) argued that terrorism can be morally justified in only one specific case: when "a nation or community faces the extreme threat of complete destruction and the only way it can preserve itself is by intentionally targeting non-combatants, then it is morally entitled to do so".[[58]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Robin-58)[[59]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jannmllk-59)

In his book *Inside Terrorism* [Bruce Hoffman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruce_Hoffman) offered an explanation of why the term *terrorism* becomes distorted:

On one point, at least, everyone agrees: *terrorism* is a pejorative term. It is a word with intrinsically negative connotations that is generally applied to one's enemies and opponents, or to those with whom one disagrees and would otherwise prefer to ignore. 'What is called terrorism,' Brian Jenkins has written, 'thus seems to depend on one's point of view. Use of the term implies a moral judgment; and if one party can successfully attach the label *terrorist* to its opponent, then it has indirectly persuaded others to adopt its moral viewpoint.' Hence the decision to call someone or label some organization *terrorist* becomes almost unavoidably subjective, depending largely on whether one sympathizes with or opposes the person/group/cause concerned. If one identifies with the victim of the violence, for example, then the act is terrorism. If, however, one identifies with the perpetrator, the violent act is regarded in a more sympathetic, if not positive (or, at the worst, an ambivalent) light; and it is not terrorism.[[60]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jant5r4-60)[[61]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jant5r555-61)[[62]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jangbbjj-62)

The pejorative connotations of the word can be summed up in the [aphorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aphorism), "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter".[[57]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janbcvc-57) This is exemplified when a group using [irregular military](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irregular_military) methods is an ally of a [state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sovereign_state) against a mutual enemy, but later falls out with the state and starts to use those methods against its former ally. During [World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II), the [Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malayan_People%27s_Anti-Japanese_Army) was allied with the British, but during the [Malayan Emergency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malayan_Emergency), members of its successor (the [Malayan Races Liberation Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malayan_Races_Liberation_Army)), were branded "terrorists" by the British.[[63]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-63)[[64]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-64) More recently, [Ronald Reagan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Reagan) and others in the American administration frequently called the [Afghan Mujahideen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mujaheddin#Afghan_Mujahideen) "freedom fighters" during [their war](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_invasion_of_Afghanistan) against the [Soviet Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union),[[65]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-65) yet twenty years later, when a new generation of Afghan men are fighting against what they perceive to be a regime installed by foreign powers, their attacks were labelled "terrorism" by [George W. Bush](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_W._Bush).[[66]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-66)[[67]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-67)[[68]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-68) Groups accused of terrorism understandably prefer terms reflecting legitimate military or ideological action.[[69]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-69)[[70]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-70)[[71]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-TCCACR-71) Leading terrorism researcher Professor Martin Rudner, director of the Canadian Centre of Intelligence and Security Studies at Ottawa's [Carleton University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carleton_University), defines "terrorist acts" as attacks against civilians for political or other ideological goals, and said:

There is the famous statement: 'One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter.' But that is grossly misleading. It assesses the validity of the cause when terrorism is an act. One can have a perfectly beautiful cause and yet if one commits terrorist acts, it is terrorism regardless.[[72]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-72)

Some groups, when involved in a "liberation" struggle, have been called "terrorists" by the Western governments or media. Later, these same persons, as leaders of the liberated nations, are called "statesmen" by similar organizations. Two examples of this phenomenon are the [Nobel Peace Prize](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nobel_Peace_Prize) laureates [Menachem Begin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menachem_Begin) and [Nelson Mandela](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nelson_Mandela).[[73]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-73)[[74]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-74)[[75]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-75)[[76]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-76)[[77]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-77)[[78]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-78) [WikiLeaks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WikiLeaks) [editor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Editor) [Julian Assange](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Julian_Assange) has been called a "terrorist" by [Sarah Palin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarah_Palin) and [Joe Biden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Biden).[[79]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-79)[[80]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-80)

Sometimes, states that are close allies, for reasons of history, culture and politics, can disagree over whether or not members of a certain organization are terrorists. For instance, for many years, some branches of the United States government refused to label members of the [Provisional Irish Republican Army](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Provisional_Irish_Republican_Army) (IRA) as terrorists while the IRA was using methods against one of the United States' closest allies (the United Kingdom) that the UK branded as terrorism. This was highlighted by the *Quinn v. Robinson* case.[[81]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-81)[[82]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-82)

Media outlets who wish to convey impartiality may limit their usage of "terrorist" and "terrorism" because they are loosely defined, potentially controversial in nature, and subjective terms.[[83]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-GUSG-83)[[84]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-84)

## Types

Depending on the country, the political system, and the time in history, the types of terrorism is varying.

