



An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices

Peter Harvey

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This book provides a comprehensive introduction to the Buddhist tradition as it has developed in three major cultural areas in Asia, and to Buddhism as it is now developing in the West. It is intended to be a textbook for students of Religious or Asian Studies, but will also be of interest to those who want a general survey of Buddhism and its beliefs.

An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices Details

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From Reader Review An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices for online ebook

Yupa says

Utile come introduzione generica per i non specialisti.
A tratti affetto da un approccio un po' troppo "confessionale" e poco critico.

Sarja says

A great and comprehensive introduction to Buddhism - read it together with some source texts!

Ben Fairchild says

I am re-reading this because its for my exams. Buddhism is such an inspiring religion for me because it is very well versed in the practicalities of highly intense spiritual work i.e. meditation, which is light years away from the practise of all but very few Buddhists but is just about within my realm. This comes from its very strong monastic tradition. It is also runs parallel to Christianity in many ways (Buddha the man that became Dhamma v.s. Jesus the God that became man) and it is very faith affirming when it does so. Y'know that little Buddha guy; he's okay but I'll take an eternity over a 'great eon' (apparently the time it takes for a 'world-system' to go through its cycle of evolution) any day!

Ellison says

This is a text book. A good one, I think it, but it is a little dry, even dull, and all the chapters weren't of equal interest to me. It is a good overview of the different branches of Buddhist belief, their differing philosophies and practices and how and where they have flourished or not.

Jake Bornheimer says

This book brings both scholarly accuracy and readability. An excellent introduction to the many and varied facets of Buddhism. It covers all the bases: the Southern, Eastern, and Northern varieties. I highly recommend this book for any prospective students of Buddhism.

Sabio says

By far the best intro to Buddhism
But this is for those with an academic bent -- not for those who just want to try meditating.
Harvey is a great author and shows all sides of the various types of Buddhism.

Just as Christianity has more than a hundred sects (OK, they like to call theirs "denominations"), so does Buddhism.

There is no one thing called Buddhism. And each claims to be the original teaching. Yawn.

Humans are so predictable.

Frank Jude says

An excellent 'all-round' introduction, its strength is particularly in its treatment of history, major philosophical themes, and practices. Its weakness is due to its age. First published in 1990, its treatment of 'contemporary' Buddhism is terribly dated. However, reading it today makes the dramatic changes in the last 18 years all the more impressive.

I'd recommend this to anyone wishing to explore the over-arching traditions of Buddhism up to the last century.

Kristian says

A thorough introduction to Buddhism. One of the best out there.

vlthm says

I've read a little about Buddhism but got really specialists advices and this one is so far my favorite. It's really concerned about a scientific perspective, gives you a lot of histories from the sutras and it's very extensive about the developments of Buddhism. It's neither a "propaganda" book to answer questions of health or mental states, which is very annoying from a historian perspective, but more about what is buddhism historically and also philosophically (the authors really dig into philosophy even if really quickly)

To read...

Chris May says

Clear, concise and well written account of the history, philosophy and practices of a range of Buddhist traditions. It is not simply a surface level overview but has some great analysis of key Buddhist concepts and philosophical arguments. It also has a very helpful further reading section of free electronic articles and texts for a deeper look at many of the topics covered.

Josiah Miller says

Well written and readable. accessed pdf online.

Matias Altalef says

So incredibly dry and boring, I could not bring myself to finish it.

Fiona says

An excellent introduction including more than the bare minimum. Harvey pays attention to important linguistic points which other introductions often skip over and explains the history and major philosophical elements of Buddhism well.

Allison says

This book has really great information, but the writing is very dry and hard to get through. My first Buddhism teacher got sick, and our new professor thinks this book is a snooze. I would give it two stars, but the substance of the text is very thorough for an introductory text.

Jono says

Very good, but a bit too in depth to quite be termed an introduction.
