**Immanuel Kant**

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| **Immanuel Kant** |
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| **Born** | (1724-04-22)22 April 1724[Königsberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%B6nigsberg), [Prussia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Prussia) (now [Kaliningrad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaliningrad), [Russia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russia)) |
| **Died** | 12 February 1804(1804-02-12) (aged 79)Königsberg, Prussia |
| **Residence** | Königsberg, Prussia |
| **Nationality** | Prussian |
|  |
| **Era** | [18th-century philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/18th-century_philosophy) |
| **Region** | [Western philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_philosophy) |
| [**School**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_schools_of_philosophy) | * [Kantianism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kantianism)
* [Enlightenment philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Enlightenment)
 |
| **Main interests** | * [Epistemology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epistemology)
* [Metaphysics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphysics)
* [Ethics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethics)
* [Cosmogony](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmogony)
 |
| **Notable ideas** | * [Categorical imperative](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Categorical_imperative)
* [Transcendental idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transcendental_idealism)
* [Synthetic *a priori*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Analytic%E2%80%93synthetic_distinction)
	+ [Noumenon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noumenon)
	+ [*Sapere aude*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sapere_aude)
* [Nebular hypothesis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebular_hypothesis)
 |
| Influences* + [Wolff](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_Wolff_%28philosopher%29)
	+ [Baumgarten](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Baumgarten)
	+ [Plato](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato)
	+ [Aristotle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristotle)
	+ [Empiricus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sextus_Empiricus)
	+ [Hume](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Hume)
	+ [Smith](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adam_Smith)
	+ [Descartes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ren%C3%A9_Descartes)
	+ [Spinoza](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baruch_Spinoza)
	+ [Leibniz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gottfried_Leibniz)
	+ [Locke](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Locke)
	+ [Rousseau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Jacques_Rousseau)
	+ [Newton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_Newton)
	+ [Swedenborg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emanuel_Swedenborg)
	+ [Euclid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euclid)
	+ [Epicurus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epicurus)
 |
| Influenced* + Virtually all subsequent [Western philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_philosophy), notably: [Fichte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Gottlieb_Fichte)
	+ [Schelling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Wilhelm_Joseph_Schelling)
	+ [Jacobi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Heinrich_Jacobi)
	+ [Mises](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ludwig_von_Mises)
	+ [Reinhold](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Leonhard_Reinhold)
	+ [F. Schlegel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Wilhelm_Friedrich_Schlegel)
	+ [A.W. Schlegel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/August_Wilhelm_Schlegel)
	+ [Hegel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georg_Wilhelm_Friedrich_Hegel)
	+ [Schopenhauer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Schopenhauer)
	+ [Nietzsche](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Nietzsche)
	+ [Peirce](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Sanders_Peirce)
	+ [Husserl](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Husserl)
	+ [Heidegger](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Heidegger)
	+ [Cassirer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernst_Cassirer)
	+ [Habermas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J%C3%BCrgen_Habermas)
	+ [Rawls](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Rawls)
	+ [Chomsky](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noam_Chomsky)
	+ [Piaget](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Piaget)
	+ [Kierkegaard](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/S%C3%B8ren_Kierkegaard)
	+ [T.W. Adorno](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T.W._Adorno)
	+ [Hilbert](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Hilbert)
	+ [Foucault](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michel_Foucault)
	+ [Weber](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_Weber)
	+ [Strawson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P._F._Strawson)
	+ [Strauss](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo_Strauss)
	+ [McDowell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McDowell)
	+ [Simmel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georg_Simmel)
	+ [Azurmendi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joxe_Azurmendi)
	+ [Guyer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Guyer)
	+ [Seung](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T._K._Seung)
	+ [Pogge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Pogge)
	+ [Zongsan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mou_Zongsan)
	+ [Nozick](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Nozick)
	+ [Iqbal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammad_Iqbal)
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| **Signature** |  |

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| Part of [a series](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category%3AImmanuel_Kant) on |
| **Immanuel Kant** |
|  |
| **Major works** |
| * [*Critique of Pure Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Pure_Reason)
* [*Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prolegomena_to_Any_Future_Metaphysics)
* "[Answering the Question: What is Enlightenment?](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Answering_the_Question%3A_What_is_Enlightenment%3F)"
* [*Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groundwork_of_the_Metaphysic_of_Morals)
* [*Critique of Practical Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Practical_Reason)
* [*Critique of Judgment*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Judgment)
* [*Religion within the Bounds of Bare Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_within_the_Bounds_of_Bare_Reason)
* [*Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perpetual_Peace%3A_A_Philosophical_Sketch)
* [*The Metaphysics of Morals*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Metaphysics_of_Morals)
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| * [**Kantianism**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kantianism)
* [**Kantian ethics**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kantian_ethics)
 |
| * [Transcendental idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transcendental_idealism)
* [Critical philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_philosophy)
* [*Sapere aude*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sapere_aude)
* [Schema](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schema_%28Kant%29)
* [*A priori* and *a posteriori*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_priori_and_a_posteriori)
* [Analytic–synthetic distinction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Analytic%E2%80%93synthetic_distinction)
* [Noumenon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noumenon)
* [Categories](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category_%28Kant%29)
* [Categorical imperative](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Categorical_imperative)
* [Hypothetical imperative](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypothetical_imperative)
* "[Kingdom of Ends](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Ends)"
* [Political philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_philosophy_of_Immanuel_Kant)
 |
| **People** |
| * [George Berkeley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Berkeley)
* [René Descartes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ren%C3%A9_Descartes)
* [J. G. Fichte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Gottlieb_Fichte)
* [F. H. Jacobi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Heinrich_Jacobi)
* [G. W. F. Hegel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georg_Wilhelm_Friedrich_Hegel)
* [David Hume](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Hume)
* [Arthur Schopenhauer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Schopenhauer)
* [Baruch Spinoza](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baruch_Spinoza)
* [African Spir](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Spir)
* [Johannes Tetens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johannes_Tetens)
 |
| **Related topics** |
| * [Schopenhauer's criticism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schopenhauer%27s_criticism_of_the_Kantian_philosophy)
* [German idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_idealism)
* [Neo-Kantianism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neo-Kantianism)
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**Immanuel Kant** ([/kænt/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help%3AIPA_for_English); German: [[ɪˈmaːnu̯eːl kant]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help%3AIPA_for_German); 22 April 1724 – 12 February 1804) was a [German philosopher](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_German-language_philosophers) who is widely considered to be a central figure of [modern philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_philosophy). He argued that fundamental concepts structure human experience, and that reason is the source of morality. His thought continues to have a major influence in contemporary thought, especially the fields of [metaphysics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphysics), [epistemology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epistemology), [ethics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethics), [political philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_philosophy), and [aesthetics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aesthetics).