In early 1975, the [Law Enforcement Assistant Administration](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Institute_of_Justice) in the United States formed the National Advisory Committee on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals. One of the five volumes that the committee wrote was titled *Disorders and Terrorism*, produced by the Task Force on Disorders and Terrorism under the direction of H. H. A. Cooper, Director of the Task Force staff.[[88]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-88) The Task Force classified terrorism into six categories.

* [**Civil disorder**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_disorder) – A form of collective violence interfering with the [peace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peace), [security](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Security), and normal functioning of the community.
* **Political terrorism** – [Violent](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violence) criminal behaviour designed primarily to generate [fear](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fear) in the community, or substantial segment of it, for political purposes.
* **Limited political terrorism** – Genuine political terrorism is characterized by a [revolutionary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolutionary) approach; limited political terrorism refers to "acts of terrorism which are committed for [ideological](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ideology) or [political](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics) motives but which are not part of a concerted campaign to capture control of the [state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sovereign_state).
* **Official or state terrorism** – "referring to nations whose rule is based upon [fear](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fear) and [oppression](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oppression) that reach similar to terrorism or such proportions". It may also be referred to as **Structural Terrorism** defined broadly as terrorist acts carried out by governments in pursuit of political objectives, often as part of their foreign policy.
* **Data-terrorism** – "The unjust storage or use of private information for economic, political or personal gains". Commonly seen in governments and countries like the [United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States), [Canada](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canada) and [Australia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia). Large corporations such as [Facebook](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook) are also guilty of using user data without confirming explicit user knowledge and consent to do so when joining.
* **Passive terrorism** - (passive + terrorism) is an, inert or quiescent behavior towards terrorism; an inaction, non-reaction, non-participation, non-involvement in countering terrorism. Passive terrorism describes a behavior of general public or government which silently allows the spread or promotion of terrorism by turning a blind eye or tolerating terrorism. Passive terrorism prevails when there is no deliberate effort or decision to either counter it or raise voice against it.

The term hasn’t been widely defined or discussed openly as yet and has just been recently emerging in the wake of recent ongoing terrorism activities against or in the countries like Pakistan. The word “Passive” has its origin from 1350 – 1400; Middle English Latin passīvus literally means submissive or to submit. “Terrorism” originated in 1795 from French terrorisme, from Latin terror; used as government intimidation during the reign of terror in France in 1795. Professor Daniel L Byman, in his article "Passive Sponsorship of Terrorism," (published in Journal "Survival" 2005), in the MIT Security Studies Seminar in 2004 defined the term "Passive Sponsorship of Terrorism" as the individuals assistance of terrorists without their permission. A regime is guilty of passive sponsorship if it knowingly allows a terrorist group to raise money, enjoy a sanctuary, recruit, or otherwise flourish but does not directly aid the group itself. Professor Byman define the following characteristics of Passive support of terrorism:

The regime in question itself does not provide assistance but knowingly allows other actors in the country to aid a terrorist group; The regime has the capacity to stop this assistance or has chosen not to develop this capacity, and Often passive support is given by political parties, wealthy merchants, or other actors in society that have no formal affiliation with the government.

Several sources[[89]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism" \l "cite_note-89)[[90]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-90)[[91]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-91) have further defined the typology of terrorism:

* Political terrorism
  + Sub-state terrorism
    - Social revolutionary terrorism
    - Nationalist-separatist terrorism
    - Religious extremist terrorism
      * Religious fundamentalist Terrorism
      * New religions terrorism
    - [Right-wing terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right-wing_terrorism)
    - [Left-wing terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Left-wing_terrorism)
    - [Single-issue terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_interest_terrorism)
  + [State-sponsored terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State-sponsored_terrorism)
  + [Regime or state terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_terrorism)
* Criminal terrorism
* Pathological terrorism

### Russia in the Stalin era

[Article 58 (RSFSR Penal Code)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Article_58_%28RSFSR_Penal_Code%29) was the base of putting people in Russian [Gulags](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulag). It contained terms like:

