

## Atheism at a glance



Atheism is the absence of belief in any Gods or spiritual beings. The word Atheism comes from *a*, meaning without, and *theism* meaning belief in god or gods.

- Atheists don't use God to **explain** the existence of the universe.
- Atheists say that human beings can devise suitable moral codes to live by without the aid of Gods or scriptures.

## Reasons for non-belief

People are atheist for many **reasons**, among them:

- They find **insufficient evidence** to support any religion.
- They think that religion is **nonsensical**.
- They once had a religion and have lost faith in it.
- They live in a non-religious culture.
- Religion doesn't interest them.
- Religion doesn't seem relevant to their lives.
- Religions seem to have done a lot of **harm** in the world.
- The world is such a bad place that there can't be a God.

It is possible to be both atheist and religious. Virtually all **Buddhists** manage it, as do adherents of other religions, such as **Judaism** and **Christianity**.

But many atheists are also **secularist**, and are hostile to any special treatment given to organised religion.

## Atheists and morality

Atheists are as moral (or immoral) as religious people.

In practical terms atheists often follow the same moral code as religious people, but they arrive at the decision of what is good or bad without any help from the idea of God.

## What does it mean to be human?

Atheists find their own answers to the question of what it means to be human. This discussion looks at the question from both theological and ethical viewpoints.