Kant's major work, the [*Critique of Pure Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Pure_Reason) (*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 1781), aimed to explain the relationship between reason and human experience. With this project, he hoped to move beyond what he took to be failures of traditional philosophy and metaphysics. He attempted to put an end to what he considered an era of futile and speculative theories of human experience, while resisting the [skepticism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophical_skepticism) of thinkers such as [David Hume](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Hume).

Kant argued that our experiences are structured by necessary features of our minds. In his view, the mind shapes and structures experience so that, on an abstract level, all human experience shares certain essential structural features. Among other things, Kant believed that the concepts of *space* and *time* are integral to all human experience, as are our concepts of *cause* and *effect*. One important consequence of this view is that one never has *direct* experience of things, the so-called *noumenal* world, and that what we do experience is the *phenomenal* world as conveyed by our senses. These claims summarize Kant's views upon the [subject–object problem](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Subject%E2%80%93object_problem&action=edit&redlink=1). Kant published other important works on ethics, religion, law, aesthetics, astronomy, and history. These included the [*Critique of Practical Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Practical_Reason) (*Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, 1788), the [*Metaphysics of Morals*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphysics_of_Morals) (*Die Metaphysik der Sitten*, 1797), which dealt with [ethics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethics), and the [*Critique of Judgment*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Judgment) (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 1790), which looks at [aesthetics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aesthetics) and [teleology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teleology).

Kant aimed to resolve disputes between [empirical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empiricism) and [rationalist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rationalism) approaches. The former asserted that all knowledge comes through experience; the latter maintained that reason and innate ideas were prior. Kant argued that experience is purely subjective without first being processed by pure reason. He also said that using reason without applying it to experience only leads to theoretical illusions. The free and proper exercise of reason by the individual was a theme both of the [Age of Enlightenment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Enlightenment), and of Kant's approaches to the various problems of philosophy. His ideas influenced many thinkers in Germany during his lifetime, and he moved philosophy beyond the debate between the rationalists and empiricists. Kant is seen as a major figure in the history and development of philosophy.

**Biography**

Immanuel Kant was born in 1724 in [Königsberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%B6nigsberg), Prussia (since 1946 the city of [Kaliningrad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaliningrad), [Kaliningrad Oblast](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaliningrad_Oblast), [Russia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Federation)). His mother, Anna Regina Reuter (1697–1737), was born in [Nuremberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuremberg). His father, Johann Georg Kant (1682–1746), was a German harness maker from [Memel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klaip%C4%97da), at the time [Prussia's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prussia) most northeastern city (now [Klaipėda](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klaip%C4%97da), [Lithuania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lithuania)). Kant's paternal grandfather, Hans Kant, had emigrated from [Scotland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scotland) to [East Prussia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/East_Prussia), and his father still spelled their family name "Cant". Kant was the fourth of nine children (four of them reached adulthood). Baptized 'Emanuel', he changed his name to 'Immanuel' after learning [Hebrew](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew).

Young Kant was a solid, albeit unspectacular, student. He was brought up in a [Pietist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pietism) household that stressed religious devotion, humility, and a literal interpretation of the [Bible](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bible). His education was strict, punitive and disciplinary, and focused on [Latin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin) and religious instruction over mathematics and science. Despite his religious upbringing and maintaining a belief in God, Kant was skeptical of religion in later life; various commentators have labelled him [agnostic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnostic).

Common myths about Kant's personal mannerisms are listed, explained, and refuted in Goldthwait's introduction to his translation of [*Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Observations_on_the_Feeling_of_the_Beautiful_and_Sublime). It is often held that Kant lived a very strict and predictable life, leading to an oft-repeated story that neighbors would set their clocks by his daily walks. He never married, but seemed to have a rewarding social life — he was a popular teacher and a modestly successful author even before starting on his major philosophical works.

A common myth is that Kant never traveled more than 10 miles (16 km) from Königsberg his whole life. In fact, between 1750 and 1754 he worked as a tutor (*Hauslehrer*) in Judtschen (now Veselovka, [Russia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russia), approximately 20 km) and in Groß-Arnsdorf (now near Elbląg, [Poland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poland), approximately 105 km).