* Damage of transport, communication, water supply, warehouses and other buildings or state and communal property
* Terrorist acts against representatives of Soviet power or of workers and peasants organisations
* Counter-revolutionary sabotage
* Counter-revolutionary action is any action aimed at overthrowing, undermining or weakening of the power of workers' and peasants' Soviets
* Armed uprising or intervention with the goal to seize the power
* Undermining of state industry, transport, monetary circulation or credit system, as well as of cooperative societies and organizations

## Motivation of terrorists

Attacks on 'collaborators' are used to intimidate people from cooperating with the state in order to undermine state control. This strategy was used in [Ireland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ireland), in [Kenya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenya), in [Algeria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algeria) and in [Cyprus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyprus) during their independence struggles.

Attacks on high profile symbolic targets are used to incite counter-terrorism by the state to polarize the population. This strategy was used by [Al Qaeda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Qaeda) in its attacks on the United States in September 2001. These attacks are also used to draw international attention to struggles that are otherwise unreported, such as the [Palestinian airplane hijackings in 1970](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dawson%27s_Field_hijackings) and the South Moluccan hostage crisis in the [Netherlands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Netherlands) in 1975.

Abrahm suggests that terrorist organizations do not select terrorism for its political effectiveness.[[92]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Abrahm-92) Individual terrorists tend to be motivated more by a desire for social solidarity with other members of their organization than by political platforms or strategic objectives, which are often murky and undefined.[[92]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Abrahm-92)

Some terrorists like [Timothy McVeigh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timothy_McVeigh) were motivated by revenge against a state for its actions.

## Democracy and domestic terrorism

The relationship between domestic terrorism and democracy is very complex. Terrorism is most common in nations with intermediate political freedom, and is least common in the most democratic nations.[[93]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-93)[[94]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-94)[[95]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-95)[[96]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-96) However, one study suggests that suicide terrorism may be an exception to this general rule. Evidence regarding this particular method of terrorism reveals that every modern suicide campaign has targeted a democracy–a state with a considerable degree of political freedom.[[97]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janbhhj-97) The study suggests that concessions awarded to terrorists during the 1980s and 1990s for suicide attacks increased their frequency.[[98]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-98)

Some examples of "terrorism" in non-democracies include [ETA](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ETA) in Spain under [Francisco Franco](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Franco) (although the group's terrorist activities increased sharply after Franco's death),[[99]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janfjlk-99) the [Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organization_of_Ukrainian_Nationalists) in pre-war [Poland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Polish_Republic),[[100]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-100) the [Shining Path](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shining_Path) in [Peru](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peru) under [Alberto Fujimori](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alberto_Fujimori),[[101]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janaawsw-101) the [Kurdistan Workers Party](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kurdistan_Workers_Party) when [Turkey](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkey) was ruled by military leaders and the [ANC](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_National_Congress) in South Africa.[[102]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jangvdf-102) Democracies, such as the United Kingdom, United States, [Israel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel), [Indonesia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indonesia), India, Spain and the [Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines), have also experienced domestic terrorism.

While a democratic nation espousing civil liberties may claim a sense of higher moral ground than other regimes, an act of terrorism within such a state may cause a dilemma: whether to maintain its civil liberties and thus risk being perceived as ineffective in dealing with the problem; or alternatively to restrict its civil liberties and thus risk delegitimizing its claim of supporting civil liberties.[[103]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janetrr-103) For this reason, [homegrown terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homegrown_terrorism) has started to be seen as a greater threat, as stated by former CIA Director Michael Hayden.[[104]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Hayden-104) This dilemma, some social theorists would conclude, may very well play into the initial plans of the acting terrorist(s); namely, to delegitimize the state.[[105]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-105)

## Religious terrorism

Religious terrorism is terrorism performed by groups or individuals, the motivation of which is typically rooted in [faith](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faith)-based tenets. Terrorist acts throughout the centuries have been performed on religious grounds with the hope to either spread or enforce a system of belief, viewpoint or opinion.[[107]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jan-107) Religious terrorism does not in itself necessarily define a specific religious standpoint or view, but instead usually defines an individual or a group view or interpretation of that belief system's teachings.

