

What is Paganism and how is it different from Wicca?

A Pagan is a religious person who is not a Jew, Christian, Muslim, or Satanist. As such "Pagan" takes in a lot of territory. Ancient faiths such as Hinduism and Taoism, as well as the Classical religions of Greece, Rome, Egypt, etc... are Pagans, as are modern movements such as Wicca, Asatru, modern Druidism, etc... Thus Wicca will be seen to be a branch or a kind of Paganism. To give an example, Wiccan is to Pagan as Methodist is to Christian. It should be noted that historically the term Pagan has been applied from outside and that only fairly recently has there been any recognition among Pagans that we might view our different traditions as being related.

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What is Wicca?

- **What is Wicca?**
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- **What is Paganism and how does it differ from Wicca?**

The logo for WitchSchool, featuring the word "WitchSchool" in a stylized, handwritten font with a dark, textured background behind the letters.

What is Wicca?

Wicca is a modern Pagan religion which involves many different Traditions (denominations) not all of which have common origins. Wicca grew out of older movements, taking its modern shape during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries AD

As a rule the characteristics that define Wicca include:

- * The veneration of the feminine aspect of Deity (Goddess) either alone or in combination with the masculine aspect (God).
- * The belief that Deity comes to people in many different ways, contingent upon their personality, capacity, and culture, and thus that all faces of Deity are valid as faces for Deity.
- * The belief that all things are connected through Deity, often expressed through the idea of the Four Elements as the symbolic qualities of existence.
- * Belief in the Wiccan Rede “An it Harm None do as You Will” –a corollary to the Law of Thelema (Do As You Will) from Rabelais.
- * Belief in reincarnation and some version of Karma/Fate, often encapsulated in the “Threefold Law” –that what you do comes back to you multiple times.
- * A belief in magic, which the accessing and directing of the higher powers of the soul, and that the use of magic is a good thing when used wisely: that we are meant to be “co-creators” of our own lives, not merely the passive recipient of fate.

Where does Wicca come from?

Wicca is a modern world religion having heterogeneous roots and consisting of many Traditions, some of which have very little in common with each other. The roots of Wicca trace to both survival (often fragmentary) and revival of European tribal and classical religion, the hermetic and alchemical movements, ceremonialism, masonry, Deism, and spiritualism. Many people lumped all these practices together under the term “Witchcraft”, using it as a generic term for non-Christian metaphysical practices. By the nineteenth century there were also strong influences from Asian, Native American and African religions.

These heterogeneous elements began to form into the modern Wiccan religion when descendants of these various movements saw themselves and their beliefs, rightly or wrongly, reflected in the writings of Charles Leland, Margaret Murray, and Dion Fortune (among others) in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In the mid-twentieth century the movement was given a public face by the writings of Gerald Gardner, Sybil Leek, and Stuart Farrar. Gardner’s writings were the first to publicly use the term “Wicca” which had long been cited as the origin of the term Witch and to publicly apply it as the name of the modern movement.

In the 1970s and 1980s the use of the term Wicca spread through many Traditions of Witchcraft unrelated to Gardnerianism, such as the Dianic and Correllian Nativist Traditions, becoming a blanket term for modern religious Witchcraft, especially in the United States – although some people insist that the term should only properly apply to the Gardnerian Tradition.

What is Correllian Wicca?

The Correllian Tradition is a branch of Traditional Witchcraft which has identified as Wiccan since the 1970s, in much the same way as the Dianic Tradition identifies as Wiccan. Originally a familial Tradition, Correllianism has been an open, public Tradition since 1979, expanding rapidly since the late '90s.

Correllian Wicca places a very strong emphasis on the philosophical and theological aspects of Wicca, and stresses personal spiritual, magical, and psychic development. Correllian Wicca also places great importance on the idea of the Ancestors, meaning both the Ancestors of the Tradition as well as members' physical and philosophical Ancestors.

Correllian Wicca celebrates the Wheel of the Year in the same manner as most Wiccan Traditions, but in addition to this also celebrates a twice-yearly rite of purification and blessing called the “Lustration” which is considered uniquely Correllian. The Lustrations began as private, comparatively simple Ancestor-rituals practiced by the High-Correll family and the Correll Mother Temple to honor and maintain their connection to the Ancestors and bring through Oracles from them, and evolved into an elaborate public ceremony as the Tradition expanded.

You can learn more about Correllian Wicca at www.correllian.com