**Young scholar**

Kant showed a great aptitude for study at an early age. He first attended the [Collegium Fridericianum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collegium_Fridericianum). In 1740, aged 16, he enrolled at the [University of Königsberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_K%C3%B6nigsberg), where he spent his whole career. He studied the philosophy of [Gottfried Leibniz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gottfried_Leibniz) and [Christian Wolff](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_Wolff_%28philosopher%29) under [Martin Knutzen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Knutzen), a [rationalist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rationalism) who was also familiar with developments in British philosophy and science and introduced Kant to the new mathematical physics of [Isaac Newton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_Newton). Knutzen dissuaded Kant from the theory of [pre-established harmony](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pre-established_harmony), which he regarded as "the pillow for the lazy mind". He also dissuaded Kant from [idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Idealism), the idea that reality is purely mental, which most philosophers in the 18th century regarded in a negative light. (The theory of [transcendental idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transcendental_idealism) that Kant developed in the [*Critique of Pure Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Pure_Reason) is not traditional idealism and the *Critique'*s second part even argues against traditional idealism.)

His father's stroke and subsequent death in 1746 interrupted his studies. Kant became a private tutor in the towns surrounding Königsberg, but continued his scholarly research. In 1747, he published his first philosophical work, [*Thoughts on the True Estimation of Living Forces*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thoughts_on_the_True_Estimation_of_Living_Forces).

**Early work**

Kant is best known for his work in the philosophy of ethics and metaphysics, but he made significant contributions to other disciplines. He made an important astronomical discovery about the nature of Earth's rotation, for which he won the Berlin Academy Prize in 1754.

According to [Lord Kelvin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Thomson%2C_1st_Baron_Kelvin):

"Kant pointed out in the middle of last century, what had not previously been discovered by mathematicians or physical astronomers, that the frictional resistance against tidal currents on the earth's surface must cause a diminution of the earth's rotational speed. This immense discovery in Natural Philosophy seems to have attracted little attention—indeed to have passed quite unnoticed—among mathematicians, and astronomers, and naturalists, until about 1840, when the doctrine of energy began to be taken to heart."

—Lord Kelvin, *physicist, 1897*

According to [Thomas Huxley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Henry_Huxley):

"The sort of geological speculation to which I am now referring (geological aetiology, in short) was created as a science by that famous philosopher, Immanuel Kant, when, in 1775, he wrote his *General Natural History and Theory of the Celestial Bodies; or, an Attempt to Account for the Constitutional and Mechanical Origin of the Universe, upon Newtonian Principles.*"

—Thomas H. Huxley, *1869*

In the *General History of Nature and Theory of the Heavens (Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels)* (1755), Kant laid out the [Nebular hypothesis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebular_hypothesis), in which he deduced that the [Solar System](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solar_System) formed from a large cloud of gas, a [nebula](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebula). Thus he tried to explain the order of the solar system, which [Isaac Newton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isaac_Newton) had explained as imposed from the beginning by God. Kant also correctly deduced that the [Milky Way](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milky_Way) was a large disk of stars, which he theorized also formed from a (much larger) spinning cloud of gas. He further suggested that other nebulae might also be similarly large and distant disks of stars. These postulations opened new horizons for astronomy: for the first time extending astronomy beyond the solar system to galactic and extragalactic realms.

From then on, Kant turned increasingly to philosophical issues, although he continued to write on the sciences throughout his life. In the early 1760s, Kant produced a series of important works in philosophy. [*The False Subtlety of the Four Syllogistic Figures*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_False_Subtlety_of_the_Four_Syllogistic_Figures), a work in logic, was published in 1762. Two more works appeared the following year: *Attempt to Introduce the Concept of Negative Magnitudes into Philosophy* and [*The Only Possible Argument in Support of a Demonstration of the Existence of God*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Only_Possible_Argument_in_Support_of_a_Demonstration_of_the_Existence_of_God). In 1764, Kant wrote [*Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Observations_on_the_Feeling_of_the_Beautiful_and_Sublime) and then was second to [Moses Mendelssohn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moses_Mendelssohn) in a Berlin Academy prize competition with his *Inquiry Concerning the Distinctness of the Principles of Natural Theology and Morality* (often referred to as "The Prize Essay"). In 1770, aged 45, Kant was finally appointed Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at the University of Königsberg. Kant wrote his [*inaugural dissertation*](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Inaugural_dissertation&action=edit&redlink=1) in defense of this appointment. This work saw the emergence of several central themes of his mature work, including the distinction between the faculties of intellectual thought and sensible receptivity. To miss this distinction would mean to commit the error of [subreption](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subreption), and, as he says in the last chapter of the dissertation, only in avoiding this error does metaphysics flourish.

The issue that vexed Kant was central to what 20th-century scholars called "the [philosophy of mind](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_mind)". The flowering of the natural sciences had led to an understanding of how data reaches the brain. Sunlight falling on an object is reflected from its surface in a way that maps the surface features (color, texture, etc.). The reflected light reaches the human eye, passes through the cornea, is focused by the lens onto the retina where it forms an image similar to that formed by light passing through a pinhole into a [camera obscura](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camera_obscura). The retinal cells send impulses through the [optic nerve](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Optic_nerve) and then they form a mapping in the brain of the visual features of the object. The interior mapping is not the exterior object, and our belief that there is a meaningful relationship between the object and the mapping in the brain depends on a chain of reasoning that is not fully grounded. But the uncertainty aroused by these considerations, by optical illusions, misperceptions, delusions, etc., are not the end of the problems.

Kant saw that the mind could not function as an empty container that simply receives data from outside. Something must be giving order to the incoming data. Images of external objects must be kept in the same sequence in which they were received. This ordering occurs through the mind's intuition of time. The same considerations apply to the mind's function of constituting **space** for ordering mappings of visual and tactile signals arriving via the already described chains of physical causation.

It is often claimed that Kant was a late developer, that he only became an important philosopher in his mid-50s after rejecting his earlier views. While it is true that Kant wrote his greatest works relatively late in life, there is a tendency to underestimate the value of his earlier works. Recent Kant scholarship has devoted more attention to these "pre-critical" writings and has recognized a degree of continuity with his mature work.