## Intimate terrorism

Intimate terrorism (IT) may also involve emotional and [psychological abuse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychological_abuse). Intimate terrorism is one element in a general pattern of control by one partner over the other. Intimate terrorism is more likely to escalate over time, not as likely to be mutual, and more likely to involve serious injury. IT batterers include two types: "Generally-violent-antisocial" and "[dysphoric](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dysphoria" \o "Dysphoria)-[borderline](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Borderline_personality_disorder)". The first type includes people with general [psychopathic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychopathic) and violent tendencies. The second type are people who are emotionally dependent on the relationship. Violence by a person against their intimate partner is often done as a way for controlling their partner, even if this kind of violence is not the most frequent. Support for this typology has been found in subsequent evaluations.

## Perpetrators

The [perpetrators](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perpetrator) of acts of terrorism can be individuals, groups, or states. According to some definitions, clandestine or semi-clandestine state actors may also carry out terrorist acts outside the framework of a state of war. However, the most common image of terrorism is that it is carried out by small and secretive [cells](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Covert_cell), highly motivated to serve a particular cause and many of the most deadly operations in recent times, such as the [September 11 attacks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/September_11_attacks), the [London underground bombing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/7_July_2005_London_bombings), [2008 Mumbai attacks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2008_Mumbai_attacks) and the [2002 Bali bombing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2002_Bali_bombing) were planned and carried out by a close clique, composed of close friends, family members and other strong social networks. These groups benefited from the free flow of information and efficient [telecommunications](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telecommunications) to succeed where others had failed.[[114]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-114)

Over the years, many people have attempted to come up with a terrorist profile to attempt to explain these individuals' actions through their psychology and social circumstances. Others, like Roderick Hindery, have sought to discern profiles in the propaganda tactics used by terrorists. Some security organizations designate these groups as *violent non-state actors*.[[115]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-williams_isn-115) A 2007 study by economist [Alan B. Krueger](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alan_B._Krueger) found that terrorists were less likely to come from an impoverished background (28% vs. 33%) and more likely to have at least a high-school education (47% vs. 38%). Another analysis found only 16% of terrorists came from impoverished families, vs. 30% of male Palestinians, and over 60% had gone beyond high school, vs. 15% of the populace.[[116]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-116)

To avoid detection, a terrorist will look, dress, and behave normally until executing the assigned mission. Some claim that attempts to profile terrorists based on personality, physical, or sociological traits are not useful.[[117]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11janhfgf-117) The physical and behavioral description of the terrorist could describe almost any normal person.[[118]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Library_of_Congress-118) However, the majority of terrorist attacks are carried out by military age men, aged 16–40.[[118]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Library_of_Congress-118)

### Non-state groups

Groups not part of the state apparatus of in opposition to the state are most commonly referred to as a "terrorist" in the media.

### State sponsors

A state can sponsor terrorism by funding or harboring a terrorist group. Opinions as to which acts of violence by states consist of state-sponsored terrorism vary widely. When states provide funding for groups considered by some to be terrorist, they rarely acknowledge them as such.

### State terrorism

Civilization is based on a clearly defined and widely accepted yet often unarticulated hierarchy. Violence done by those higher on the hierarchy to those lower is nearly always invisible, that is, unnoticed. When it is noticed, it is fully rationalized. Violence done by those lower on the hierarchy to those higher is unthinkable, and when it does occur is regarded with shock, horror, and the fetishization of the victims.

—[Derrick Jensen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Derrick_Jensen)[[119]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-119)

As with "terrorism" the concept of "state terrorism" is controversial.[[120]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-120) The Chairman of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee has stated that the Committee was conscious of 12 international Conventions on the subject, and none of them referred to State terrorism, which was not an international legal concept. If States abused their power, they should be judged against international conventions dealing with [war crimes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_crimes), [international human rights law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_human_rights_law), and [international humanitarian law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_humanitarian_law).[[121]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-121) Former [United Nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations) [Secretary-General](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secretary-General) [Kofi Annan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kofi_Annan) has said that it is "time to set aside debates on so-called 'state terrorism'. The [use of force by states](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Use_of_force_by_states) is already thoroughly regulated under international law".[[122]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-122) However, he also made clear that, "regardless of the differences between governments on the question of definition of terrorism, what is clear and what we can all agree on is any deliberate attack on innocent civilians [or non-combatants], regardless of one's cause, is unacceptable and fits into the definition of terrorism."[[123]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-123)

