



# Traditional Korean Culture



## **Korean Culture**

### **A Fusion of Tradition and Modernity**

Korean culture beautifully intertwines its rich historical traditions, deeply rooted in Confucianism and ancient customs, with a dynamic embrace of modern innovation and global trends. This unique blend creates a vibrant society where centuries-old practices coexist harmoniously with cutting-edge technology and pop culture phenomena like Hallyu.



# Religion & Spirituality in Korea

## Shamanism - Indigenous Beliefs

### 무속신앙

- Korea's earliest spiritual tradition based in animism and nature worship

## Confucianism - Social and Ethical Framework

### 유교

- **Focus:** Respect for elders and hierarchy (structured family and political systems), and education
- **Legacy:** Continues to influence Korean values and social etiquette

## Buddhism - Spiritual Foundation

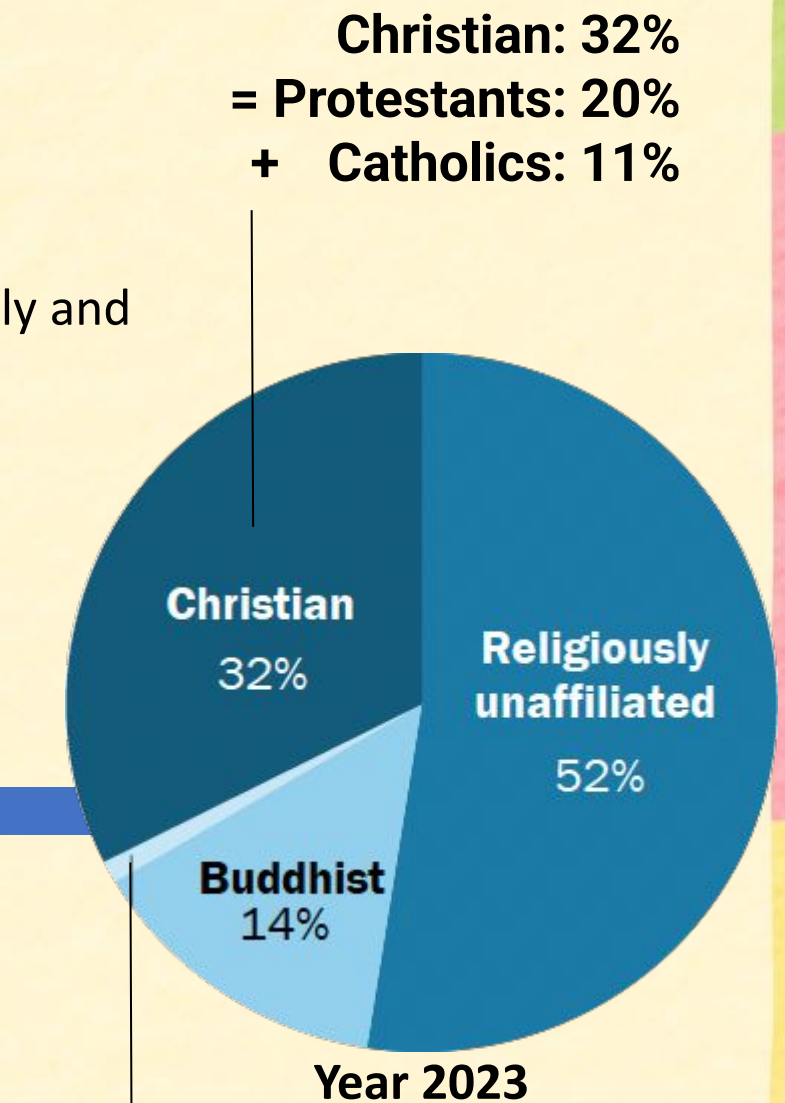
### 불교

- **Impact:** Became Korea's state religion for centuries shaping spiritual foundation, art and architecture (temples)

## Christianity - Modern Growth

### 기독교

- **Catholicism** arrived in the late 18th century, and **Protestantism** spread in the late 19th century.
- **Impact:** Rapidly grew during the 20th century, especially after the Korean War



4th Century

14th Century during Joseon Dynasty

Late 18th Century

# Core Values in Korea



01

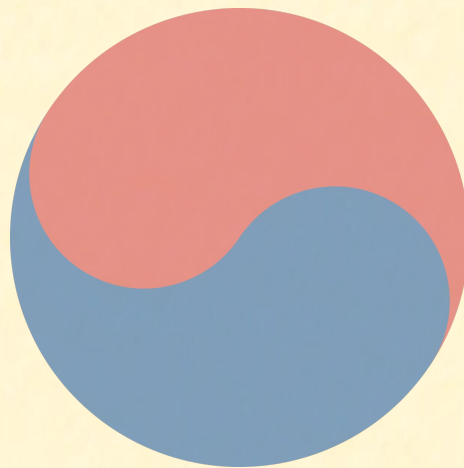
## Respect for Elders and Hierarchy

Rooted in Confucianism, age and status shape social behavior. Deference to seniors is shown through language (honorifics), body language (bows), and decisions.

02

## Collectivism and Harmony

Korean villages historically relied on cooperation for farming and defense. Influenced by Buddhism and Confucianism, the group often comes before the individual. Cooperation, social conformity, and maintaining peace are vital for social cohesion.



03

## Education and Hard Work

Due to Korea's post-war transformation and Confucian, emphasis on learning, academic success and diligence are tied to one's identity and future prospects.

04

## Social Reciprocity (Jeong)

*Jeong* is a deep emotional bond formed through mutual care over time. Social interactions are built on empathy, loyalty, and giving without expecting immediate returns.

05

## National Pride and Resilience (Han)

Koreans embrace '*Han*'—a deep collective emotion from historical hardships, centuries of invasions and the Korean War. This fuels patriotism, unity, and an enduring drive to overcome adversity.



# Hanbok 한복 & Korean Holidays

**Hanbok 한복** is Korea's traditional clothing worn on holidays, weddings, and important occasions.



## Seollal 설날 (Lunar New Year)

: Celebrated on the first day of the lunar calendar usually in late January or February



Ancestral Rite  
차례



New Year's Bow  
세배



Rice Cake Soup  
떡국



Playing Yutnori  
윷놀이

## Chuseok 추석 (Harvest Festival, Full Moon Festival, or Mid-Autumn Festival)

: Celebrated on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month usually in September or early October



Ancestral Rite  
차례



Visiting Ancestors' Graves  
성묘



Songpyeon  
송편



Wishing Upon the Full Moon  
소원빌기



# Traditional Korean Visual Arts and Architecture

아침이면 태양을 볼 수 있고 저녁이면 별을 볼 수 있다. 나는 행복하다.  
꽃이랑 보고 싶음은 사랑임을 볼 수 있는 기쁨과  
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나는 행복합니다. 이 시를 쓴 사람은 박영숙 2008년 10월 10일



## Seoye (Calligraphy) 서예

Artistic brush writing in Hanji

## Hanok 한옥

Traditional Korean houses with curved roofs and ondol (heated floors)

## Hanji (Korean Paper) 한지 공예

Used in lanterns, fans, and calligraphy

## Ceramics 도자기 공예

Celadon, white porcelain, and Buncheong ware



# Traditional Korean Performing Arts and Sports



## Janggu Dance 장구춤

A dance performed while playing the janggu, Korea's hourglass drum

## Samulnori 사물놀이

Percussion Quartet

## Buchae (Fan) Dance 부채춤

A dance with large, vibrant fans

## Taekwondo 태권도

Korean martial arts