[Template:Other uses](/wiki/Template:Other_uses" \o "Template:Other uses) [Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates) [thumb|Called *svastika* in](/wiki/File:HinduSwastika.svg) [Sanskrit](/wiki/Sanskrit), it is an ancient [symbol](/wiki/Symbol) of auspiciousness in [Hinduism](/wiki/Hinduism), [Buddhism](/wiki/Buddhism), and [Jainism](/wiki/Jainism). [Template:Hinduism](/wiki/Template:Hinduism) [Template:Buddhism](/wiki/Template:Buddhism) [Template:Jainism](/wiki/Template:Jainism) [Template:Nazism sidebar](/wiki/Template:Nazism_sidebar) The **swastika** (also known as the **hakenkreuz**, **gammadion cross**, **cross cramponnée**, or **tetraskelion**) (as a character: 卐 or 卍) is an ancient religious [symbol](/wiki/Symbol) that generally takes the form of an equilateral [cross](/wiki/Cross), with its four legs bent at 90 degrees.[[1]](#cite_note-1)[[2]](#cite_note-2) It is considered to be a sacred and auspicious symbol in [Hinduism](/wiki/Hinduism), [Buddhism](/wiki/Buddhism), and [Jainism](/wiki/Jainism) and dates back to before the 2nd century BC.[[3]](#cite_note-3) Western literature's older term for the symbol, *gammadion cross*, derives mainly from its appearance, which is identical to four Greek [gamma](/wiki/Gamma) letters affixed to each other.<ref name=etymology>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> The name *swastika* comes from the [Sanskrit](/wiki/Sanskrit) word *svastika* ([Devanāgarī](/wiki/Devanāgarī): स्वस्तिक), meaning "lucky or auspicious object".<ref name=etymology/>

It has been used as a decorative element in various cultures since at least the [Neolithic](/wiki/Neolithic). It is known most widely as an important symbol, long used in [Indian religions](/wiki/Indian_religions), denoting "auspiciousness."

[It was adopted as such in pre-World War I-Europe](/wiki/Western_use_of_the_swastika_in_the_early_20th_century) and later, and most notably, by the [Nazi Party](/wiki/Nazi_Party) and [Nazi Germany](/wiki/Nazi_Germany) prior to World War II. In many Western countries, the swastika has been highly [stigmatized](/wiki/Social_stigma) because of its use in and association with Nazism.[[4]](#cite_note-4) It continues to be commonly used as a religious symbol in Hinduism and Buddhism.[[3]](#cite_note-3)

## Contents

* 1 Names[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]
* 2 Appearance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]
  + 2.1 Written characters[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]
* 3 Theories of origin[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]
* 4 Historical use[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]
  + 4.1 Asia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]
    - 4.1.1 Hinduism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]
    - 4.1.2 Buddhism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]
    - 4.1.3 Jainism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]
    - 4.1.4 East Asian traditions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]
    - 4.1.5 Armenia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]
  + 4.2 Europe[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]
    - 4.2.1 Greco-Roman antiquity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]
    - 4.2.2 Celts[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]
    - 4.2.3 Germanic Iron Age[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]
    - 4.2.4 Illyrians[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]
    - 4.2.5 Slavic[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

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

The word *swastika* has been in use in English since the 1870s, replacing *gammadion* (from [Greek](/wiki/Ancient_Greek) [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)).[[5]](#cite_note-5)It was loaned from the [Sanskrit](/wiki/Sanskrit) term ([Devanāgarī](/wiki/Devanāgarī): [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)), which is transliterated [*Template:IAST*](/wiki/Template:IAST) under the commonly used IAST transliteration system, but is pronounced "swastika" when letters are used as in English. It means any lucky or auspicious object, and in particular a mark made on persons and things to denote auspiciousness, or any piece of luck or well-being. It is composed of *su-* meaning "good, well" and *asti* "it is", which form the word [*Template:IAST*](/wiki/Template:IAST), meaning good health or good fortune; the added suffix [*Template:IAST*](/wiki/Template:IAST) forms an abstract noun, and [*Template:IAST*](/wiki/Template:IAST) might thus be translated literally as "that which is associated with well-being," corresponding to "lucky charm" or "thing that is auspicious."[[6]](#cite_note-6)The word finds its origin in [Vedic Sanskrit](/wiki/Vedic_Sanskrit). As noted by [Monier-Williams](/wiki/Monier-Williams) in his Sanskrit-English dictionary, according to [Alexander Cunningham](/wiki/Alexander_Cunningham), its shape represents a monogram formed by interlacing of the letters of the auspicious words *su-astí* ([*Template:IAST*](/wiki/Template:IAST)) written in [Ashokan characters](/wiki/Brahmi_script).[[7]](#cite_note-7) Other names for the symbol include:

