[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About" \o "Template:About) [Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image)[Template:God](/wiki/Template:God) In [monotheism](/wiki/Monotheism), **God** is conceived of as the [Supreme Being](/wiki/Supreme_Being) and principal object of [faith](/wiki/Faith).<ref name=Swinburne>[Swinburne, R.G.](/wiki/Richard_Swinburne) "God" in [Honderich, Ted](/wiki/Ted_Honderich). (ed)*The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, [Oxford University Press](/wiki/Oxford_University_Press), 1995.</ref> The [concept of God](/wiki/Conceptions_of_God) as described by most [theologians](/wiki/Theology) includes the attributes of [omniscience](/wiki/Omniscience) (infinite knowledge), [omnipotence](/wiki/Omnipotence) (unlimited power), [omnipresence](/wiki/Omnipresence) (present everywhere), [divine simplicity](/wiki/Divine_simplicity), and as having an eternal and necessary existence. Many theologians also describe God as being [omnibenevolent](/wiki/Omnibenevolence) (perfectly good), and [all loving](/wiki/Love_of_God).

God is most often held to be non-corporeal,[[1]](#cite_note-1) and to be without any human biological sex,[[2]](#cite_note-2)[[3]](#cite_note-3) yet the concept of God actively creating the universe (as opposed to passively)[[4]](#cite_note-4) has caused many religions to describe God using masculine terminology, using such terms as "Him" or "Father". Furthermore, some religions (such as [Judaism](/wiki/Judaism)) attribute non-physical ["gender" to God](/wiki/Gender_of_God).[[5]](#cite_note-5) In [theism](/wiki/Theism), God is the [creator](/wiki/Creator_deity) and [sustainer](/wiki/God_the_Sustainer) of the [universe](/wiki/Universe), while in [deism](/wiki/Deism), God is the creator, but not the sustainer, of the universe. In [pantheism](/wiki/Pantheism), God is the universe itself. In [atheism](/wiki/Atheism), God is not believed to exist, while God is deemed unknown or unknowable within the context of [agnosticism](/wiki/Agnosticism). God has also been conceived as being [incorporeal](/wiki/Incorporeality) (immaterial), a [personal](/wiki/Personal_god) being, the source of all [moral obligation](/wiki/Moral_obligation), and the "greatest conceivable existent".[[1]](#cite_note-1) Many notable philosophers have developed arguments for and against the [existence of God](/wiki/Existence_of_God).[[6]](#cite_note-6) There are many [names for God](/wiki/Names_of_God), and different names are attached to different cultural ideas about God's identity and attributes. In the ancient Egyptian era of [Atenism](/wiki/Atenism), possibly the earliest recorded monotheistic religion, this deity was called [Aten](/wiki/Aten),[[7]](#cite_note-7) premised on being the one "true" Supreme Being and Creator of the Universe.[[8]](#cite_note-8) In the [Hebrew Bible](/wiki/Hebrew_Bible) and [Judaism](/wiki/Judaism), "He Who Is", "[I Am that I Am](/wiki/I_Am_that_I_Am)", and the [tetragrammaton](/wiki/Tetragrammaton) YHWH ([Template:Lang-he](/wiki/Template:Lang-he), which means: "I am who am"; "He Who Exists") are used as names of God, while [Yahweh](/wiki/Yahweh) and [Jehovah](/wiki/Jehovah) are sometimes used in Christianity as vocalizations of YHWH. In the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, God, consubstantial in three persons, is called the [Father](/wiki/God_the_Father), the [Son](/wiki/God_the_Son), and the [Holy Spirit](/wiki/Holy_Spirit_(Christianity)). In Judaism, it is common to refer to God by the titular [names](/wiki/Names_of_God_in_Judaism) [Elohim](/wiki/Elohim) or [Adonai](/wiki/Adonai), the latter of which is believed by some scholars to descend from the Egyptian Aten.[[9]](#cite_note-9)[[10]](#cite_note-10)[[11]](#cite_note-11)[[12]](#cite_note-12)[[13]](#cite_note-13) In [Islam](/wiki/Islam), the name [Allah](/wiki/Allah), "Al-El", or "Al-Elah" ("the God") is used, while Muslims also have a [multitude of titular names](/wiki/Names_of_God_in_Islam) for God. In [Hinduism](/wiki/Hinduism), [Brahman](/wiki/Brahman) is often considered a [monistic](/wiki/Monism) deity.[[14]](#cite_note-14) Other religions have names for God, for instance, [Baha](/wiki/God_in_the_Bahá'í_Faith) in the [Bahá'í Faith](/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith),[[15]](#cite_note-15) [Waheguru](/wiki/Waheguru) in [Sikhism](/wiki/Sikhism),[[16]](#cite_note-16) and [Ahura Mazda](/wiki/Ahura_Mazda) in [Zoroastrianism](/wiki/Zoroastrianism).[[17]](#cite_note-17) The many different conceptions of God, and competing claims as to God's characteristics, aims, and actions, have led to the development of ideas of [omnitheism](/wiki/Omnitheism), [pandeism](/wiki/Pandeism),[[18]](#cite_note-18)[[19]](#cite_note-19) or a [perennial philosophy](/wiki/Perennial_philosophy), which postulates that there is one underlying theological truth, of which all religions express a partial understanding, and as to which "the devout in the various great world religions are in fact worshipping that one God, but through different, overlapping concepts or mental images of Him."[[20]](#cite_note-20)