**The silent decade**

At age 46, Kant was an established scholar and an increasingly influential philosopher. Much was expected of him. In correspondence with his ex-student and friend [Markus Herz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Markus_Herz), Kant admitted that, in the *Inaugural Dissertation*, he had failed to account for the relation between our sensible and intellectual faculties—he needed to explain how we combine sensory knowledge with reasoned knowledge, these being related but very different processes. He also credited [David Hume](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Hume) with awakening him from "dogmatic slumber" (circa 1771). Hume had stated that experience consists only of sequences of feelings, images or sounds. Ideas such as "cause", goodness, or objects were not evident in experience, so why do we believe in the reality of these? Kant felt that reason could remove this skepticism, and he set himself to solving these problems. He did not publish any work in philosophy for the next 11 years.

Immanuel Kant

Although fond of company and conversation with others, Kant isolated himself. He resisted friends' attempts to bring him out of his isolation. In 1778, in response to one of these offers by a former pupil, Kant wrote:

"Any change makes me apprehensive, even if it offers the greatest promise of improving my condition, and I am persuaded by this natural instinct of mine that I must take heed if I wish that the threads which the Fates spin so thin and weak in my case to be spun to any length. My great thanks, to my well-wishers and friends, who think so kindly of me as to undertake my welfare, but at the same time a most humble request to protect me in my current condition from any disturbance."

When Kant emerged from his silence in 1781, the result was the [*Critique of Pure Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Pure_Reason). Although now uniformly recognized as one of the greatest works in the history of philosophy, this *Critique* was largely ignored upon its initial publication. The book was long, over 800 pages in the original German edition, and written in a convoluted style. It received few reviews, and these granted it no significance. Kant's former student, [Johann Gottfried Herder](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Gottfried_Herder) criticized it for placing reason as an entity worthy of criticism instead of considering the process of reasoning within the context of language and one's entire personality. Similar to [Christian Garve](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_Garve) and [Johann Georg Heinrich Feder](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Georg_Heinrich_Feder), he rejected Kant's position that space and time possessed a form which could be analyzed. Additionally, Garve and Feder also faulted Kant's Critique for not explaining differences in perception of sensations. Its density made it, as Herder said in a letter to [Johann Georg Hamann](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Georg_Hamann), a "tough nut to crack", obscured by "all this heavy gossamer". Its reception stood in stark contrast to the praise Kant had received for earlier works, such as his *Prize Essay* and shorter works that preceded the first Critique. These well-received and readable tracts include one on the [earthquake in Lisbon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1755_Lisbon_earthquake) that was so popular that it was sold by the page. Prior to the change in course documented in the first Critique, his books sold well, and by the time he published [*Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Observations_on_the_Feeling_of_the_Beautiful_and_Sublime) in 1764 he had become a notable popular author. Kant was disappointed with the first Critique's reception. Recognizing the need to clarify the original treatise, Kant wrote the [*Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prolegomena_to_any_Future_Metaphysics) in 1783 as a summary of its main views. Shortly thereafter, Kant's friend Johann Friedrich Schultz (1739–1805) (professor of mathematics) published *Erläuterungen ūber des Herrn Professor Kant Critik der reinen Vernunft* (Kōnigsberg, 1784), which was a brief but very accurate commentary on Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*.

Kant's reputation gradually rose through the latter portion of the 1780s, sparked by a series of important works: the 1784 essay, "[Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/What_is_Enlightenment%3F)"; 1785's [*Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groundwork_of_the_Metaphysics_of_Morals) (his first work on moral philosophy); and, from 1786, [*Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphysical_Foundations_of_Natural_Science)*.* But Kant's fame ultimately arrived from an unexpected source. In 1786, [Karl Leonhard Reinhold](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Leonhard_Reinhold) published a series of public letters on Kantian philosophy. In these letters, Reinhold framed Kant's philosophy as a response to the central intellectual controversy of the era: the [Pantheism Dispute](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pantheism_Dispute). [Friedrich Jacobi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Jacobi) had accused the recently deceased [Gotthold Ephraim Lessing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gotthold_Ephraim_Lessing) (a distinguished dramatist and philosophical essayist) of [Spinozism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spinozism). Such a charge, tantamount to atheism, was vigorously denied by Lessing's friend [Moses Mendelssohn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moses_Mendelssohn), leading to a bitter public dispute among partisans. The controversy gradually escalated into a debate about the values of the Enlightenment and the value of reason. Reinhold maintained in his letters that Kant's [*Critique of Pure Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Pure_Reason) could settle this dispute by defending the authority and bounds of reason. Reinhold's letters were widely read and made Kant the most famous philosopher of his era.

**Mature work**

Kant published a second edition of the [*Critique of Pure Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Pure_Reason) ([*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kritik_der_reinen_Vernunft)) in 1787, heavily revising the first parts of the book. Most of his subsequent work focused on other areas of philosophy. He continued to develop his moral philosophy, notably in 1788's [*Critique of Practical Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Practical_Reason) (known as the second *Critique*) and 1797's [*Metaphysics of Morals*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphysics_of_Morals). The 1790 [*Critique of Judgment*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Judgment) (the third *Critique*) applied the Kantian system to aesthetics and [teleology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teleology).

In 1792, Kant's attempt to publish the Second of the four Pieces of [*Religion within the Bounds of Bare Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religion_within_the_Bounds_of_Bare_Reason), in the journal *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, met with opposition from the King's [censorship](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Censorship) commission, which had been established that same year in the context of the [French Revolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Revolution). Kant then arranged to have all four pieces published as a book, routing it through the philosophy department at the University of Jena to avoid the need for theological censorship. This insubordination earned him a now famous reprimand from the King. When he nevertheless published a second edition in 1794, the censor was so irate that he arranged for a royal order that required Kant never to publish or even speak publicly about religion. Kant then published his response to the King's reprimand and explained himself, in the preface of *The Conflict of the Faculties*.