* *hook cross* (German: [***Template:Lang***](/wiki/Template:Lang)), *angled cross* (German: [*Template:Lang*](/wiki/Template:Lang)) or *crooked cross* (German: [*Template:Lang*](/wiki/Template:Lang)).
* *cross cramponned,* *cramponnée*, or *cramponny*, in [heraldry](/wiki/Heraldry), as each arm resembles a [Crampon](/wiki/Crampon_(heraldry)) or angle-iron ([Template:Lang-de](/wiki/Template:Lang-de)).
* [*fylfot*](/wiki/Fylfot), chiefly in heraldry and architecture.
* *gammadion*, *tetragammadion* (Greek: [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)), or *cross gammadion* ([Template:Lang-la](/wiki/Template:Lang-la); French: [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)), as each arm resembles the [Greek letter](/wiki/Greek_alphabet) Γ ([*Template:Lang*](/wiki/Template:Lang)).[[1]](#cite_note-1)\* *tetraskelion* (Greek: [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)), literally meaning "four legged", especially when composed of four conjoined legs (compare [triskelion](/wiki/Triskelion) [Greek: [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang)]).[[8]](#cite_note-8)\* *whirling logs* (Navajo (native american): can denote abundance, prosperity, healing, and luck.[[9]](#cite_note-9)

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

[thumb|180px|left|Swastikas tiling the plane. Two colours are used for clarity.](/wiki/File:Swastika-tiling.svg) [Template:Double image](/wiki/Template:Double_image) Although all swastikas are bent crosses based on a [chiral symmetry](/wiki/Chiral_symmetry), they appear with different [geometrical](/wiki/Geometry) details: as compact crosses with short arms, as crosses with long trailing arms and as motifs in a pattern of unbroken lines.

Chirality describes an absence of [reflective symmetry](/wiki/Reflective_symmetry), with the existence of two versions that are [mirror images](/wiki/Mirror_image) of each other. The mirror-image forms are typically described as:

* clockwise (卍) and counterclockwise (卐); [Template:Cn](/wiki/Template:Cn)
* left-facing (卍) and right-facing (卐);
* left-hand (卍) and right-hand (卐).

The left-facing version is distinguished in some traditions and languages as a distinct symbol from the right-facing "swastika", and is more correctly called the "[sauwastika](/wiki/Sauwastika)" or "sauvastika".

The compact swastika can be seen as a chiral irregular [icosagon](/wiki/Icosagon) (20-sided [polygon](/wiki/Polygon)) with fourfold (90°) [rotational symmetry](/wiki/Rotational_symmetry). Such a swastika proportioned on a 5 × 5 square grid and with the broken portions of its arms shortened by one unit can [tile the plane](/wiki/Tessellation) by [translation](/wiki/Translation_(geometry)) alone. The Nazi swastika used a 5 × 5 diagonal grid, but with the arms unshortened.[[10]](#cite_note-10)

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

The swastika was adopted as a standard character in [Sanskrit](/wiki/Sanskrit). "[Template:Script](/wiki/Template:Script)" ([Template:Zh](/wiki/Template:Zh)) and as such entered various other [East Asian languages](/wiki/East_Asian_languages), including [Chinese script](/wiki/Chinese_character). In Japanese the symbol is called [Template:Nihongo](/wiki/Template:Nihongo) or [Template:Nihongo](/wiki/Template:Nihongo).

The swastika is included in the [Unicode](/wiki/Unicode) character sets of two languages. In Chinese unicode it is U+534D [卍](/wiki/Wikt:卍) (left-facing) and U+5350 [卐](/wiki/Wikt:卐) (right-facing);[[11]](#cite_note-11) the latter has a mapping in the original [Big5](/wiki/Big5) character set,[[12]](#cite_note-12) but the former does not (although it is in Big5+[[13]](#cite_note-13)). In Unicode 5.2, four swastika symbols were added to the [Tibetan block](/wiki/Tibetan_(Unicode_block)): [Template:Unichar](/wiki/Template:Unichar), [Template:Unichar](/wiki/Template:Unichar), [Template:Unichar](/wiki/Template:Unichar) and [Template:Unichar](/wiki/Template:Unichar).[[14]](#cite_note-14)

## Theories of origin[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[thumb|left|170px| Swastika necklace discovered in the Guilan province, northern Iran. Dating back to 3200 years ago, this was made by ancient](/wiki/File:Swastika_iran.jpg) [Marlik](/wiki/Marlik) people. The swastika is a repeating design, said to have been created by the edges of the reeds in a square basket-weave. Other theories attempt to establish a connection via [cultural diffusion](/wiki/Cultural_diffusion) or an explanation along the lines of [Carl Jung's](/wiki/Carl_Jung) [collective unconscious](/wiki/Collective_unconscious).

