

## Five Precepts

The 5 Precepts in Pali and English

1. [Pānātipātā veramanī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi](#)
  - I undertake the training rule to abstain from taking life (killing living creatures).
2. [Adinnādānā veramanī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi](#)
  - I undertake the training rule to abstain from taking what is not given (stealing).
3. [Kāmesu micchācārā veramanī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi](#)
  - I undertake the training rule to abstain from sexual misconduct.
4. [Musāvādā veramanī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi](#)
  - I undertake the training rule to abstain from false speech (lying).
5. [Surāmerayamajjapamādatthānā veramanī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi](#)
  - I undertake the training rule to abstain from intoxicating drinks and drugs that cause heedlessness

These five precepts lay the basic groundwork for sila, or morality in Buddhism. The language used for chanting is called pali, the ancient language of the Buddha, and is said to be what was spoken at that time. However they are not restricted to just Buddhists, anybody can agree to abide by these guidelines. At a Buddhist ceremony lay devotees will request five precepts following a declaration of taking refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma(Truth and Doctrine) and Sangha(community of noble disciples) is similar to the Buddha as our father, the Dhamma as our mother and the Sangha as our brothers/sisters whom we go to for guidance and friendship. Lay buddhists would begin by chanting “Buddham Saranam Gachaami, Dhammam Saranam gachami, Sangham saranam gachami...Dutiyampi Buddham, etc...Tatiyampi Buddham, etc.” The meaning is I go to the Buddha for refuge, I go to the Dhamma for refuge, and I go to the Sangha for refuge, For a second time...For a third time. This is a way Buddhists have taken spiritual, moral, and ethical refuge in the Buddha, the teachings, and the Sangha who preserve, practice and pass down those teachings. The teachings are not only belonging to the Buddha, nor were they invented by the Buddha, but rather a universal law or truth rediscovered and preached by the Buddha to be available for all.

Morality provides a basis for meditation, for we are not overwhelmed with sorrow or remorse over our actions; as well as protection because all actions have consequences, if we perform good action there are good results, same with the bad. It is said that “As long as the evil deed does not bear fruit, the fool thinks it is sweet like honey; but when his evil deed does bear fruit, the fool suffers for it” (Dhammpada 5:69) Fortunately, Buddha taught the way out of the cycle of suffering. With strong morality one can more easily calm their mind, we are able to relax knowing that we have done the best that we could. Morality also creates good kamma for us, although we may not see the fruits immediately we are sure to plant good seeds, and through care and cultivation sprout into magnificent roots of wholesomeness that take us far and wide in life. No matter if you are Buddhist, Muslim or Christian, the core principles can apply anywhere and enhance our daily lives.