

The Pāli Canon

Preserved in the Pāli language, this is the canon of the Theravāda school, the only sect of the Hīnayāna to survive down to modern times. Although other early [schools](#) had their own canons, the Pāli Canon is unique in being the only set of scriptures to be preserved in its entirety. The Pāli Canon is also known as the *Tiṭṭaka* ('three baskets') because of its three divisions into Vinaya (monastic law), Sutta (the Buddha's discourses), and Abhidhamma (scholastic treatises).

I. Vinaya Piṭaka

- A.** Suttavibhanga. The rules of the Saṅgha or monastic code (Pāṭimokkha)
1. Mahāvibhanga. 227 rules for monks
 2. Bhikkhunivibhanga. 311 rules for nuns
- B.** Khandhaka. Matters concerning the organization of the Saṅgha.
1. Mahāvagga. Regulations for ordination, retreats, clothing, [food](#), etc.
 2. Cullavagga. Procedural matters and the history of the first two councils.
- C.** The Parivāra. An appendix summarizing the rules.

II. Sutta Piṭaka

- A.** Dīgha Nikāya. 34 long discourses.
- B.** Majjhima Nikāya. 154 medium length discourses.
- C.** Saṃyutta Nikāya. 56 groups of discourses arranged by subject matter.
- D.** Aṅguttara Nikāya. Discourses grouped by incremental lists of subjects.
- E.** Khuddaka Nikāya. A collection of fifteen minor texts.
1. *Khuddakapāṭha*. Short suttas.
 2. *Dhammapada*. Popular collection of 423 verses on ethics.
 3. *Udāna*. 80 solemn utterances of the Buddha.
 4. *Itivuttaka*. 112 short suttas.
 5. *Sutta-nipāta*. 70 suttas in verse.
 6. *Vimānavatthu*. Accounts of the heavenly rebirths of the virtuous.
 7. *Petavatthu*. 51 poems about rebirth as a hungry ghost.
 8. *Theragāthā*. Verses by 264 male Elders.
 9. *Therīgāthā*. Verses by around 100 female Elders.
 10. *Jātaka*. 547 stories about the Buddha's previous lives.
 11. *Niddesa*. Commentary on portions of the *Sutta-nipāta*.
 12. *Paṭisambhidāmagga*. Abhidharma-style analysis of points of doctrine.
 13. *Apadāna*. Verse stories about the present and former lives of monks and nuns.
 14. *Buddhavaṃsa*. An account of the 24 previous Buddhas.
 15. *Cariyāpiṭaka*. Jātaka stories about the virtues of Bodhisattvas.

III. Abhidhamma Piṭaka

- A.** *Dhammasaṅgani*. Psychological analysis of ethics.
- B.** *Vibhanga*. Analysis of various doctrinal categories.
- C.** *Dhātukathā*. Classification of points of doctrine.
- D.** *Puggalapaññatti*. Classification of human types.
- E.** *Kathāvatthu*. Doctrinal disputes among the sects.
- F.** *Yamaka*. Pairs of questions about basic categories of teachings.
- G.** *Paṭṭhāna*. Causation analysed into 24 groups.

The Chinese Canon

Various editions of the Chinese Canon have been produced. The first complete edition was printed in 983 CE and the standard modern edition known as the Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō was published in Tokyo between 1924 and 1929. The latter consists of 55 volumes containing 2,184 texts, together with 45 supplementary volumes.