[170px|thumb|Ancient Roman mosaics of](/wiki/File:Ancient_Roman_Mosaics_Villa_Romana_La_Olmeda_007_Pedrosa_De_La_Vega_-_Saldaña_(Palencia).JPG) [La Olmeda](/wiki/La_Olmeda), Spain. [200px|left|thumb|Mosaic swastika in excavated Byzantine (?) church in](/wiki/File:ShaveyZion1.jpg) [Shavei Tzion](/wiki/Shavei_Tzion) (Israel) The genesis of the swastika symbol is often treated in conjunction with [cross symbols](/wiki/Cross_symbol) in general, such as the [sun cross](/wiki/Sun_cross) of pagan [Bronze Age religion](/wiki/Prehistoric_religion). Beyond its certain presence in the "[proto-writing](/wiki/Proto-writing)" symbol systems emerging in the [Neolithic](/wiki/Neolithic),[[15]](#cite_note-15) nothing certain is known about the symbol's origin. There are nevertheless a number of speculative hypotheses. One hypothesis is that the cross symbols and the swastika share a common origin in simply symbolizing the [sun](/wiki/Sun). Another hypothesis is that the 4 arms of the cross represent 4 aspects of nature - the sun, wind, water, soil. Some have said the 4 arms of cross are four seasons, where the division for 90-degree sections correspond to the [solstices](/wiki/Solstice) and [equinoxes](/wiki/Equinox). The Hindus represent it as the Universe in our own spiral galaxy in the fore finger of Lord Vishnu. This carries most significance in establishing the creation of the Universe and the arms as '[kal'](/wiki/Kāla_(time)) or time, a calendar that is seen to be more advanced than the lunar calendar where the seasons drift from calendar year to calendar year. The [luni-solar](/wiki/Lunisolar_calendar) solution for correcting season drift was to [intercalate](/wiki/Intercalation_(timekeeping)) an extra month in certain years to restore the lunar cycle to the solar-season cycle. The [Star of David](/wiki/Star_of_David) is thought to originate as a symbol of that calendar system, where the two overlapping triangles are seen to form a partition of 12 sections around the perimeter with a 13th section in the middle, representing the 12 and sometimes 13 months to a year. As such, the Christian cross, Jewish hexagram star and the Muslim crescent moon are seen to have their origins in different views regarding which calendar system is preferred for marking holy days. Groups in higher latitudes experience the seasons more strongly, offering more advantage to the calendar represented by the swastika/cross.

According to Reza Assasi, the swastika is a geometric pattern in the sky representing the north [ecliptic pole](/wiki/Ecliptic_pole) centred to [Zeta Draconis](/wiki/Zeta_Draconis). He argues that this primitive astrological symbol was later called the four-horse chariot of [Mithra](/wiki/Mithra) in ancient [Iran](/wiki/Iran) and represented the centre of Ecliptic in the star map and also demonstrates that in [Iranian mythology](/wiki/Iranian_mythology), the cosmos was believed to be pulled by four heavenly horses revolving around a fixed centre on clockwise direction possibly because of a geocentric understanding of an astronomical phenomenon called [axial precession](/wiki/Axial_precession). He suggests that this notion was transmitted to the west and flourished in Roman [mithraism](/wiki/Mithraism) in which this symbol appears in Mithraic iconography and astrological representations.[[16]](#cite_note-16) [Carl Sagan](/wiki/Carl_Sagan) in his book [*Comet*](/wiki/Comet_(book)) (1985) reproduces [Han period](/wiki/Western_Han_Dynasty) Chinese manuscript (the [*Book of Silk*](/wiki/Book_of_Silk), 2nd century BC) that shows comet tail varieties: most are variations on simple comet tails, but the last shows the comet nucleus with four bent arms extending from it, recalling a swastika. Sagan suggests that in antiquity a [comet](/wiki/Comet) could have approached so close to Earth that the jets of gas streaming from it, bent by the comet's rotation, became visible, leading to the adoption of the swastika as a symbol across the world.[[17]](#cite_note-17)Bob Kobres in his 1992 paper *Comets and the Bronze Age Collapse* contends that the swastika like comet on the Han Dynasty silk comet atlas was labeled a "long tailed pheasant star" (Di-Xing) because of its resemblance to a bird's foot or footprint,[[18]](#cite_note-18)[Majiayao](/wiki/Majiayao_culture),[[28]](#cite_note-28) [Dawenkou](/wiki/Dawenkou_culture) and Xiaoheyan cultures.<ref name=epoch>[Template:Zh icon](/wiki/Template:Zh_icon) ["卍字符號 (Swastika Symbol)](http://www.epochtimes.com/b5/9/4/22/n2502980.htm). [Epoch Times](/wiki/Epoch_Times), 2009-04-22 Reprint from *New Era* #115 "Art and Culture" section (2009.04.02—04.08)</ref> Other Iron Age attestations of the swastika can be associated with [Indo-European](/wiki/Indo-European) cultures such as the [Indo-Iranians](/wiki/Indo-Iranians), [Celts](/wiki/Celt), [Greeks](/wiki/Ancient_Greeks), [Germanic peoples](/wiki/Swastika_(Germanic_Iron_Age)) and [Slavs](/wiki/Slavs).

The swastika is also seen in Egypt during the Coptic period. Textile number T.231-1923 held at the V&A Museum in London includes small swastikas in its design. This piece was found at Qau-el-Kebir, near Asyut, and is dated between AD300-600.

