

BUDDHIST BELIEFS

Central to the Buddha's teachings is the aim of overcoming suffering. Buddhists believe that there are guiding principles that help them achieve enlightenment.

THE FIVE PRECEPTS

The Five Precepts are the Buddhist version of a code of conduct or rules to help people behave in a moral and ethical way. Buddhists should follow the Five Precepts to ensure they are living a morally good life. This helps them to get rid of suffering and achieve enlightenment.

The five precepts are as follows:

Precept	An Example
1. Refrain from taking life	Not killing any living being. For Buddhists, this includes animals, so many Buddhists choose to be vegetarian.
2. Refrain from taking what is not given	Not stealing from anyone.
3. Refrain from the misuse of the senses	Not having too much sensual pleasure. For example, not looking at people in a lustful way or committing adultery.
4. Refrain from wrong speech	Not lying or gossiping about other people.
5. Refrain from intoxicants that cloud the mind	Not drinking alcohol or taking drugs, as these do not help you to think clearly.

It is important to practise the precepts over time as they are not always easy to carry out. The main aim of a Buddhist is get rid of suffering, and therefore following the Five Precepts is important as they help Buddhists to avoid causing others to suffer. Following the Five Precepts is linked to kamma, as these count as skilful actions, which produce good consequences.