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## Etymology and usage[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[thumb|The](/wiki/File:Louvre_042010_01.jpg) [Mesha Stele](/wiki/Mesha_Stele) bears the earliest known reference (840 BCE) to the Israelite God Yahweh. [Template:Pp-semi-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-semi-indef)[Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The earliest written form of the Germanic word *God* (always, in this usage, [capitalized](/wiki/Capitalization_in_English)[[21]](#cite_note-21)) comes from the 6th-century [Christian](/wiki/Christianity) [Codex Argenteus](/wiki/Codex_Argenteus). The English word itself is derived from the [Proto-Germanic](/wiki/Proto-Germanic) \* ǥuđan. The reconstructed [Proto-Indo-European](/wiki/Proto-Indo-European_language) form [Template:PIE](/wiki/Template:PIE) was likely based on the root [Template:PIE](/wiki/Template:PIE), which meant either "to call" or "to invoke".[[22]](#cite_note-22) The Germanic words for *God* were originally [neuter](/wiki/Grammatical_gender)—applying to both genders—but during the process of the [Christianization](/wiki/Christianization) of the [Germanic peoples](/wiki/Germanic_people) from their indigenous [Germanic paganism](/wiki/Germanic_paganism), the words became a [masculine syntactic form](/wiki/Grammatical_gender).<ref name=BARNHART323>Barnhart, Robert K (1995). *The Barnhart Concise Dictionary of Etymology: the Origins of American English Words*, page 323. [HarperCollins](/wiki/HarperCollins). ISBN 0-06-270084-7</ref>

[thumb|right|The word 'Allah' in](/wiki/File:Allah3.svg) [Arabic calligraphy](/wiki/Islamic_calligraphy)

In the [English language](/wiki/English_language), the capitalized form of *God* continues to represent a distinction between monotheistic "God" and "gods" in [polytheism](/wiki/Polytheism).[[23]](#cite_note-23)[[24]](#cite_note-24)The English word *God* and its counterparts in other languages are normally used for any and all conceptions and, in spite of significant differences between religions, the term remains an English translation common to all. The same holds for Hebrew [*El*](/wiki/El_(god)), but [in Judaism](/wiki/Names_of_God_in_Judaism), God is also given a proper name, the [tetragrammaton](/wiki/Tetragrammaton) YHWH, in origin possibly the name of an [Edomite](/wiki/Edomite) or [Midianite](/wiki/Midianite) deity, [Yahweh](/wiki/Yahweh_(Canaanite_deity)). In many translations of the [Bible](/wiki/Bible), when the word *LORD* is in all capitals, it signifies that the word represents the tetragrammaton.<ref name=Barton2006>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref>