State terrorism has been used to refer to terrorist acts by governmental agents or forces. This involves the use of state resources employed by a state's foreign policies, such as using its military to directly perform acts of terrorism. Professor of [Political Science](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_Science) Michael Stohl cites the examples that include the German [bombing of London](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Blitz), the Japanese [bombing of Pearl Harbor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bombing_of_Pearl_Harbor), the British [firebombing of Dresden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Firebombing_of_Dresden), and the U.S. [atomic bombing of Hiroshima](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atomic_bombing_of_Hiroshima) during [World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II). He argues that "the use of terror tactics is common in international relations and the state has been and remains a more likely employer of terrorism within the international system than insurgents." He also cites the [first strike](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_strike) option as an example of the "terror of coercive diplomacy" as a form of this, which holds the world hostage with the implied threat of using nuclear weapons in "crisis management" and argue that the institutionalized form of terrorism has occurred as a result of changes that took place following World War II. In this analysis, state terrorism exhibited as a form of [foreign policy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign_policy) was shaped by the presence and use of [weapons of mass destruction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weapons_of_mass_destruction), and that the legitimizing of such violent behavior led to an increasingly accepted form of this state behavior.[[124]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jangbhh-124)[[125][125]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jangbhhss-125)

[Charles Stewart Parnell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Stewart_Parnell) described [William Ewart Gladstone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Ewart_Gladstone)'s [Irish Coercion Act](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_Coercion_Act) as terrorism in his "no-Rent manifesto" in 1881, during the [Irish Land War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_Land_War).[[126]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-126) The concept is also used to describe [political repressions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_repression) by governments against their own civilian population with the purpose to incite fear. For example, taking and executing civilian [hostages](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hostage) or [extrajudicial elimination](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extrajudicial_killing) campaigns are commonly considered "terror" or terrorism, for example during the [Red Terror](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Terror) or [Great Terror](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Purge).[[127]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Black-127) Such actions are often also described as [democide](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democide) or [genocide](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genocide), which has been argued to be equivalent to state terrorism.[[128]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Kisangani2007-128) Empirical studies on this have found that democracies have little democide.[[129]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-129)[[130]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-130)

## Terrorism and leisure

The connection between terrorism and tourism has been widely studied since the Luxor massacre in Egypt.[[131]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-131)[[132]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-132) In the 1970s, the targets of terrorists were politicians and chiefs of police while now international tourists and visitors are selected as main targets of attacks. The attacks to World Trade Centre, in September 11 were the symbolic epicenter, which marked a new epoch in the use of civil transport against the main power of the planet.[[133]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-133)[[134]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-134) From this event onwards, the spaces of leisure that characterized the pride of West, were conceived as dangerous and frightful.[[135]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-135)[[136]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-136) [Maximiliano E Korstanje](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Maximiliano_E_Korstanje&action=edit&redlink=1)[[*who?*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style/Words_to_watch#Unsupported_attributions)] argued that terrorism represents a dialectics of hate, between a group of insurgents whose interests has been placed out the election system and the state which is unable to anticipate the next blow. Historically, tourism and terrorism has inextricably intertwined. As enrooted in the capitalist ethos, terrorism rests on the logic of violence and extortion, where the “Other” is used to achieve the in-group goals.[[137]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-137) Similarly, Luke Howie explains that the action of terrorists are not aimed at effacing entire civilizations, as the media portrays, but in administering an extreme fear so that their claims will be accepted. Terrorists are psychologically insensitive to the Other suffering. Using extortion as a main tactic, the media plays a fertile ground to amplify the effects of terrorism in the society.[[138]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-138)[[139]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-139)[[140]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-140) Likely, one of the main problems of terrorism seems to be the needs to take the attention of audience. At some extent, terrorists appeal to jolt the society, however, the gradual process of desensitization the western audience experiences. This results these groups innovate in more cruel and violent strategies.[[141]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-141)

## Funding

[State sponsors](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State-sponsored_terrorism) have constituted a major form of funding; for example, [Palestine Liberation Organization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palestine_Liberation_Organization), [Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Front_for_the_Liberation_of_Palestine) and some other terrorist groups were funded by the [Soviet Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union).[[142]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-ncua-142)[[143]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jan4r67-143) The [Stern Gang](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stern_Gang) received funding from [Italian Fascist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italian_Fascism) officers in Beirut to undermine the [British Mandate for Palestine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Mandate_for_Palestine).[[144]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-144) [Pakistan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pakistan) has created and nurtured terrorist groups as policy for achieving tactical objectives against its neighbours, especially [India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India).[[145]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism" \l "cite_note-145)