He also wrote a number of semi-popular essays on history, religion, politics and other topics. These works were well received by Kant's contemporaries and confirmed his preeminent status in 18th-century philosophy. There were several journals devoted solely to defending and criticizing Kantian philosophy. Despite his success, philosophical trends were moving in another direction. Many of Kant's most important disciples (including [Reinhold](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Leonhard_Reinhold), [Beck](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jakob_Sigismund_Beck) and [Fichte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Gottlieb_Fichte)) transformed the Kantian position into increasingly radical forms of idealism. The progressive stages of revision of Kant's teachings marked the emergence of [German Idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_Idealism). Kant opposed these developments and publicly denounced Fichte in an open letter in 1799. It was one of his final acts expounding a stance on philosophical questions. In 1800, a student of Kant named Gottlob Benjamin Jäsche (1762–1842) published a manual of logic for teachers called *Logik*, which he had prepared at Kant's request. Jäsche prepared the *Logik* using a copy of a textbook in logic by Georg Freidrich Meier entitled *Auszug aus der Vernunftlehre*, in which Kant had written copious notes and annotations. The *Logik* has been considered of fundamental importance to Kant's philosophy, and the understanding of it. The great 19th-century logician [Charles Sanders Peirce](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Sanders_Peirce) remarked, in an incomplete review of [Thomas Kingsmill Abbott](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Kingsmill_Abbott)'s English translation of the introduction to *Logik*, that "Kant's whole philosophy turns upon his logic." Also, [Robert Schirokauer Hartman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Schirokauer_Hartman) and Wolfgang Schwarz, wrote in the translators' introduction to their English translation of the *Logik*, "Its importance lies not only in its significance for the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the second part of which is a restatement of fundamental tenets of the *Logic*, but in its position within the whole of Kant's work."

Kant's health, long poor, worsened and he died at Königsberg on 12 February 1804, uttering "*Es ist gut*" ("It is good") before expiring. His unfinished final work was published as *Opus Postumum*.

Kant wrote a book discussing his theory of virtue in terms of independence which he believed was "a viable modern alternative to more familiar Greek views about virtue". This book is often criticized for its hostile tone and for not articulating his thoughts about autocracy comprehensibly. In the self-governance model of Aristotelian virtue, the non-rational part of the soul can be made to listen to reason through training. Although Kantian self-governance appears to involve "a rational crackdown on appetites and emotions" with lack of harmony between reason and emotion, Kantian virtue denies requiring "self-conquest, self-suppression, or self-silencing". They dispute that "the self-mastery constitutive of virtue is ultimately mastery over our tendency of will to give priority to appetite or emotion unregulated by duty, it does not require extirpating, suppressing, or silencing sensibility in general".

**Philosophy**

Immanuel Kant by [Carle Vernet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carle_Vernet) (1758-1836)

In Kant's essay "[Answering the Question: What is Enlightenment?](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/What_is_Enlightenment%3F)", Kant defined the Enlightenment as an age shaped by the [Latin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Latin) motto [*Sapere aude*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sapere_aude) ("Dare to be wise"). Kant maintained that one ought to think autonomously, free of the dictates of external [authority](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Authority). His work reconciled many of the differences between the [rationalist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rationalism) and [empiricist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empiricism) traditions of the 18th century. He had a decisive impact on the [Romantic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romanticism) and [German Idealist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_Idealism) philosophies of the 19th century. His work has also been a starting point for many 20th century philosophers.

Kant asserted that, because of the limitations of argumentation in the absence of irrefutable [evidence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evidence#Evidence_in_Problems), no one could really know whether there is a God and an afterlife or not. For the sake of morality and as a ground for reason, Kant asserted, people are justified in believing in God, even though they could never know God's presence empirically. He explained:

All the preparations of reason, therefore, in what may be called pure philosophy, are in reality directed to those three problems only [God, the soul, and freedom]. However, these three elements in themselves still hold independent, proportional, objective weight individually. Moreover, in a collective relational context; namely, to know *what ought to be done*: if the will is free, if there is a God, and if there is a future [world](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_%28philosophy%29). As this concerns our actions with reference to the highest aims of life, we see that the ultimate intention of nature in her wise provision was really, in the constitution of our reason, directed to moral interests only.

The sense of an enlightened approach and the [critical method](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientific_method) required that "If one cannot prove that a thing *is,* he may try to prove that it is *not.* If he fails to do neither (as often occurs), he may still ask whether it is in his *interest* to *accept* one or the other of the alternatives hypothetically, from the theoretical or the practical point of view. Hence the question no longer is as to whether [perpetual peace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perpetual_peace) is a real thing or not a real thing, or as to whether we may not be deceiving ourselves when we adopt the former alternative, but we must *act* on the supposition of its being real." The presupposition of God, soul, and freedom was then a practical concern, for "Morality, by itself, constitutes a system, but happiness does not, unless it is distributed in exact proportion to morality. This, however, is possible in an intelligible world only under a wise author and ruler. Reason compels us to admit such a ruler, together with life in such a world, which we must consider as future life, or else all moral laws are to be considered as idle dreams... ."

Kant claimed to have created a "[Copernican revolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copernican_Revolution_%28metaphor%29)" in philosophy. This involved two interconnected foundations of his "[critical philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_philosophy)":

* the [epistemology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epistemology) of [transcendental idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transcendental_idealism) and
* the [moral philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral_philosophy) of the autonomy of practical reason.