[*Allāh*](/wiki/Allāh) ([Template:Lang-ar](/wiki/Template:Lang-ar)) is the [Arabic](/wiki/Arabic) term with no [plural](/wiki/Plural) used by Muslims and Arabic speaking Christians and Jews meaning "The God" (with a capital G), while "[ʾilāh](/wiki/ʾilāh)" ([Template:Lang-ar](/wiki/Template:Lang-ar)) is the term used for a deity or a god in general.[[25]](#cite_note-25)[[26]](#cite_note-26)[[27]](#cite_note-27) God may also be given a proper name in monotheistic currents of Hinduism which emphasize the [personal nature of God](/wiki/Personal_god), with early references to his name as [Krishna](/wiki/Krishna)-[Vasudeva](/wiki/Vasudeva) in [Bhagavata](/wiki/Bhagavata) or later [Vishnu](/wiki/Vishnu) and [Hari](/wiki/Hari).[[28]](#cite_note-28) Ahura Mazda is the name for God used in Zoroastrianism. "Mazda", or rather the Avestan stem-form *Mazdā-*, nominative *Mazdå*, reflects Proto-Iranian *\*Mazdāh (female)*. It is generally taken to be the proper name of the spirit, and like its [Sanskrit](/wiki/Sanskrit) cognate *medhā*, means "[intelligence](/wiki/Intelligence)" or "[wisdom](/wiki/Wisdom)". Both the Avestan and Sanskrit words reflect [Proto-Indo-Iranian](/wiki/Proto-Indo-Iranian_language) *\*mazdhā-*, from [Proto-Indo-European](/wiki/Proto-Indo-European_language) mn̩sdʰeh1*, literally meaning "placing (*dʰeh1*) one's mind (*\*mn̩-s*)", hence "wise".*[*Template:Sfn*](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

Waheguru ([Template:Lang-pa](/wiki/Template:Lang-pa)) is a term most often used in [Sikhism](/wiki/Sikhism) to refer to God. It means "Wonderful Teacher" in the Punjabi language. *Vāhi* (a Middle Persian borrowing) means "wonderful" and [*guru*](/wiki/Guru) ([Template:Lang-sa](/wiki/Template:Lang-sa)) is a term denoting "teacher". Waheguru is also described by some as an experience of ecstasy which is beyond all descriptions. The most common usage of the word "Waheguru" is in the greeting Sikhs use with each other:

*Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh*

Wonderful Lord's [Khalsa](/wiki/Khalsa), Victory is to the Wonderful Lord.

*Baha*, the "greatest" name for God in the Baha'i faith, is Arabic for "All-Glorious".

## General conceptions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

There is no clear consensus on the nature or even the [existence of God](/wiki/Existence_of_God).[[29]](#cite_note-29) The [Abrahamic conceptions of God](/wiki/Abrahamic_conceptions_of_God) include the [monotheistic](/wiki/Monotheistic) definition of God in [Judaism](/wiki/Judaism), the [trinitarian](/wiki/Trinity) view of [Christians](/wiki/Christians), and the [Islamic concept of God](/wiki/Islamic_concept_of_God). The [dharmic religions](/wiki/Dharmic_religions) differ in their view of the divine: views of [God in Hinduism](/wiki/God_in_Hinduism) vary by region, sect, and caste, ranging from monotheistic to polytheistic. Divinity was [recognized](/wiki/God_in_Buddhism) by the historical Buddha, particularly [Śakra](/wiki/Śakra_(Buddhism)) and [Brahma](/wiki/Brahma_(Buddhism)). However, other sentient beings, including gods, can at best only play a supportive role in one's personal path to salvation. Conceptions of God in the latter developments of the [Mahayana](/wiki/Mahayana) tradition give a more prominent place to notions of the divine.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

### Oneness[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|The Trinity is the belief that God is composed of](/wiki/File:Shield-Trinity-Scutum-Fidei-English.svg) [The Father](/wiki/God_the_Father), [The Son](/wiki/God_the_Son) (embodied metaphysically in the physical realm by [Jesus](/wiki/Jesus)), and [The Holy Spirit](/wiki/Holy_Spirit_(Christianity)).