The *Tierwirbel* (the German for "animal whorl" or "whirl of animals"[[29]](#cite_note-29)) is a characteristic motif in Bronze Age Central Asia, the [Eurasian Steppe](/wiki/Eurasian_Steppe), and later also in Iron Age [Scythian](/wiki/Scythian) and [European](/wiki/Iron_Age_Europe) ([Baltic](/wiki/Baltic_peoples)[[30]](#cite_note-30) and [Germanic](/wiki/Germanic_peoples)) culture, showing rotational symmetric arrangement of an [animal motif](/wiki/Animal_style), often four birds' heads. Even wider diffusion of this "Asiatic" theme has been proposed, to the Pacific and even North America (especially [Moundville](/wiki/Moundville_Archaeological_Site)).[[31]](#cite_note-31)

## Historical use[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[thumb|Carved fretwork forming a swastika in the window of a Lalibela rock hewn church in Ethiopia.](/wiki/File:Skastika_symbol_in_the_window_of_Lalibela_Rock_hewn_churches.jpg)

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

[left|150px|thumb|Swastikas inscribed at a](/wiki/File:Hanumantal_kshetrapal.jpg) [Kshetrapala](/wiki/Kshetrapala) shrine at [Hanumantal Bada Jain Mandir](/wiki/Hanumantal_Bada_Jain_Mandir) at [Jabalpur](/wiki/Jabalpur) In [Asia](/wiki/Asia), the swastika symbol first appears in the archaeological record around[[26]](#cite_note-26) 3000 BCE in the [Indus Valley Civilization](/wiki/Indus_Valley_Civilization).[[32]](#cite_note-32)[[33]](#cite_note-33) It also appears in the Bronze and Iron Age cultures around the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. In all these cultures the swastika symbol does not appear to occupy any marked position or significance, but appears as just one form of a series of similar symbols of varying complexity. In the Zoroastrian religion of Persia, the swastika was a symbol of the revolving sun, infinity, or continuing creation.[[34]](#cite_note-34)[[35]](#cite_note-35) It rose to importance in [Buddhism](/wiki/Buddhism) during the [Mauryan Empire](/wiki/Mauryan_Empire) and in [Hinduism](/wiki/Hinduism) with the [decline of Buddhism in India](/wiki/Decline_of_Buddhism_in_India) during the [Gupta Empire](/wiki/Gupta_Empire). With the [spread of Buddhism](/wiki/Silk_Road_transmission_of_Buddhism), the Buddhist swastika reached Tibet and China. The symbol was also introduced to [Balinese Hinduism](/wiki/Hinduism_in_Indonesia) by [Hindu](/wiki/Hinduism) kings. The use of the swastika by the [Bön](/wiki/Bön) faith of [Tibet](/wiki/Tibet), as well as Chinese [Taoism](/wiki/Taoism), can also be traced to Buddhist influence. In [Thailand](/wiki/Thailand), the word "Sawaddi" is normally used as a greeting which simply means "hello"; Sawaddi-ka (feminine) and Sawaddi-krup (masculine). "Sawaddi" derives from the Sanskrit word "swasti" and its meaning is a combination of the words: prosperity, luck, security, glory, and good.

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

The swastika is an important Hindu symbol. It is traced with the finger with [sindoor](/wiki/Sindoor) on the head or body during Hindu religious rites, and on doors on festival days - notably on diwali, or deepavalli. It is painted on many, if not most, three-wheel auto-rikshas and trucks. In all these uses it is a lucky charm protecting from evil and attracting good.

It is also said to represent [God](/wiki/God) (the [Brahman](/wiki/Brahman)) in his universal manifestation, and energy ([*Shakti*](/wiki/Shakti)). It represents the four directions of the world (the four faces of [Brahma](/wiki/Brahma)). It also represents the [Purushartha](/wiki/Purushartha): Dharma (natural order), Artha (wealth), Kama (desire), and Moksha (liberation).

Among the Hindus of [Bengal](/wiki/Bengal), it is common to see the name "swastika" ([Template:Lang-bn](/wiki/Template:Lang-bn) *shostik*) applied to a slightly different symbol, which has the same significance as the common swastika, that looks like a stick figure of a human being.[[36]](#cite_note-36) Right-facing swastika in the decorative Hindu form is used to evoke the Shakti. <gallery> Swastik on head.jpg|thumb|100px|Hindu child with head shaven and red Swastika painted on it as part of his [Upanayana](/wiki/Upanayana) ceremony. Bengali Swastika.jpg|thumb|left|Image of a swastika (স্বস্তিক) from a Bengali wedding invitation printed in 2006 </gallery>

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

[Buddhism](/wiki/Buddhism) originated in the 5th century BC and spread throughout the [Indian subcontinent](/wiki/Indian_subcontinent). The swastika rose in importance around the 3rd century BC (during the [Mauryan Empire](/wiki/Mauryan_Empire)). Also known as a "yungdrung"[[37]](#cite_note-37) in ancient Tibet, it was a graphical representation of eternity.[[38]](#cite_note-38)