"[Revolutionary tax](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolutionary_tax)" is another major form of funding, and essentially a euphemism for "[protection money](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protection_money)".[[142]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-ncua-142) Revolutionary taxes are typically extorted from businesses (including farms cultivating illicit drugs (such as Papaver somniferum)[[146]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism" \l "cite_note-146) and they also "play a secondary role as one other means of intimidating the target population".[[142]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-ncua-142)

Other major sources of funding include [kidnapping](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kidnapping) for ransoms, [smuggling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smuggling) (including [wildlife smuggling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wildlife_smuggling)),[[147]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-147) [fraud](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fraud), and [robbery](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robbery).[[142]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-ncua-142) The [Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islamic_State_in_Iraq_and_the_Levant) received funding "via private donations from the [Gulf states](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab_states_of_the_Persian_Gulf)".[[148]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-148)

The [Financial Action Task Force](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financial_Action_Task_Force) is an inter-governmental body whose mandate, since October 2001, has included combatting [terrorist financing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorist_financing).[[149]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-149)

## Tactics

Terrorism is a form of [asymmetric warfare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asymmetric_warfare), and is more common when direct [conventional warfare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conventional_warfare) will not be effective because forces vary greatly in power.[[150]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jan1q21q-150)

The context in which terrorist tactics are used is often a large-scale, unresolved political conflict. The type of conflict varies widely; historical examples include:

* [Secession](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secession) of a territory to form a new sovereign state or become part of a different state
* Dominance of territory or resources by various [ethnic groups](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_groups)
* Imposition of a particular form of government
* Economic deprivation of a population
* Opposition to a domestic government or occupying army
* Religious fanaticism

Terrorist attacks are often targeted to maximize fear and publicity, usually using [explosives](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Explosives) or [poison](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poison).[[151]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-151) There is concern about terrorist attacks employing [weapons of mass destruction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weapons_of_mass_destruction). Terrorist groups usually methodically plan attacks in advance, and may train participants, plant undercover agents, and raise money from supporters or through [organized crime](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organized_crime). Communications occur through modern [telecommunications](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telecommunications), or through old-fashioned methods such as [couriers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Courier).

## Responses

Responses to terrorism are broad in scope. They can include re-alignments of the [political spectrum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_spectrum) and reassessments of [fundamental values](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Value_system).

Specific types of responses include:

* [Targeted laws, criminal procedures, deportations, and enhanced police powers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-terrorism_legislation)
* [Target hardening](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Target_hardening), such as locking doors or adding traffic barriers
* Preemptive or reactive military action
* Increased intelligence and surveillance activities
* Preemptive humanitarian activities
* More permissive interrogation and detention policies

The term "[counter-terrorism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counter-terrorism)" has a narrower connotation, implying that it is directed at terrorist actors.

### Response in the United States

According to a report by Dana Priest and William M. Arkin in [The Washington Post](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Washington_Post), "Some 1,271 government organizations and 1,931 private companies work on programs related to counterterrorism, homeland security and intelligence in about 10,000 locations across the United States."[[152]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-152)

America's thinking on how to defeat radical Islamists is split along two very different schools of thought. Republicans, typically follow what is known as the Bush Doctrine, advocate the military model of taking the fight to the enemy and seeking to democratize the Middle East. Democrats, by contrast, generally propose the law enforcement model of better cooperation with nations and more security at home.[[153]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-ankony1-153) In the introduction of the *U.S. Army / Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual*, Sarah Sewall states the need for "U.S. forces to make securing the civilian, rather than destroying the enemy, their top priority. The civilian population is the center of gravity—the deciding factor in the struggle.... Civilian deaths create an extended family of enemies—new insurgent recruits or informants––and erode support of the host nation." Sewall sums up the book’s key points on how to win this battle: "Sometimes, the more you protect your force, the less secure you may be.... Sometimes, the more force is used, the less effective it is.... The more successful the counterinsurgency is, the less force can be used and the more risk must be accepted.... Sometimes, doing nothing is the best reaction."[[154]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-154) This strategy, often termed "courageous restraint," has certainly led to some success on the Middle East battlefield, yet it fails to address the central truth: the terrorists we face are mostly homegrown.[[153]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-ankony1-153)