[Monotheists](/wiki/Monotheism) hold that there is only one god, and may claim that the one true god is worshiped in different religions under different names. The view that all theists actually worship the same god, whether they know it or not, is especially emphasized in [Hinduism](/wiki/Hinduism)[[30]](#cite_note-30) and [Sikhism](/wiki/Sikhism).[[31]](#cite_note-31) In [Christianity](/wiki/Christianity), the [doctrine of the Trinity](/wiki/Doctrine_of_the_Trinity) describes God as one God in three persons. The Trinity comprises [The Father](/wiki/God_the_Father), [The Son](/wiki/God_the_Son) (embodied metaphysically by [Jesus](/wiki/Jesus)), and [The Holy Spirit](/wiki/Holy_Spirit_(Christianity)).[[32]](#cite_note-32) [Islam's](/wiki/Islam) most fundamental concept is [*tawhid*](/wiki/Tawhid) (meaning "oneness" or "uniqueness"). God is described in the [Quran](/wiki/Quran) as: "Say: He is Allah, the One and Only; Allah, the Eternal, Absolute; He begetteth not, nor is He begotten; And there is none like unto Him."[[33]](#cite_note-33)[[34]](#cite_note-34) Muslims repudiate the Christian doctrine of the [Trinity](/wiki/Trinity) and the divinity of [Jesus](/wiki/Islamic_view_of_Jesus), comparing it to [polytheism](/wiki/Polytheism). In Islam, God is beyond all comprehension or equal and does not resemble any of his creations in any way. Thus, [Muslims](/wiki/Muslim) are not [iconodules](/wiki/Iconodules), and are not expected to visualize God.[[35]](#cite_note-35) [Henotheism](/wiki/Henotheism) is the belief and worship of a single god while accepting the existence or possible existence of other [deities](/wiki/Deity).[[36]](#cite_note-36)

### Theism, deism and pantheism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

[Theism](/wiki/Theism) generally holds that God exists realistically, objectively, and independently of human thought; that God created and sustains everything; that God is omnipotent and eternal; and that God is personal and interacting with the universe through, for example, [religious experience](/wiki/Religious_experience) and the prayers of humans.[[37]](#cite_note-37) Theism holds that God is both transcendent and immanent; thus, God is simultaneously infinite and in some way present in the affairs of the world.[[38]](#cite_note-38) Not all theists subscribe to all of these propositions, but each usually subscribes to some of them (see, by way of comparison, [family resemblance](/wiki/Family_resemblance)).[[37]](#cite_note-37) Catholic theology holds that God is [infinitely simple](/wiki/Divine_simplicity) and is not involuntarily subject to time. Most theists hold that God is omnipotent, omniscient, and benevolent, although this belief raises questions about God's responsibility for evil and suffering in the world. Some theists ascribe to God a self-conscious or purposeful limiting of omnipotence, omniscience, or benevolence. [Open Theism](/wiki/Open_Theism), by contrast, asserts that, due to the nature of time, God's omniscience does not mean the deity can predict the future. *Theism* is sometimes used to refer in general to any belief in a god or gods, i.e., monotheism or [polytheism](/wiki/Polytheism).[[39]](#cite_note-39)[[40]](#cite_note-40)[thumb|200px|"God blessing the](/wiki/File:Blake_God_Blessing.jpg) [seventh day](/wiki/Sabbath)", a watercolor painting depicting God, by [William Blake](/wiki/William_Blake) (1757 – 1827)[Deism](/wiki/Deism) holds that God is wholly [transcendent](/wiki/Transcendence_(religion)): God exists, but does not intervene in the world beyond what was necessary to create it.[[38]](#cite_note-38) In this view, God is not [anthropomorphic](/wiki/Anthropomorphic), and neither answers prayers nor produces miracles. Common in Deism is a belief that God has no interest in humanity and may not even be aware of humanity. [Pandeism](/wiki/Pandeism) and [Panendeism](/wiki/Panendeism), respectively, combine Deism with the Pantheistic or Panentheistic beliefs.[[19]](#cite_note-19)[[41]](#cite_note-41)[[42]](#cite_note-42) Pandeism is proposed to explain as to Deism why God would create a universe and then abandon it,[[43]](#cite_note-43) and as to Pantheism, the origin and purpose of the universe.[[43]](#cite_note-43)[[44]](#cite_note-44) [Pantheism](/wiki/Pantheism) holds that God is the universe and the universe is God, whereas [Panentheism](/wiki/Panentheism) holds that God contains, but is not identical to, the Universe.[[45]](#cite_note-45) It is also the view of the [Liberal Catholic Church](/wiki/Liberal_Catholic_Church); [Theosophy](/wiki/Theosophy); some views of Hinduism except [Vaishnavism](/wiki/Vaishnavism), which believes in panentheism; Sikhism; some divisions of [Neopaganism](/wiki/Neopaganism) and [Taoism](/wiki/Taoism), along with many varying denominations and individuals within denominations. [Kabbalah](/wiki/Kabbalah), Jewish mysticism, paints a pantheistic/panentheistic view of God—which has wide acceptance in [Hasidic Judaism](/wiki/Hasidic_Judaism), particularly from their founder [The Baal Shem Tov](/wiki/Israel_ben_Eliezer)—but only as an addition to the Jewish view of a personal god, not in the original pantheistic sense that denies or limits persona to God.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