These teachings placed the active, rational human [subject](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subject_%28philosophy%29) at the center of the cognitive and moral worlds. Kant argued that the rational order of the world as known by science was not just the accidental accumulation of sense perceptions.

Conceptual unification and integration is carried out by the mind through [concepts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concept) or the "categories of the understanding" operating on the perceptual manifold within [space and time](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_and_time). The latter are not concepts, but are forms of sensibility that are *a priori* necessary conditions for any possible experience. Thus the objective order of nature and the causal necessity that operates within it depend on the mind's processes, the product of the rule-based activity that Kant called, "[synthesis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_priori_and_a_posteriori)." There is much discussion among Kant scholars about the correct interpretation of this train of thought.

The 'two-world' interpretation regards Kant's position as a statement of epistemological limitation, that we are not able to transcend the bounds of our own mind, meaning that we cannot access the "[thing-in-itself](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thing-in-itself)". However, Kant also speaks of the thing in itself or *transcendental object* as a product of the (human) understanding as it attempts to conceive of objects in abstraction from the conditions of sensibility. Following this line of thought, some interpreters have argued that the thing in itself does not represent a separate ontological domain but simply a way of considering objects by means of the understanding alone – this is known as the two-aspect view.

The notion of the "[thing in itself](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thing_in_itself)" was much discussed by philosophers after Kant. It was argued that because the "thing in itself" was unknowable, its existence must not be assumed. Rather than arbitrarily switching to an account that was ungrounded in anything supposed to be the "real," as did the German Idealists, another group arose to ask how our (presumably reliable) accounts of a coherent and rule-abiding universe were actually grounded. This new kind of philosophy became known as [Phenomenology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phenomenology_%28philosophy%29), and its founder was [Edmund Husserl](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Husserl).

With regard to [morality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morality), Kant argued that the source of the [good](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goodness_and_value_theory) lies not in anything outside the [human](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human) subject, either in [nature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nature) or given by [God](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God), but rather is only the good will itself. A good will is one that acts from duty in accordance with the universal moral law that the autonomous human being freely gives itself. This law obliges one to treat humanity – understood as rational agency, and represented through oneself as well as others – as an [end in itself](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/End_in_itself) rather than (merely) as [means](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Means_%28philosophy%29) to other ends the individual might hold. This necessitates practical self-reflection in which we universalize our reasons.

These ideas have largely framed or influenced all subsequent philosophical discussion and analysis. The specifics of Kant's account generated immediate and lasting controversy. Nevertheless, his theses – that the [mind](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mind) itself necessarily makes a constitutive contribution to its [knowledge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge), that this contribution is transcendental rather than psychological, that philosophy involves self-critical activity, that morality is rooted in human freedom, and that to act autonomously is to act according to rational moral principles – have all had a lasting effect on subsequent philosophy.

**Theory of perception**

Main article: [Critique of Pure Reason](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Pure_Reason)

Kant defines his theory of perception in his influential 1781 work the [*Critique of Pure Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Pure_Reason), which has often been cited as the most significant volume of metaphysics and [epistemology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epistemology) in modern philosophy. Kant maintains that our understanding of the external world had its foundations not merely in experience, but in both experience and *a priori* [concepts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Concept), thus offering a **non-empiricist critique of rationalist philosophy**, which is what he and others referred to as his "[Copernican revolution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copernican_Revolution_%28metaphor%29)".

Firstly, Kant [distinguishes between analytic and synthetic propositions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Analytic%E2%80%93synthetic_distinction):

1. Analytic proposition: a proposition whose predicate concept is contained in its subject concept; *e.g.*, "All bachelors are unmarried," or, "All bodies take up space."
2. Synthetic proposition: a proposition whose predicate concept is not contained in its subject concept; *e.g.*, "All bachelors are happy," or, "All bodies have weight."

An analytic proposition is true by nature of the meaning of the words in the sentence — we require no further knowledge than a grasp of the language to understand this proposition (a theory put forward by Weiner in his papers on expressionism). On the other hand, a synthetic statement is one that tells us something about the world. The truth or falsehood of synthetic statements derives from something outside their linguistic content. In this instance, weight is not a necessary [predicate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Predicate_%28grammar%29) of the body; until we are told the heaviness of the body we do not know that it has weight. In this case, experience of the body is required before its heaviness becomes clear. Before Kant's first Critique, empiricists (cf. [Hume](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Hume)) and rationalists (cf. [Leibniz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gottfried_Wilhelm_Leibniz)) assumed that all synthetic statements required experience to be known.

Kant, however, contests this: he claims that elementary mathematics, like arithmetic, is synthetic *a priori*, in that its statements provide new knowledge, but knowledge that is not derived from experience. This becomes part of his over-all argument for [transcendental idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transcendental_idealism). That is, he argues that the possibility of experience depends on certain [necessary conditions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Necessary_and_sufficient_conditions) — which he calls *a priori* forms — and that these conditions structure and hold true of the world of experience. In so doing, his main claims in the "[Transcendental Aesthetic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Pure_Reason#I._Transcendental_Doctrine_of_Elements)" are that mathematic judgments are synthetic *a priori* and in addition, that [Space](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space) and [Time](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time) are not derived from experience but rather are its preconditions.

Once we have grasped the functions of basic arithmetic, we do not need any empirical experience to know that 100 + 100 = 200, and so it appears that arithmetic is analytic. However, that it is analytic can be disproved by considering the calculation 5 + 7 = 12: there is nothing in the numbers 5 and 7 by which the number 12 can be inferred. Thus "5 + 7" and "the cube root of 1,728" or "12" are not analytic because their reference is the same but their sense is not — the mathematical judgment "5 + 7 = 12" tells us something new about the world. It is self-evident, and undeniably *a priori*, but at the same time it is synthetic. Thus Kant proved that a proposition can be synthetic and known a priori.