## Mass media

[Mass media](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mass_media) exposure may be a primary goal of those carrying out terrorism, to expose issues that would otherwise be ignored by the media. Some consider this to be manipulation and exploitation of the media.[[155]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-155)

The [Internet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet) has created a new channel for groups to spread their messages. This has created a cycle of measures and counter measures by groups in support of and in opposition to terrorist movements. The United Nations has created its own online counter-terrorism resource.[[156]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-156)

The mass media will, on occasion, censor organizations involved in terrorism (through self-restraint or regulation) to discourage further terrorism. However, this may encourage organizations to perform more extreme acts of terrorism to be shown in the mass media. Conversely [James F. Pastor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_F._Pastor) explains the significant relationship between terrorism and the media, and the underlying benefit each receives from the other.[[157]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-157)

There is always a point at which the terrorist ceases to manipulate the media gestalt. A point at which the violence may well escalate, but beyond which the terrorist has become symptomatic of the media gestalt itself. Terrorism as we ordinarily understand it is innately media-related.

—Novelist [William Gibson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Gibson)[[158]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-158)

## History

Depending on how broadly the term is defined, the roots and practice of terrorism can be traced at least to the 1st-century AD [Sicarii Zealots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicarii_Zealots), though some dispute whether the group, a radical offshoot of the [Zealots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zealots) which was active in [Judaea Province](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judaea_Province) at the beginning of the 1st century AD, was in fact terrorist. According to the contemporary Jewish-Roman historian [Josephus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Josephus), after the [Zealotry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zealotry) rebellion against Roman rule in Judea, when some prominent collaborators with Roman rule were killed,[[159]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-159)[[160]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-160) [Judas of Galilee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judas_of_Galilee) formed a small and more extreme offshoot of the Zealots, the [Sicarii](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sicarii), in 6 AD.[[161]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Chaliand.2C_Gerard_2007._p.68-161) Their terror also was directed against Jewish "collaborators", including temple priests, Sadducees, Herodians, and other wealthy elites.[[162]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-162)

The term "terrorism" itself was originally used to describe the actions of the [Jacobin Club](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacobin_Club) during the "[Reign of Terror](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reign_of_Terror)" in the [French Revolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Revolution). "Terror is nothing other than justice, prompt, severe, inflexible," said Jacobin leader [Maximilien Robespierre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maximilien_Robespierre). In 1795, [Edmund Burke](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Burke) denounced the Jacobins for letting "thousands of those hell-hounds called Terrorists ... loose on the people" of France.[[163]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-tws11jan14432-163)

In January 1858, Italian patriot [Felice Orsini](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felice_Orsini) threw three bombs in an attempt to assassinate French Emperor [Napoleon III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleon_III).[[164]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Crenshaw38-164) Eight bystanders were killed and 142 injured.[[164]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Crenshaw38-164) The incident played a crucial role as an inspiration for the development of the early terrorist groups.[[164]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Crenshaw38-164)

Arguably the first organization to utilize modern terrorist techniques was the [Irish Republican Brotherhood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_Republican_Brotherhood),[[165]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-165) founded in 1858 as a revolutionary Irish nationalist group[[166]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-166) that carried out attacks in England.[[167]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-167) The group initiated the [Fenian dynamite campaign](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fenian_dynamite_campaign) in 1881, one of the first modern terror campaigns.[[168]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-168) Instead of earlier forms of terrorism based on political assassination, this campaign used modern, timed explosives with the express aim of sowing fear in the very heart of metropolitan Britain, in order to achieve political gains.[[169]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-169)

Another early terrorist group was [Narodnaya Volya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narodnaya_Volya_%28organization%29), founded in [Russia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russia) in 1878 as a revolutionary anarchist group inspired by [Sergei Nechayev](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sergei_Nechayev) and "propaganda by the deed" theorist Pisacane.[[170]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-cdi.org-170)[[171]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-Hoffman.2C_Bruce_1998._p._5-171) The group developed ideas—such as [targeted killing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Targeted_killing) of the 'leaders of oppression'—that were to become the hallmark of subsequent violence by small non-state groups, and they were convinced that the developing technologies of the age—such as the invention of dynamite, which they were the first anarchist group to make widespread use of[[172]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-172)—enabled them to strike directly and with discrimination.[[173]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism#cite_note-bbc.co.uk-173) Modern terrorism had largely taken shape by the turn of the 20th century.