### Other concepts[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Dystheism](/wiki/Dystheism), which is related to [theodicy](/wiki/Theodicy), is a form of theism which holds that God is either not wholly good or is fully malevolent as a consequence of the [problem of evil](/wiki/Problem_of_evil). One such example comes from [Dostoevsky's](/wiki/Dostoevsky) [*The Brothers Karamazov*](/wiki/The_Brothers_Karamazov), in which Ivan Karamazov rejects God on the grounds that he allows children to suffer.[[46]](#cite_note-46) In modern times, some more abstract concepts have been developed, such as [process theology](/wiki/Process_theology) and [open theism](/wiki/Open_theism). The contemporaneous French philosopher [Michel Henry](/wiki/Michel_Henry) has however proposed a [phenomenological approach and definition of God](/wiki/Phenomenological_definition_of_God) as [phenomenological](/wiki/Phenomenology_(religion)) essence of [Life](/wiki/Phenomenological_life).[[47]](#cite_note-47) God has also been conceived as being [incorporeal](/wiki/Incorporeality) (immaterial), a [personal](/wiki/Personal_god) being, the source of all [moral obligation](/wiki/Moral_obligation), and the "greatest conceivable existent".<ref name=Swinburne/> These attributes were all supported to varying degrees by the early [Jewish](/wiki/Judaism), [Christian](/wiki/Christianity) and [Muslim](/wiki/Islam) theologian philosophers, including [Maimonides](/wiki/Maimonides),[[48]](#cite_note-48) [Augustine of Hippo](/wiki/Augustine_of_Hippo),[[48]](#cite_note-48) and [Al-Ghazali](/wiki/Al-Ghazali),<ref name=Platinga>[Platinga, Alvin](/wiki/Alvin_Plantinga). "God, Arguments for the Existence of", *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Routledge, 2000.</ref> respectively.

## Non-theistic views of God[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [Non-theist](/wiki/Nontheism) views about God also vary. Some non-theists avoid the concept of God, whilst accepting that it is significant to many; other non-theists understand God as a symbol of human values and aspirations. The nineteenth-century English [atheist](/wiki/Atheism) [Charles Bradlaugh](/wiki/Charles_Bradlaugh) declared that he refused to say "There is no God", because "the word 'God' is to me a sound conveying no clear or distinct affirmation";[[49]](#cite_note-49) he said more specifically that he disbelieved in the Christian god. [Stephen Jay Gould](/wiki/Stephen_Jay_Gould) proposed an approach dividing the world of philosophy into what he called "[non-overlapping magisteria](/wiki/Non-overlapping_magisteria)" (NOMA). In this view, questions of the [supernatural](/wiki/Supernatural), such as those relating to the [existence](/wiki/Existence) and [nature](/wiki/Nature) of God, are [non](/wiki/Metaphysics)-[empirical](/wiki/Empirical) and are the proper domain of [theology](/wiki/Theology). The methods of science should then be used to answer any empirical question about the natural world, and theology should be used to answer questions about ultimate meaning and moral value. In this view, the perceived lack of any empirical footprint from the magisterium of the supernatural onto natural events makes science the sole player in the natural world.[[50]](#cite_note-50) Another view, advanced by [Richard Dawkins](/wiki/Richard_Dawkins), is that the existence of God is an empirical question, on the grounds that "a universe with a god would be a completely different kind of universe from one without, and it would be a scientific difference."[[51]](#cite_note-51) [Carl Sagan](/wiki/Carl_Sagan) argued that the doctrine of a Creator of the Universe was difficult to prove or disprove and that the only conceivable scientific discovery that could disprove the existence of a Creator (not necessarily a God) would be the discovery that the universe is infinitely old.[[52]](#cite_note-52) [Stephen Hawking](/wiki/Stephen_Hawking) and co-author [Leonard Mlodinow](/wiki/Leonard_Mlodinow) state in their book, [*The Grand Design*](/wiki/The_Grand_Design_(book)), that it is reasonable to ask who or what created the universe, but if the answer is God, then the question has merely been deflected to that of who created God. Both authors claim however, that it is possible to answer these questions purely within the realm of science, and without invoking any divine beings.[[53]](#cite_note-53) Neuroscientist Michael Nikoletseas has proposed that questions of the existence of God are no different from questions of natural sciences. Following a biological comparative approach, he concludes that it is highly probable that God exists, and, although not visible, it is possible that we know some of his attributes.[[54]](#cite_note-54)