#### Jainism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[thumb|left|upright|Nepalese Buddhist](/wiki/File:Buddhist_gompa,_Swayambhunath.JPG) [gompa](/wiki/Gompa), [Swayambhunath](/wiki/Swayambhunath), [Kathmandu](/wiki/Kathmandu), showing swastika designs on curtains. 1973

[150px|thumb|Swastika on the doorstep of an apartment in](/wiki/File:swastika_doorstep_crop.jpg) [Maharashtra](/wiki/Maharashtra), India.[Jainism](/wiki/Jainism) gives even more prominence to the swastika as a tantra than Hinduism does. It is a symbol of the seventh [tīrthaṅkara](/wiki/Tirthankara), [Suparśvanātha](/wiki/Suparshvanatha). In the [Śvētāmbara](/wiki/Śvētāmbara) tradition, it is also one of the [aṣṭamaṅgala](/wiki/Ashtamangala). All [Jain temples](/wiki/Jain_temple) and holy books must contain the swastika and ceremonies typically begin and end with creating a swastika mark several times with rice around the altar. Jains use rice to make a swastika in front of statues and then put an offering on it, usually a ripe or dried fruit, a sweet ([Template:Lang-hi](/wiki/Template:Lang-hi) [Template:IAST](/wiki/Template:IAST)), or a coin or currency note. The four arms of the swastika symbolize the four places where a soul could be reborn in the cycle of birth and death - [svarga](/wiki/Svarga) "heaven", [naraka](/wiki/Naraka) "hell", manushya "humanity" or *tiryancha* "as flora or fauna" - before the soul attains [moksha](/wiki/Moksha_(Jainism)) "salvation" as a [siddha](/wiki/Siddha#Siddha_in_Jainism), having ended the cycle of birth and death and become [omniscient](/wiki/Omniscience).[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

#### East Asian traditions[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[thumb|150px|left|Swastika on](/wiki/File:Swastika.jpg) [Saisen box](/wiki/Saisen) in [Sensō Temple](/wiki/Sensō-ji), [Asakusa](/wiki/Asakusa), [Taitō, Tokyo](/wiki/Taitō,_Tokyo), Japan.

The paired swastika symbols are included, at least since the [Liao Dynasty](/wiki/Liao_Dynasty) (AD 907–1125), as part of the [Chinese writing system](/wiki/Chinese_character) (卍 and 卐) and are [variant characters](/wiki/Variant_Chinese_character) for 萬 or 万 (*wàn* in Mandarin, *man* in Korean, Cantonese, and Japanese, *vạn* in Vietnamese) meaning "all" or "eternity" (lit. [myriad](/wiki/Myriad)). The swastika marks the beginning of many Buddhist scriptures. In East Asian countries, the left-facing character is often used as symbol for Buddhism and marks the site of a Buddhist temple on maps.

In Chinese, Japanese, and Korean the swastika is also a homonym of the number 10,000, and is commonly used to represent the whole of Creation, e.g. 'the myriad things' in the [Dao De Jing](/wiki/Dao_De_Jing). During the Chinese [Tang Dynasty](/wiki/Tang_Dynasty), Empress [Wu Zetian](/wiki/Wu_Zetian) (684-704) decreed that the swastika would also be used as an alternative symbol of the Sun.

[thumb|150px|The Hachisuka swastika, a](/wiki/File:Japanese_Crest_Maru_ni_Hidari_Mannji.svg) [family crest](/wiki/Mon_(crest)) used by the Japanese [Hachisuka](/wiki/Hachisuka_Masakatsu) clan.

When the [Chinese writing system](/wiki/Chinese_character) was introduced to Japan in the 8th century, the swastika was adopted into the Japanese language and culture. It is commonly referred as the *manji* (lit. Man-character). Since the Middle Ages, it has been used as a [*mon*](/wiki/Mon_(emblem)) by various Japanese families such as [Tsugaru clan](/wiki/Tsugaru_clan), [Hachisuka clan](/wiki/Hachisuka_clan) or around 60 clans that belong to [Tokugawa clan](/wiki/Tokugawa_clan).[[39]](#cite_note-39) On [Japanese maps](/wiki/Japanese_map_symbols), a swastika (left-facing and horizontal) is used to mark the location of a Buddhist temple. The right-facing swastika is often referred to as the [Template:Nihongo](/wiki/Template:Nihongo) or [Template:Nihongo](/wiki/Template:Nihongo), and can also be called [Template:Nihongo](/wiki/Template:Nihongo).

In [Chinese](/wiki/Chinese_art) and [Japanese](/wiki/Japanese_art) art, the swastika is often found as part of a repeating pattern. One common pattern, called *sayagata* in Japanese, comprises left- and right-facing swastikas joined by lines.[[40]](#cite_note-40) As the negative space between the lines has a distinctive shape, the sayagata pattern is sometimes called the "*key fret*" motif in English.