Kant asserts that experience is based both on the perception of external objects and *a priori* knowledge. The external world, he writes, provides those things that we sense. But it is our mind that processes this information and gives it order, allowing us to comprehend it. Our mind supplies the conditions of space and time to experience objects. According to the "transcendental unity of apperception", the concepts of the mind (Understanding) and the perceptions or intuitions that garner information from phenomena (Sensibility) are synthesized by comprehension. Without the concepts, perceptions are nondescript; without the perceptions, concepts are meaningless — thus the famous statement, "Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions (perceptions) without concepts are blind."

Kant also claims that an external environment is necessary for the establishment of the self. Although Kant would want to argue that there is no empirical way of observing the self, we can see the logical necessity of the self when we observe that we can have different perceptions of the external environment over time. By uniting all of these general representations into one global representation, we can see how a transcendental self emerges. "I am therefore conscious of the identical self in regard to the manifold of the representations that are given to me in an intuition because I call them all together my representations."

**Categories of the Faculty of Understanding**

*See also:* [*Category (Kant)*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category_%28Kant%29)

Kant statue in [Belo Horizonte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belo_Horizonte), Brazil

Kant deemed it obvious that we have some objective knowledge of the world, such as, say, Newtonian physics. But this knowledge relies on [synthetic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Analytic-synthetic_distinction), *a priori* laws of nature, like causality and substance. The problem, then, is how this is possible. Kant's solution was to reason that the [subject](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subject_%28philosophy%29#The_subject_in_German_idealism) must supply laws that make experience of objects possible, and that these laws are the synthetic, *a priori* laws of nature that we know apply to all objects before we experience them. So, to deduce all these laws, Kant examined experience in general, dissecting in it what is supplied by the mind from what is supplied by the given intuitions. What has just been explicated is commonly called a transcendental reduction.

To begin with, Kant's distinction between the [*a posteriori*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empirical_evidence) being [contingent](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contingency_%28philosophy%29) and particular knowledge, and the *a priori* being universal and necessary knowledge, must be kept in mind. For if we merely connect two intuitions together in a perceiving subject, the knowledge is always subjective because it is derived *a posteriori,* when what is desired is for the knowledge to be objective, that is, for the two intuitions to refer to the object and hold good of it necessarily universally for anyone at any time, not just the perceiving subject in its current condition. What else is equivalent to objective knowledge besides the *a priori,* that is to say, universal and necessary knowledge? Nothing else, and hence before knowledge can be objective, it must be incorporated under an *a priori* category of *the understanding*.

For example, say a subject says, "The sun shines on the stone; the stone grows warm," which is all he perceives in perception. His judgment is contingent and holds no necessity. But if he says, "The sunshine causes the stone to warm," he subsumes the perception under the category of causality, which is not found in the perception, and necessarily synthesizes the concept sunshine with the concept heat, producing a necessarily universally true judgment.

To explain the categories in more detail, they are the preconditions of the construction of objects in the mind. Indeed, to even think of the sun and stone presupposes the category of subsistence, that is, substance. For the categories synthesize the random data of the sensory manifold into intelligible objects. This means that the categories are also the most abstract things one can say of any object whatsoever, and hence one can have an *a priori* cognition of the totality of all objects of experience if one can list all of them. To do so, Kant formulates another transcendental deduction.

Judgments are, for Kant, the preconditions of any thought. Man thinks via judgments, so all possible judgments must be listed and the perceptions connected within them put aside, so as to make it possible to examine the moments when *the understanding* is engaged in constructing judgments. For the categories are equivalent to these moments, in that they are concepts of intuitions in general, so far as they are determined by these moments universally and necessarily. Thus by listing all the moments, one can deduce from them all of the categories.

One may now ask: How many possible judgments are there? Kant believed that all the possible propositions within Aristotle's [syllogistic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syllogism) logic are equivalent to all possible judgments, and that all the logical operators within the propositions are equivalent to the moments of the understanding within judgments. Thus he listed Aristotle's system in four groups of three: quantity (universal, particular, singular), quality (affirmative, negative, infinite), relation (categorical, hypothetical, disjunctive) and modality (problematic, assertoric, apodeictic). The parallelism with Kant's categories is obvious: quantity (unity, plurality, totality), quality (reality, negation, limitation), relation (substance, cause, community) and modality (possibility, existence, necessity).

The fundamental building blocks of experience, i.e. objective knowledge, are now in place. First there is the sensibility, which supplies the mind with intuitions, and then there is the understanding, which produces judgments of these intuitions and can subsume them under categories. These categories lift the intuitions up out of the subject's current state of consciousness and place them within consciousness in general, producing universally necessary knowledge. For the categories are innate in any rational being, so any intuition thought within a category in one mind is necessarily subsumed and understood identically in any mind. In other words we filter what we see and hear.

**Transcendental schema doctrine**

*See also:* [*Schema (Kant)*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schema_%28Kant%29)

Kant ran into a problem with his theory that the mind plays a part in producing objective knowledge. Intuitions and categories are entirely disparate, so how can they interact? Kant's solution is the (transcendental) schema: a priori principles by which the transcendental imagination connects concepts with intuitions through time. All the principles are temporally bound, for if a concept is purely a priori, as the categories are, then they must apply for all times. Hence there are principles such as *substance is that which endures through time*, and *the cause must always be prior to the effect*.