### Agnosticism and Atheism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

Agnosticism is the view that, the [truth values](/wiki/Truth_value) of certain claims – especially [metaphysical](/wiki/Metaphysics) and religious claims such as [whether God](/wiki/Existence_of_God), the [divine](/wiki/Divinity) or the [supernatural](/wiki/Supernatural) exist – are unknown and perhaps unknowable.[[55]](#cite_note-55)[[56]](#cite_note-56)[[57]](#cite_note-57) Atheism is, in a broad sense, the rejection of [belief](/wiki/Belief) in the existence of [deities,](/wiki/Deity) or a God.[[58]](#cite_note-58)[[59]](#cite_note-59) In a narrower sense, atheism is specifically the position that there are no deities.[[60]](#cite_note-60)

### Anthropomorphism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Pascal Boyer](/wiki/Pascal_Boyer) argues that while there is a wide array of supernatural concepts found around the world, in general, supernatural beings tend to behave much like people. The construction of gods and spirits like persons is one of the best known traits of religion. He cites examples from [Greek mythology](/wiki/Greek_mythology), which is, in his opinion, more like a modern [soap opera](/wiki/Soap_opera) than other religious systems.[[61]](#cite_note-61)[Bertrand du Castel](/wiki/Bertrand_du_Castel) and Timothy Jurgensen demonstrate through formalization that Boyer's explanatory model matches physics' [epistemology](/wiki/Epistemology) in positing not directly observable entities as intermediaries.[[62]](#cite_note-62)[Anthropologist](/wiki/Anthropology) Stewart Guthrie contends that people project human features onto non-human aspects of the world because it makes those aspects more familiar. [Sigmund Freud](/wiki/Sigmund_Freud) also suggested that god concepts are projections of one's father.[[63]](#cite_note-63) Likewise, [Émile Durkheim](/wiki/Émile_Durkheim) was one of the earliest to suggest that gods represent an extension of human social life to include supernatural beings. In line with this reasoning, psychologist Matt Rossano contends that when humans began living in larger groups, they may have created gods as a means of enforcing morality. In small groups, morality can be enforced by social forces such as gossip or reputation. However, it is much harder to enforce morality using social forces in much larger groups. Rossano indicates that by including ever-watchful gods and spirits, humans discovered an effective strategy for restraining selfishness and building more cooperative groups.[[64]](#cite_note-64)