As a pottery graph of unknown provision and meaning the swastika-like sign is known in Chinese Neolithic culture (2400–2000 BCE, Liu wan 柳湾, [Qinghai](/wiki/Qinghai) province).

#### Armenia[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[thumb|left|200px|](/wiki/File:Armenian_Khachkar_with_Swastikas_Sanahin_Armenia_1.jpg)[Khachkar](/wiki/Khachkar) with swastikas [Sanahin](/wiki/Sanahin), [Armenia](/wiki/Armenia) In [Armenia](/wiki/Armenia) the swastika is called the "[arevakhach](/wiki/Arevakhach)" and "kerkhach" ([Template:Lang-hy](/wiki/Template:Lang-hy))[[41]](#cite_note-41)[Template:Dubious](/wiki/Template:Dubious) and is the ancient symbol of eternity and eternal light (i.e. God). Swastikas in [Armenia](/wiki/Armenia) were founded on petroglyphs. During the bronze age it was depicted on [cauldrons](/wiki/Cauldron), belts, [medallions](/wiki/Medallion) and other items.[[42]](#cite_note-42) Among the oldest petroglyphs is the seventh letter of the Armenian alphabet - "E" (which means "is" or "to be") - depicted as half-swastika.

Swastikas can also be seen on early Medieval churches and fortresses, including the principal tower in Armenia's historical capital city of [Ani](/wiki/Ani).[[41]](#cite_note-41) The same symbol can be found on [Armenian carpets](/wiki/Armenian_carpet), cross-stones ([khachkar](/wiki/Khachkar)) and in medieval manuscripts, as well as on modern monuments as a symbol of eternity.[[43]](#cite_note-43)

### Europe[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

Swastika shapes have been found on numerous artifacts from [Iron Age](/wiki/Iron_Age) Europe - Armenian arevakhach ([Template:Lang-hy](/wiki/Template:Lang-hy), արև arev "sun" + խաչ xač "cross", "sun cross"),[[41]](#cite_note-41)[[44]](#cite_note-44)[[45]](#cite_note-45) [Greco-Roman](/wiki/Greco-Roman), Illyrian, [Etruscan](/wiki/Etruscan_civilization), [Baltic](/wiki/Balt), [Celtic](/wiki/Celt), [Germanic](/wiki/Germanic_peoples), and [Slavic](/wiki/Slavic_peoples).[[1]](#cite_note-1)<gallery> Etruscan pendant with swastika symbols Bolsena Italy 700 BCE to 650 BCE.jpg|[Etruscan](/wiki/Etruscan_art) pendant with swastika symbols, [Bolsena](/wiki/Bolsena), Italy, 700-650 BC. [Louvre Museum](/wiki/Louvre_Museum) Swastika1.JPG|Svastika on a Roman mosaic in [Pula](/wiki/Pula), Croatia Swastika2.JPG|Svastika on a Roman mosaic in [Veli Brijun](/wiki/Brijuni), Croatia </gallery>

#### Greco-Roman antiquity[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Ancient Greek](/wiki/Ancient_Greek) architectural, clothing and coin designs are replete with single or interlinking swastika motifs. There are also gold plate [fibulae](/wiki/Fibula_(brooch)) from the 8th century BC decorated with an engraved swastika.[[46]](#cite_note-46) Related symbols in classical Western architecture include the cross, the three-legged triskele or [triskelion](/wiki/Triskelion) and the rounded [lauburu](/wiki/Lauburu). The swastika symbol is also known in these contexts by a number of names, especially *gammadion*,[[47]](#cite_note-47) or rather the tetra-gammadion. The name gammadion comes from the fact that it can be seen as being made up of four Greek gamma (Γ) letters. Ancient Greek priestesses would tattoo the symbol, along with the tetraskelion, on their bodies. Ancient Greek architectural designs are replete with the interlinking symbol.

In [Greco-Roman](/wiki/Art_in_Ancient_Greece) art and architecture, and in [Romanesque](/wiki/Romanesque_architecture) and [Gothic art](/wiki/Gothic_art) in the West, isolated swastikas are relatively rare, and the swastika is more commonly found as a repeated element in a border or tessellation. The swastika often represented perpetual motion, reflecting the design of a rotating windmill or watermill. A meander of connected swastikas makes up the large band that surrounds the [Augustan](/wiki/Augustus) [Ara Pacis](/wiki/Ara_Pacis).

