

Hinduism Vocab

- **Ahimsa:** Respect of everything living; even if it's an ant, you have to be careful not to kill it.
- **Asceticism:** Avoidance of material wants/needs; mostly for religion
- **Artha:** The pursuit of material wants
- **Atman:** A person's soul; basically something that's beyond the body/mind/consciousness
- **Avatar:** Appearance of a god on earth
- **Bhakti:** Worship towards one supreme God; usually Vishnu/Rama/Krishna and Shiva; people do this to attain moksha
- **Brahman:** The Supreme force, the Absolute; beyond all gods and everything
- **Brahmin:** A member of the highest class (priest)
- **Dharma:** Behaviors that keep society orderly
- **Ganges:** A holy river that is worshipped by all Hindus; supposed to be the material version of Ganga the river goddess
- **Guru:** teacher
- **Jainism:** A reaction against normal Brahmanism; main goal is "don't kill any living thing"; the founder died of starvation lol
- **Jnana:** Sacred knowledge
- **Kama:** Sensory enjoyment
- **Mahabharata:** A major epic of Hinduism; details the life of the Pandavas
- **Mantra:** Invocation in Hindu rituals
- **Moksha:** Release from rebirth
- **Om:** Origin of all mantras
- **Prakriti:** Nature
- **Puja:** A ritual to invoke/please a deity
- **Ramayana:** The other big epic; Details the life of Rama and his quest to rescue his wife Seeta from the demon king Ramayana
- **Samsara:** Process of reincarnation
- **Shakti:** Primordial cosmic energy
- **Sutra:** A rule in Sanskrit literature
- **Trimurthi:** Trinity of the three gods Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva
- **Varna system:** Caste system; Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras
- **Vedas:** The most ancient Hindu scriptures
- **Yoga:** Physical/mental disciplines originating in India
- **Yuga:** A period of humanity