## Existence of God[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)[thumb|200px|](/wiki/File:St-thomas-aquinas.jpg)[St. Thomas Aquinas](/wiki/Thomas_Aquinas) summed up five main arguments as proofs for God's existence. [thumb|164x164px|](/wiki/File:GodfreyKneller-IsaacNewton-1689.jpg)[Issac Newton](/wiki/Issac_Newton) saw the existence of a Creator necessary in the movement of astronomical objects. Arguments about the existence of God typically include empirical, deductive, and inductive types. Different views include that: "God does not exist" ([strong atheism](/wiki/Weak_and_strong_atheism)); "God almost certainly does not exist" (*de facto* [atheism](/wiki/Atheism)); "no one knows whether God exists" ([agnosticism](/wiki/Agnosticism)[[65]](#cite_note-65));"God exists, but this cannot be proven or disproven" (*de facto* [theism](/wiki/Theism)); and that "God exists and this can be proven" ([strong theism](/wiki/Theism)). There are numerous variations on these positions.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Countless arguments have been proposed to prove the existence of God.[[66]](#cite_note-66) Some of the most notable arguments are the [Five Ways of Aquinas](/wiki/Quinque_viae), the [Argument from Desire](/wiki/Argument_from_Desire) proposed by [C.S. Lewis](/wiki/C.S._Lewis), and the [Ontological Argument](/wiki/Ontological_Argument) formulated both by [St. Anselm](/wiki/St._Anselm) and [René Descartes](/wiki/Descartes).[[67]](#cite_note-67) St. Anselm's approach was to define God as, "that than which nothing greater can be conceived". Famed pantheist philosopher [Baruch Spinoza](/wiki/Baruch_Spinoza) would later carry this idea to its extreme: "By God I understand a being absolutely infinite, i.e., a substance consisting of infinite attributes, of which each one expresses an eternal and infinite essence." For Spinoza, the whole of the natural universe is made of one substance, God, or its equivalent, Nature.[[68]](#cite_note-68) His proof for the existence of God was a variation of the Ontological argument.[[69]](#cite_note-69) [Scientist](/wiki/Scientist) [Isaac Newton](/wiki/Isaac_Newton) saw God as the masterful creator whose existence could not be denied in the face of the grandeur of all creation.[[70]](#cite_note-70) Nevertheless, he rejected polymath [Leibniz'](/wiki/Gottfried_Wilhelm_Leibniz) thesis that God would necessarily make a perfect world which requires no intervention from the creator. In Query 31 of the *Opticks*, Newton simultaneously made an argument from design and for the necessity of intervention:[Template:QuoteSt](/wiki/Template:Quote). Thomas believed that the [existence of God](/wiki/Existence_of_God) is self-evident in itself, but not to us. "Therefore I say that this proposition, "God exists", of itself is self-evident, for the predicate is the same as the subject.... Now because we do not know the essence of God, the proposition is not self-evident to us; but needs to be demonstrated by things that are more known to us, though less known in their nature—namely, by effects."[[71]](#cite_note-71) Many [philosophers](/wiki/Philosopher) developed arguments for the existence of God,<ref name=Platinga/> while attempting to comprehend the precise implications of God's attributes. Reconciling some of those attributes generated important philosophical problems and debates. For example, God's omniscience may seem to imply that God knows how free agents will choose to act. If God does know this, their ostensible [free will](/wiki/Free_will) might be illusory, or foreknowledge does not imply predestination, and if God does not know it, God may not be omniscient.<ref name=Wierenga>Wierenga, Edward R. "Divine foreknowledge" in [Audi, Robert](/wiki/Robert_Audi). *The Cambridge Companion to Philosophy*. [Cambridge University Press](/wiki/Cambridge_University_Press), 2001.</ref>

However, if by its essential nature, free will is not predetermined, then the effect of its will can never be perfectly predicted by anyone, regardless of intelligence and knowledge. Although knowledge of the options presented to that will, combined with perfectly infinite intelligence, could be said to provide God with omniscience if omniscience is defined as knowledge or understanding of all that is.

The last centuries of philosophy have seen vigorous questions regarding the [arguments for God's existence](/wiki/Arguments_for_the_existence_of_God) raised by such philosophers as [Immanuel Kant](/wiki/Immanuel_Kant), [David Hume](/wiki/David_Hume) and [Antony Flew](/wiki/Antony_Flew), although Kant held that the [argument from morality](/wiki/Argument_from_morality) was valid. The [theist](/wiki/Theist) response has been either to contend, as does [Alvin Plantinga](/wiki/Alvin_Plantinga), that faith is "[properly basic](/wiki/Reformed_epistemology)", or to take, as does [Richard Swinburne](/wiki/Richard_Swinburne), the [evidentialist](/wiki/Evidentialist) position.[[121]](#cite_note-121) Some [theists](/wiki/Theism) agree that only some of the arguments for God's existence are compelling, but argue that [faith](/wiki/Faith) is not a product of [reason](/wiki/Reason), but requires risk. There would be no risk, they say, if the arguments for God's existence were as solid as the laws of logic, a position summed up by [Pascal](/wiki/Blaise_Pascal) as "the heart has reasons of which reason does not know."[[122]](#cite_note-122) A recent theory using concepts from physics and neurophysiology proposes that God can be conceptualized within the theory of [integrative level](/wiki/Integrative_level).[[123]](#cite_note-123) Many religious believers allow for the existence of other, less powerful [spiritual beings](/wiki/Spiritual_being) such as [angels](/wiki/Angel), [saints](/wiki/Saint), [jinn](/wiki/Jinn), [demons](/wiki/Demon), and [devas](/wiki/Deva_(New_Age)).[[124]](#cite_note-124)[[125]](#cite_note-125)[[126]](#cite_note-126)[[127]](#cite_note-127)[[128]](#cite_note-128)