A design of interlocking swastikas is one of several [tessellations](/wiki/Tessellation) on the floor of the cathedral of [Amiens](/wiki/Amiens), France.[[48]](#cite_note-48) A border of linked swastikas was a common Roman architectural motif,[[49]](#cite_note-49) and can be seen in more recent buildings as a neoclassical element. A swastika border is one form of [meander](/wiki/Meander_(art)), and the individual swastikas in such a border are sometimes called [*Greek keys*](/wiki/Meander_(art)). There have also been swastikas found on the floors of [Pompeii](/wiki/Pompeii).[[50]](#cite_note-50)<gallery> Greek Silver Stater of Corinth.jpg|Swastika on a Greek silver [stater](/wiki/Stater) coin from [Corinth](/wiki/Ancient_Corinth), 6th century BC. Swastika symbol in ancient greek doll.JPG| Bronze Age [Mycenaean](/wiki/Mycenaean_Greece) "doll" with human, solar and tetragammadion (swastika) symbols. [Louvre Museum](/wiki/Louvre_Museum) GreekHelmetSwastika marked.jpg|Greek helmet with swastika marks on the top part (circled), 350-325 BC from [Taranto](/wiki/Taranto), found at [Herculanum](/wiki/Herculanum). [Cabinet des Médailles](/wiki/Cabinet_des_Médailles), Paris. Geometric kantharos Staatliche Antikensammlungen 8501.jpg|Two [sauwastikas](/wiki/Sauwastika) (opposite-facing swastikas) on an ancient Greek [Kantharos](/wiki/Kantharos), Attica, ca. 780 BC. </gallery>

#### Celts[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

The bronze frontispiece of a ritual pre-Christian (c. 350-50 BC) shield found in the [River Thames](/wiki/River_Thames) near [Battersea Bridge](/wiki/Battersea_Bridge) (hence "[Battersea Shield](/wiki/Battersea_Shield)") is embossed with 27 swastikas in bronze and red enamel.[[51]](#cite_note-51) An [Ogham](/wiki/Ogham) stone found in Anglish, [Co Kerry](/wiki/Co_Kerry), [Ireland](/wiki/Ireland) ([CIIC](/wiki/CIIC) 141) was modified into an early Christian gravestone, and was decorated with a [cross pattée](/wiki/Cross_pattée) and two swastikas.[[52]](#cite_note-52) The [Book of Kells](/wiki/Book_of_Kells) (ca. 800) contains swastika-shaped ornamentation. At the Northern edge of [Ilkley Moor](/wiki/Ilkley_Moor) in [West Yorkshire](/wiki/West_Yorkshire), there is a swastika-shaped pattern engraved in a stone known as the [Swastika Stone](/wiki/Swastika_Stone).[[53]](#cite_note-53)

#### Germanic Iron Age[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

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

[170px|left|thumb|A comb with a swastika found in](/wiki/File:Nydam.8.jpg) [Nydam Mose](/wiki/Nydam_Mose), Denmark. [170px|thumb|Swastika symbols on the](/wiki/File:Sunny_Beach_Nesebar_centre_2.jpg) [Church of Christ Pantocrator](/wiki/Church_of_Christ_Pantocrator) (13th-14th century) in [Nesebar](/wiki/Nesebar), Bulgaria. The swastika shape (also called a *fylfot*) appears on various Germanic [Migration Period](/wiki/Migration_Period) and [Viking Age](/wiki/Viking_Age) artifacts, such as the 3rd century [Værløse Fibula](/wiki/Værløse_Fibula) from Zealand, Denmark, the [Gothic](/wiki/Goths) spearhead from [Brest-Litovsk](/wiki/Brest-Litovsk), today in [Belarus](/wiki/Belarus), the 9th century [Snoldelev Stone](/wiki/Snoldelev_Stone) from [Ramsø](/wiki/Ramsø), Denmark, and numerous Migration Period [bracteates](/wiki/Bracteate) drawn left-facing or right-facing.<ref name=OLDTIDENS>[Margrethe, Queen](/wiki/Margrethe_II_of_Denmark), Poul Kjrum, Rikke Agnete Olsen (1990). *Oldtidens Ansigt: Faces of the Past*, page 148. ISBN 978-87-7468-274-5</ref>

The [pagan](/wiki/Anglo-Saxon_paganism) [Anglo-Saxon](/wiki/Anglo-Saxons) [ship burial](/wiki/Ship_burial) at [Sutton Hoo](/wiki/Sutton_Hoo), England, contained numerous items bearing the swastika, now housed in the collection of the [Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology](/wiki/Museum_of_Archaeology_and_Anthropology,_University_of_Cambridge).<ref name=DAVIDSON83>H.R. Ellis Davidson (1965). *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe*, page 83. ISBN 978-0-14-013627-2, p. 83</ref> The Swastika is clearly marked on a hilt and sword belt found at [Bifrons](/wiki/Bifrons) in [Kent](/wiki/Kent), in a grave of about the 6th century.

[Hilda Ellis Davidson](/wiki/Hilda_Ellis_Davidson) theorized that the swastika symbol was associated with [Thor](/wiki/Thor), possibly representing his hammer [Mjolnir](/wiki/Mjolnir) - symbolic of thunder - and possibly being connected to the Bronze Age sun cross.<ref name=DAVIDSON83/> Davidson cites "many examples" of the swastika symbol from Anglo-Saxon graves of the pagan period, with particular prominence on cremation urns from the cemeteries of East Anglia.<ref name=DAVIDSON83/> Some of the swastikas on the items, on display at the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, are depicted with such care and art that, according to Davidson, it must have possessed special significance as a [funerary symbol](/wiki/Funerary_art).<ref name=DAVIDSON83/> The [runic inscription](/wiki/Runic_inscription) on the 8th-century [Sæbø sword](/wiki/Sæbø_sword) has been taken as evidence of the swastika as a symbol of Thor in [Norse paganism](/wiki/Norse_paganism).

