

be·lie·f S3 W2

/bɪˈliːf/

noun

- 1 [singular, uncountable] BELIEVE the feeling that something is definitely true or definitely exists:

belief in

a strong belief in God

belief that

her sincere belief that her brother was not the murderer

in the belief that

Thieves broke into the building in the mistaken belief that there was expensive computer equipment inside.

- 2 [singular] BELIEVE the feeling that something is good and can be trusted:

belief in

If you're selling, you have to have genuine belief in the product.

When you get something wrong, it can shake your belief in yourself.

- 3 [countable] BELIEVE an idea that you believe to be true, especially one that forms part of a system of ideas:

religious beliefs

*Several members **hold** very right-wing **beliefs**.*

- 4 **beyond belief** BELIEVE

used to emphasize that something is so extreme that it is difficult to believe:

What she did was stupid beyond belief.

→ **it beggars belief** AT BEGGAR² (1),

→ **to the best of your belief** AT BEST³ (4) ,

→ DISBELIEF,
UNBELIEF

COLLOCATIONSense 1

adjectives

a firm/ strong belief *It is still my firm belief that we did the right thing.*

a strongly-held/ deeply-held belief (= that you believe very much) *her strongly-held belief that things were much better in the past*

a common/ popular/ widespread belief (= that a lot of people believe) *There is a common belief that educational standards are declining.*

a widely-held belief (= that a lot of people believe) *The article expressed the widely-held belief that unemployment leads to crime.*

a mistaken/ false belief *the mistaken belief that cannabis is not an addictive drug*

a sincere belief (= based on what you really feel is true) *We have a sincere belief in the power of art to enhance human life.*

a passionate belief *his passionate belief that technology is a tool to be used for the benefit of mankind*

verbs

have a belief *You must always have the belief that you can succeed.*

hold a belief *He held this belief until the day he died.*

be based on the belief that ... *Our policies must be based on the belief that the planet's resources are finite.*

phrases

it is my belief that *It is my belief that most teachers are doing a good job.*

contrary to popular belief (= opposite to what most people think) *Contrary to popular belief, boys are not usually better at maths than girls.*

Word origin

Date: 1100–1200

Origin: Probably from Old English *geleafa* 'belief', from *leafa* 'belief, faith'; influenced by *believe*

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English

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