## Distribution of belief in God[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

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## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

* [God (male deity)](/wiki/God_(male_deity))
* [God the Father](/wiki/God_the_Father)
* [God the Father in Western art](/wiki/God_the_Father_in_Western_art)
* [God the Son](/wiki/God_the_Son)
* [God the Holy Spirit](/wiki/God_the_Holy_Spirit)
* [Logos](/wiki/Logos)
* [Logos (Christianity)](/wiki/Logos_(Christianity))
* [Science and God](/wiki/Science_and_God)
* [Monad (philosophy)](/wiki/Monad_(philosophy))
* [Absolute (philosophy)](/wiki/Absolute_(philosophy))

### In specific religions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

* [God in Buddhism](/wiki/God_in_Buddhism)
* [God in Caodaism](/wiki/Cao_Đài#God)
* [God in Christianity](/wiki/God_in_Christianity)
* [God in Gnosticism](/wiki/Abraxas)
* [God in Hinduism](/wiki/God_in_Hinduism)
* [God in Islam](/wiki/God_in_Islam)
* [God in Jainism](/wiki/God_in_Jainism)
* [God in Judaism](/wiki/God_in_Judaism)
* [God in Sikhism](/wiki/God_in_Sikhism)
* [God in the Bahá'í Faith](/wiki/God_in_the_Bahá'í_Faith)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

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## Further reading[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

[Template:Refbegin](/wiki/Template:Refbegin)

* [Pickover, Cliff](/wiki/Cliff_Pickover), The Paradox of God and the Science of Omniscience, Palgrave/St Martin's Press, 2001. ISBN 1-4039-6457-2
* [Collins, Francis](/wiki/Francis_Collins_(geneticist)), The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief, Free Press, 2006. ISBN 0-7432-8639-1
* [Miles, Jack](/wiki/Jack_Miles), God: A Biography, Vintage, 1996. ISBN 0-679-74368-5
* [Armstrong, Karen](/wiki/Karen_Armstrong), A History of God: The 4,000-Year Quest of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Ballantine Books, 1994. ISBN 0-434-02456-2
* [Paul Tillich](/wiki/Paul_Tillich), *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951). ISBN 0-226-80337-6
* [Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)

[Template:Refend](/wiki/Template:Refend)

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

[Template:Sister project links](/wiki/Template:Sister_project_links) [Template:Spoken Wikipedia](/wiki/Template:Spoken_Wikipedia)

* [Concept of God in Christianity](http://www.armatabianca.org/eng/padre.php?sottomenu=4)
* [Concept of God in Islam](http://www.islam-info.ch/en/Who_is_Allah.htm)
* [God Christian perspective](http://www.allaboutgod.com/)
* [Hindu Concept of God](http://www.shaivam.org/hipgodco.htm)
* [Jewish Literacy](http://www.aish.com/literacy/concepts/Understanding_God.asp)
* [Mystical view of God](http://www.fatherspeaks.net/)

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[Template:Authority control](/wiki/Template:Authority_control)

[Category:God](/wiki/Category:God) [Category:Singular God](/wiki/Category:Singular_God) [Category:Infinity](/wiki/Category:Infinity) [Category:Allah](/wiki/Category:Allah) [Category:Creator gods](/wiki/Category:Creator_gods) [Category:Deities](/wiki/Category:Deities)

[mr:ईश्वर](/wiki/Mr:ईश्वर)