#### Illyrians[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

Swastika was widespread among the [Illyrians](/wiki/Illyrians), symbolizing the Sun. The Sun cult was the main Illyrian cult, and the Sun was represented by a swastika in clockwise motion, and it stood for the movement of the Sun.[[54]](#cite_note-54)

#### Slavic[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[thumb|left|120px|*Słoneczko* (symbol of the Sun), by](/wiki/File:Kolovrat_(Коловрат)_Swastika_(Свастика)_-_Rodnovery.jpg) [Stanisław Jakubowski](/wiki/Stanisław_Jakubowski), 1923 [thumb|right|120px|Old Russian embroidery](/wiki/File:Vologodskaya_vyshivka.jpg) According to painter [Stanisław Jakubowski](/wiki/Stanisław_Jakubowski) the "little sun" is an [Early Slavic](/wiki/Early_Slavs) pagan symbol of the sun. It was engraved on wooden monuments built near the final resting places of fallen Slavs to represent eternal life.[[55]](#cite_note-55) The symbol was first seen in a collection of Early Slavic symbols and architectural features drawn and compiled by [Polish](/wiki/Poland) painter Stanisław Jakubowski, which he named *Prasłowiańskie motywy architektoniczne* ([Template:Lang-pl](/wiki/Template:Lang-pl)).[[55]](#cite_note-55) His work was published in 1923, by a publishing house that was then based in the Dębniki district of [Kraków](/wiki/Kraków).[[55]](#cite_note-55) The symbol can also be found on embroidery and pottery in most Slavic countries.[thumb|left|Swastika pattern on Russian Orthodox](/wiki/File:DSCF0010.JPG) [Vestments](/wiki/Vestment) In [Russia](/wiki/Russia) before the [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II) the swastika was a favorite sign of the last Russian Empress [Alexandra Feodorovna](/wiki/Alexandra_Feodorovna_(Alix_of_Hesse)). She placed it where she could for happiness, including drawing it in pencil on the walls and windows in the [Ipatiev House](/wiki/Ipatiev_House), - place of execution of the royal family, and, without dating, on the wallpaper above the bed, where obviously slept the heir.[[56]](#cite_note-56) It was printed on some banknotes of the [Russian Provisional Government](/wiki/Russian_Provisional_Government) (1917) and some [sovznaks](/wiki/Sovznak) (1918-1922).[[57]](#cite_note-57) In 1919 it was approved as insignia for the Kalmyk formations,[[58]](#cite_note-58) and for a short period had a certain popularity amongst some artists, politics and army groups.[[59]](#cite_note-59) Also it was present on [icons](/wiki/Icon), [vestments](/wiki/Vestments) and [clerical clothing](/wiki/Clerical_clothing)[[60]](#cite_note-60) but in World War II it was removed, becoming by association, a symbol of the German occupation.[[61]](#cite_note-61) In modern [Russia](/wiki/Russia) some [neo-Nazis](/wiki/Neo-Nazism#Russia)[[62]](#cite_note-62)<ref name=McKay>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> and [neopagan](/wiki/Slavic_neopaganism#Russia) followers of pseudohistory argue that the Russian name of the swastika is "Kolovrat" (Russian: Коловрат, lit. "[spinning wheel](/wiki/Wheel_and_axle)"), but there are no ethnographic sources, confirming this.[[61]](#cite_note-61)[[63]](#cite_note-63) In the traditional vernacular the swastika was called differently; for example, "breeze" - as in Christianity, the swastika represents a spiritual movement, descent of the Holy Spirit, and therefore the "wind" and "spirit" - a word with one meaning.[[61]](#cite_note-61) Or "geeses", "ognevtsi" (dialect. "little flames"), "hares" (towel with a swastika was called as towel with the "hares"), "little horses", because it is such a curved cross.[[60]](#cite_note-60)[[61]](#cite_note-61) [thumb|120px|The "](/wiki/File:Toporzeł_ze_swarzycą.svg)[Toporzeł](/wiki/Toporzeł)" emblem with swastika, used by polish nationalist group NS "Zadruga". The neo-Nazi [Russian National Unity](/wiki/Russian_National_Unity) group's branch in [Estonia](/wiki/Estonia) is officially registered under the name "Kolovrat" and published an extremist newspaper in 2001 under the same name.[[62]](#cite_note-62) A criminal investigation found the paper included an array of racial epithets . One Narva resident was sentenced to 1 year in jail for distribution of *Kolovrat*.[[64]](#cite_note-64) The Kolovrat has since been used by the [Rusich Battalion](/wiki/Rusich_Battalion), a Russian militant group known for its operation during the [War in Donbass](/wiki/War_in_Donbass).[[65]](#cite_note-65)