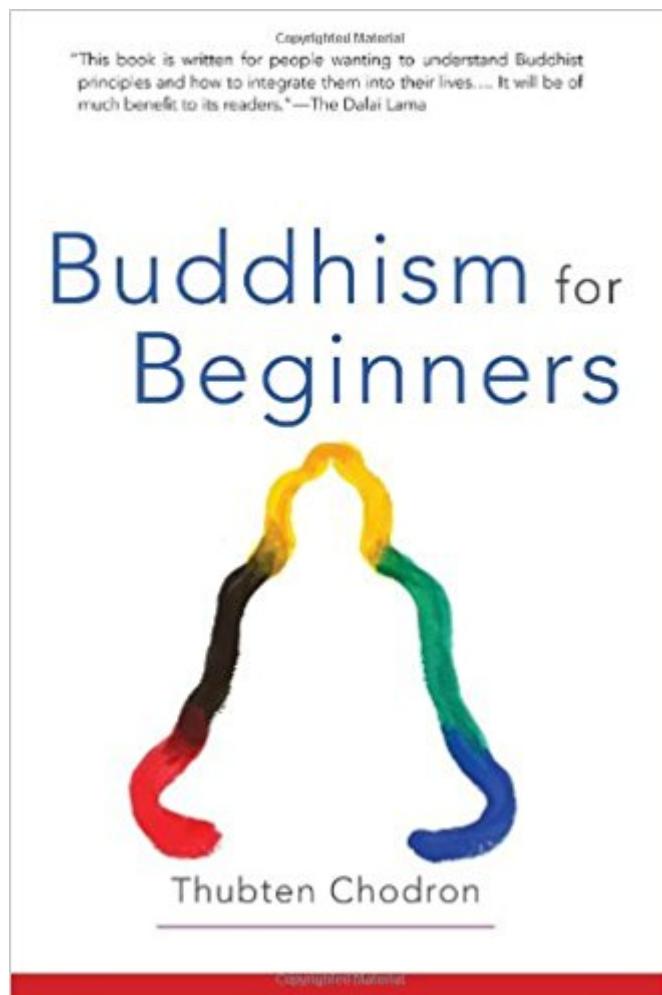


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# Buddhism For Beginners



## Synopsis

This user-friendly guide to Buddhist basics takes the most commonly asked questions—beginning with “What is the essence of the Buddha’s teachings?”—and provides simple answers in plain English. Thubten Chodron’s responses to the questions that always seem to arise among people approaching Buddhism make this an exceptionally complete and accessible introduction—as well as a manual for living a more peaceful, mindful, and satisfying life. *Buddhism for Beginners* is an ideal first book on the subject for anyone, but it’s also a wonderful resource for seasoned students, since the question-and-answer format makes it easy to find just the topic you’re looking for, such as: “What is the goal of the Buddhist path?” “What is karma?” “If all phenomena are empty, does that mean nothing exists?” “How can we deal with fear?” “How do I establish a regular meditation practice?” “What are the qualities I should look for in a teacher?” “What is Buddha-nature?” “Why can’t we remember our past lives?”

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Chodron’s plain English makes his beginner’s guide nearly perfect for those new to Buddhism and those who simply want to learn more about one of the world’s oldest, most misunderstood religions.

In question-and-answer format, Chodron defines Buddhism's essence, which, in a nutshell, is to avoid harming others and help them as much as possible. He describes the goal of the Buddhist path and discusses the historical Buddha and his various manifestations. He answers some most-asked outsiders' questions concerning such matters as the best methods of meditation and how to define karma, and he clarifies Buddhist perspectives on modern issues, from euthanasia and abortion to the environment and animal rights. Clearly, succinctly, and without talking down to readers, Chodron strives throughout to bring people together and help them understand the tradition. To outsiders, Buddhism can seem cold and mysterious, but Chodron unravels some of its mysteries and helps dispel that perceived coldness. June SawyersCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