- I.** Āgama section: volumes 1-2, 151 texts. Equivalent to the first four Pāli Nikāyas and part of the fifth.
- II.** Story Section: volumes 3-4, 68 Jātaka texts.
- III.** Prajñā-pāramitā section: volumes 5-8, 42 texts of Perfection of Insight literature.
- IV.** Saddharmapuṇḍarīka section: volume 9, 16 texts relating to the *Lotus Sūtra*.
- V.** Avatamsaka section. Volume 9-10, 31 texts relating to the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*.
- VI.** Ratnakūṭa section. Volumes 11-12, 64 early Mahāyāna texts.
- VII.** Mahāparinirvāna section. Volume 12, 23 texts concerning the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*.
- VIII.** Great Assembly section. Volume 13, 28 texts containing early sūtras, beginning with the *Great Assembly Sūtra*.
- IX.** Sūtra-Collection Section: Volumes 14-17, 423 texts. Collection of miscellaneous (primarily Mahāyāna) sūtras.
- X.** Tantra Section: Volumes 18-21, 572 texts. Contains Vajrayāna Sūtras and tantric materials.
- XI.** Vinaya Section: Volumes 22-4, 86 texts. Contain the disciplinary texts of a variety of Hīnayāna schools as well as texts on Bodhisattva [discipline](#).
- XII.** Commentaries on Sūtras: Volumes 24-6, 31 texts. Commentaries by Indian authors on the Āgamas and Mahāyāna Sūtras.
- XIII.** Abhidharma Section: Volumes 26-9, 28 texts. Translations of Sarvāstivādin, Dharmaguptaka, and Sautrāntika

Abhidharma texts.

XIV. Madhyamaka Section: Volume 30, 15 texts. Texts on Madhyamaka thought.

XV. Yogācāra Section: Volumes 30-1, 49 texts. Texts on Yogācāra thought.

XVI. Collection of Treatises: Volume 32, 65 texts. Miscellaneous works on logic and other matters.

XVII. Commentaries on the Sūtras: Volumes 33-39. Commentaries by Chinese authors.

XVIII. Commentaries on the Vinaya: Volume 40. Commentaries by Chinese authors.

XIX. Commentaries on the Śāstras: Volumes 40-4. Commentaries by Chinese authors.

XX. Chinese Sectarian Writings: Volumes 44-8.

XXI. History and Biography: Volumes 49-52, 95 texts.

XXII. Encyclopedias and Dictionaries: Volumes 53-4, 16 texts.

XXIII. Non-Buddhist Doctrines: Volumes 54, 8 texts. Contains materials on Hinduism, Manichean, and Nestorian Christian [writing](#).

XXIV. Catalogues: Volume 55, 40 texts. Catalogues of the Chinese Canon, starting with that of Seng-yu (published 515 CE).

The Tibetan Canon

The Tibetan Canon consists of two parts: **(1)** the Kanjur (Tibetan, bstan 'gyur) being the [Word](#) of the Buddha, and **(2)** the Tenjur (Tibetan, bstan-'gyur) or Commentaries. Because this latter collection contains work attributed to individuals other than the Buddha, it is considered only semi-canonical. The first printing of the Kanjur took place in Peking, being completed in 1411. The first native Tibetan edition of the canon was at Narthang, (Tibetan, snarthang) with the Kanjur appearing in 1731 and the Tenjur in 1742.

I. Kanjur: The Word of the Buddha; 98 volumes according to the Narthang edition.

A. Vinaya: 13 volumes.

B. Prajñā-pāramitā: 21 volumes.

C. Avatamsaka: 6 volumes.

D. Ratnakūṭa: 6 volumes.

E. Sūtra: 30 volumes. 270 texts, some three-quarters are Mahāyāna, one quarter Hīnayāna.

F. Tantra: 22 volumes. Contains more than 300 texts.

II. Tenjur: The Commentaries; 224 volumes (3,626 texts) according to the Peking edition.

A. Stotras (hymns of praise): 1 volume; 64 texts.

B. Commentaries on the Tantras: 86 volumes; 3,055 texts.

C. Commentaries on the Sūtras: 137 volumes; 567 texts.

1. Prajñā-pāramitā Commentaries, 16 volumes.

2. Madhyamaka Treatises, 17 volumes.

3. Yogācāra Treatises, 29 volumes.

4. Abhidharma, 8 volumes.

5. Miscellaneous Texts, 4 volumes.

6. Vinaya Commentaries, 16 volumes.

7. Tales and Dramas, 4 volumes.

8. Technical Treatises: 43 volumes.

a. Logic: 21 volumes.

b. Grammar: 1 volume.

c. Lexicography and Poetics: 1 volume.

d. Medicine: 5 volumes.

e. Chemistry and Miscellaneous: 1 volume.

f. Supplements: 14 volumes.