

Trimurti	
Hindus believe in one supreme God, Brahman, Brahman is present everywhere and there is a part of Brahman in everyone. Brahman takes many forms. Especially three forms called the Trimurti.	
<b>Brahma</b>	The <b>creator</b> of the world and all creatures. He is usually shown with four heads.
<b>Vishnu</b>	The <b>preserver</b> of the world. His role is to return to the Earth in troubled times and restore the balance of good and evil. He has blue skin and four arms.
<b>Shiva</b>	The <b>destroyer</b> of the universe. Shiva destroys the <b>universe</b> in order to re-create it. Shiva has blue skin, a third eye and carries a trident.

### Hindu Gods and Goddesses

Whilst Hindus believe in one supreme God, they also believe that **deities** can take many forms. These are often represented on shrines by **murtis**. Murtis are sacred statues that represent the Gods and Goddesses. Hindus believe that God is present in the **murti**, or even as the murti. Some other well know Hindu gods are:

<b>Ganesh</b>	The Hindu god with an elephant's head and rotund human body. Ganesh is the Lord of Good Fortune who provides prosperity, fortune and success.
<b>Krishna</b>	One of the most popular Gods. Krishna is perceived by most Hindus to be an incarnation of Vishnu. The Krishna Janmashtami festival marks the birth of Krishna.

Celebrations	
<b>Diwali</b>	Diwali is a major Hindu festival, known as the festival of light. At this time, people remember the story of Rama and Sita. In the Ramayana., people will light diva lamps in every room of their house. These divas are a symbol of good defeating evil. Beautiful coloured patterns called rangoli are made to welcome Lakshmi – the goddess of wealth. At the Mandir, divas are lit around the shrine. There is music, traditional dancing and a vegetarian feast. Later, there will be a huge firework display.
<b>Holi</b>	Holi is a festival that is celebrated to mark the coming of spring. It is a really colourful festival with singing, dancing and paint throwing. It is linked to the story of Krishna (human form of Vishnu) who threw coloured water over a milkmaid.
<b>Raksha Bandhan</b>	Raksha Bandhan is the Hindu festival that celebrates brotherhood and love. It is celebrated on the full moon in the month of Sravana in the lunar calendar. The word Raksha means protection, whilst Bandhan is the verb to tie. Traditionally, during the festival sisters tie a rakhi, a bracelet made of interwoven red and gold threads, around their brothers' wrists to celebrate their relationship.

### Pilgrimage

A special event in Hindu life is **yatra** which means pilgrimage. It is an opportunity to escape daily life and focus on spiritual matters and grow closer to God. On pilgrimage, Hindus may bathe in a holy river, visit mandirs or seek spiritual advice from holy people. The most popular holy place that Hindus pilgrimage to is the **River Ganges**. The **Kumbh Mela**, hosted by four cities near rivers in turn is the most famous pilgrimage site. Up to 40 million people come to it to bathe in the water and be purified from bad **karma**. Hindus also believe that travelling to the mountains purifies the mind and body. The mountain pilgrimage to **Ambaji** is a favourite.

### Aum symbol

Aum is an important Hindu **mantra**, representing God and the sound at the time of creation. It is often used as the symbol of Hinduism. It is a sacred symbol that stands for Brahman.



Holy Books		Key vocabulary	
Hinduism doesn't have a single holy book, but instead has many ancient texts and scriptures.		<b>arti</b>	A welcoming ceremony in which the priest offers the sacred image pure items, such as incense, a lamp and flowers.
<b>The Vedas</b>	A collection of hymns praising the Vedic gods. Veda means 'knowledge'.	<b>mantra</b>	A sacred word or prayer that is said again and again.
<b>The Ramayana</b>	Long epic poems about Rama and Sita.	<b>karma</b>	How your actions in this life affect your future in this life and the next.
<b>The Mahabharata</b>	An ancient Indian epic which includes the Bhagavad Gita.	<b>dharma</b>	Duty, which helps us to live happily and sustain the world.
<b>The Puranas</b>	A collection of stories about the different incarnations and the lives of saints.	<b>Brahman</b>	The Supreme Being, who resides everywhere and is aware of everything. Some Hindus call Brahman 'God'.
Mandir		<b>deity</b>	A form of God, or a particular god or goddess.
Hindus worship in a temple called a Mandir. Mandirs vary in size from small village shrines to large buildings, surrounded by walls. People can also visit the Mandir at any time to pray and participate in the bhajans (religious songs). Hindus also worship at home and often have a special room with a shrine to particular gods. Some items found at the Mandir are:		<b>spiritual</b>	To do with the human mind and feelings, rather than the body, and often used to describe religious feelings.
<b>Prasad</b>	Food offerings, are placed on a shrine. These are offered to deities, such as Ganesh, Hanuman or Lakshmi. After puja, the worshippers receive Prashad. This is usually fruit, nuts or sweets. Prashad is a symbol of give and take between worshippers and God. It purifies the worshippers' body and mind. Some of the offerings are returned to the worshippers with God's blessings. Afterwards, the worshippers share a meal together.	<b>reincarnation</b>	The idea that, after death, the real self (present in all living beings) enters another body.
<b>A bell and murtis</b>	When Hindus enter a mandir a bell is rung. This is to tell the deities that they are present. A murti is sacred statues that represent the Gods and Goddesses. Each mandir is dedicated to a deity – often Vishnu or Lakshmi. A large murti of that god or goddess stands on the main shrine and often there are smaller shrines with other deities at the sides.	<b>pilgrimage</b>	A journey to a holy place for religious reasons.
<b>A shoe rack</b>	Hindus remove their shoes when they enter the mandir as they do with any building.	<b>offering</b>	Something, such as food or flowers that is offered to the deities on a shrine.
<b>Incense</b>	Hindus burn incense during worship (puja) as an offering to the god or deity. In ancient India, incense was made from tree resin. Today chemicals, rather than natural ingredients, are often used to make incense.		