“This book is written for people wanting to understand basic Buddhist principles and how to integrate them into their lives. . . . It will be of much benefit to its readers.”  
•H.H. the Dalai Lama  
“Thubten Chodron has presented the Buddhist view on essential issues of spiritual development. . . . A tremendous resource for those interested in Buddhist practice.”  
•Karma Lekshe Tsomo, president of Sakyadhita International Association of Buddhist Women  
“Chodron’s plain English makes her beginner’s guide nearly perfect for those new to Buddhism and those who simply want to learn more.”  
•Booklist  
“A very compassionate book. Her approach is nonsectarian and emphasizes the basic unity found within Buddhism.”  
•Ryo Imamura, Jodo Shin priest and professor of psychology at Evergreen State College  
“Her lucid, correct, clear, and convincing manner is highly commendable.”  
•Ven. Dr. Havanpola Ratanasara, College of Buddhist Studies, Los Angeles  
“Ven. Thubten Chodron is especially skilled in presenting Buddhist philosophy and practices in ways that are easily accessible and practical for Buddhists who live in the Western world.”  
•Ven. Hung I Shih, abbot of Jade Buddha Temple in Houston  
“This is the perfect gift for family and friends who wish to understand one’s engagement with Buddhism. Thubten Chodron combines several decades of traditional training in Tibetan Buddhism with western psychotherapeutic relevance. . . . That quality of integration is where the Venerable Thubten Chodron is such a powerful writer and teacher.”  
•Branches of Light  
“Here is an excellent introduction to Buddhism. Most importantly, it offers good advice for anyone who wants to lead a more sane balanced and compassionate life.”  
•Bodhi Tree Book Review

I'm glad I did. The format is questions and answers. She answers in clear and straightforward style. I intended to look through it before giving it to my friend and ended up reading almost the entire book. There are many ways to be introduced to Tibetan Buddhism. This is a very satisfactory first book. I would also recommend Thich Nhat Hanh, and of course H.H. The Dalai Lama. They both write with wisdom and clarity that are suitable for new students and seasoned meditators. Many of my friends who read Dharma, not as a spiritual path, but to make sense out of the crazy times in which we live also receive benefit from Pema Chodron's books.

Buddhism for Beginners is a good book for those with questions about Buddhism, specifically a Tibetan form of Buddhism, unfortunately for me I was looking for a book on Zen Buddhism and didn't look closely enough at this book. Anyway, it really is a well written and thorough book it deserves 5 stars, it just wasn't what I was looking for.

This is a Westerner-friendly discussion of Buddhist beliefs and practices presented in a question-and-answer format. The 21 chapters cover Buddhist beliefs and scriptures, rituals, the role of women, modern social issues like abortion, and practical tips for raising children and dealing with non-Buddhist relatives. The author attempts to fairly represent a variety of Buddhist traditions in a positive light. As a non-Buddhist I found it to be occasionally jargon-y but probably about as clear and straightforward as a "believer" can present their own religion. I think this book would be especially helpful for people who have already decided to embrace Buddhism or who grew up in Buddhist homes but don't really understand the religion they wish to practice. The Kindle price is a few dollars cheaper than the print edition both online and in local bookstores, which is always nice to see!

It's a good book and gives one a good background on the techniques of Buddhism and outlines all of the principles, however it does not give much of a background on why we practice some of the techniques within it. I much prefer the Heart of the Buddha's Teaching.

I bought this book because I wanted to learn about Buddhism. I had questions, and this book covered them all. It even covered questions I did not have. Once I was done reading, I was left with a few questions that were generated from just reading. That's the great thing about learning. This book inspired me to dig deeper. I already knew that this book may have a Tibetan twist to Buddhism because it says outright that the author is a Buddhist nun that follows the Tibetan tradition. Simply

put, I was not surprised nor disappointed to find out that I was right. What's wrong with that, though? It is not designed to answer every question that can be asked, the goal is to provide information for someone that is new to Buddhism. This book did exactly that. Anyone that knows absolutely nothing about Buddhism should start here. There is a lot to learn and this is a great place to start. Just do not make it your last stop. I started here and moved on to Buddhism Plain & Simple by Steve Hagen, personally. Expect to have a few questions when you're done. Expect to feel like there is more to learn. The truth is, there is. That does not mean this book should be ignored. It is simply a great place to begin the search.

this book filled a lot of gaps in my understanding of Buddhist principles and the lingua franca...

This book is a very helpful introduction to Buddhism. The author made sure to explain things clearly and continue to define words throughout the entire book, just to help the reader stay on track. It provided a great overview of traditional Buddhist viewpoints and beliefs, and answered practically every initial question I had. It is easy to read and easy to understand, and helped clarify many points that often cause confusion. I would highly recommend this book to anyone who is interested in learning more about Buddhism.

I am on Chapter 7 of this book and I am struggling to get through it because the examples and writing leave a lot to be desired. It is almost written in a child like manner and I appreciate the simplicity but sometimes the author loses focus and does not make sense. Chapter 6 especially makes little sense to me. I find myself zoning in and out while reading it and I am not feeling much inspiration in the text. I just read *Buddhism Plain and Simple* which is beautiful and poetic. I would recommend that book over this.\*\*\*\*\*I updated my review to 4 stars because this book answers questions many other books don't. Some of it is really good to know and essential. I would recommend it for gaining answers to some oddball questions or even common questions one may have. As always the only con is the writing style.

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