**Moral philosophy**

Immanuel Kant

Kant developed his moral philosophy in three works: [*Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groundwork_of_the_Metaphysic_of_Morals) (1785), [*Critique of Practical Reason*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Practical_Reason) (1788), and [*Metaphysics of Morals*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphysics_of_Morals) (1797).

In the *Groundwork*, Kant's method involves trying to convert our everyday, obvious, rational knowledge of morality into philosophical knowledge. The latter two works followed a method of using "practical reason", which is based only on things about which reason can tell us, and not deriving any principles from experience, to reach conclusions which can be applied to the world of experience (in the second part of *The Metaphysic of Morals*).

Kant is known for his theory that there is a single [moral obligation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral_obligation), which he called the "[Categorical Imperative](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Categorical_Imperative)", and is derived from the concept of [duty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duty). Kant defines the demands of the moral law as "categorical imperatives". Categorical imperatives are principles that are intrinsically valid; they are good in and of themselves; they must be obeyed by everyone in all situations and circumstances, if our behavior is to observe the moral law. The Categorical Imperative generates all other moral obligations, and they can be tested against it. Kant also stated that the moral means and ends can be applied to the categorical imperative, that rational beings can pursue certain "ends" using the appropriate "means". Ends based on physical needs or wants can create merely [hypothetical imperatives](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypothetical_imperative). The categorical imperative can only be based on something that is an "end in itself", that is, an end that is not a means to some other need, desire, or purpose. Kant believed that the moral law is a principle of [reason](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reason) itself, and is not based on contingent facts about the world, such as what would make us happy, but to act on the moral law which has no other motive than "worthiness of being happy". Accordingly, he believed that moral obligation applies only to rational agents.

Unlike a hypothetical imperative, a categorical imperative is an unconditional obligation; that is, it has the force of an obligation regardless of our will or desires In *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals* (1785) Kant enumerated three formulations of the categorical imperative that he believed to be roughly equivalent.

Kant believed that if an action is not done with the motive of duty, then it is without moral value. He thought that every action should have pure intention behind it; otherwise it was meaningless. The final result was not the most important aspect of an action, but how the person felt while carrying out the action was the time at which value was set to the result.

In *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, Kant also posited the "counter-[utilitarian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utilitarian) idea that there is a difference between preferences and values, and that considerations of individual rights temper calculations of aggregate utility", a concept that is an axiom in economics:

Everything has either a *price* or a *dignity*. Whatever has a price can be replaced by something else as its equivalent; on the other hand, whatever is above all price, and therefore admits of no equivalent, has a dignity. But that which constitutes the condition under which alone something can be an end in itself does not have mere relative worth, i.e., price, but an intrinsic worth, i.e., a dignity. (p. 53, italics in original).

A phrase quoted by Kant, which is used to summarize the counter-utilitarian nature of his moral philosophy, is [*Fiat justitia, pereat mundus*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiat_justitia%2C_pereat_mundus), ("Let justice be done, though the world perish"), which he translates loosely as "Let justice reign even if all the rascals in the world should perish from it". This appears in his 1795 [*Perpetual Peace*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perpetual_Peace%3A_A_Philosophical_Sketch) ([Zum ewigen Frieden. Ein philosophischer Entwurf.](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zum_ewigen_Frieden)), Appendix 1.

**First formulation**

The first formulation (Formula of Universal Law) of the moral imperative "requires that the maxims be chosen as though they should hold as universal [laws of nature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_law)" . This formulation in principle has as its supreme law the creed "Always act according to that maxim whose universality as a law you can at the same time will" and is the "only condition under which a will can never come into conflict with itself [....]"

One interpretation of the first formulation is called the "universalizability test". An agent's maxim, according to Kant, is his "subjective principle of human actions": that is, what the agent believes is his reason to act. The universalisability test has five steps:

1. Find the agent's maxim (i.e., an action paired with its motivation). Take for example the declaration "I will lie for personal benefit". Lying is the action; the motivation is to fulfill some sort of desire. Paired together, they form the maxim.
2. Imagine a possible world in which everyone in a similar position to the real-world agent followed that maxim. With no exception of one's self. This is in order for you to hold people to the same principle required of yourself.
3. Decide whether any contradictions or irrationalities arise in the possible world as a result of following the maxim.
4. If a contradiction or irrationality arises, acting on that maxim is not allowed in the real world.
5. If there is no contradiction, then acting on that maxim is permissible, and is sometimes required.

(For a modern parallel, see [John Rawls'](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Rawls) hypothetical situation, the [original position](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Original_position).)

**Second formulation**

The second formulation (or Formula of the End in Itself) holds that "the rational being, as by its nature an end and thus as an end in itself, must serve in every maxim as the condition restricting all merely relative and arbitrary ends". The principle dictates that you "act with reference to every rational being (whether yourself or another) so that it is an end in itself in your maxim", meaning that the rational being is "the basis of all maxims of action" and "must be treated never as a mere means but as the supreme limiting condition in the use of all means, i.e., as an end at the same time".

**Third formulation**

The third formulation (Formula of Autonomy) is a synthesis of the first two and is the basis for the "complete determination of all maxims". It says "that all maxims which stem from autonomous legislation ought to harmonize with a possible realm of ends as with a realm of nature". In principle, "So act as if your maxims should serve at the same time as the universal law (of all rational beings)", meaning that we should so act that we may think of ourselves as "a member in the universal realm of ends", [legislating](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legislating) universal laws through our maxims (that is, a [code of conduct](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Code_of_conduct)), in a "possible realm of ends". None may elevate themselves above the universal law, therefore it is one's duty to follow the maxim(s).

***Religion Within the Limits of Reason***

Kant articulates his strongest criticisms of the organization and practices of religious organizations to those that encourage what he sees as a religion of counterfeit service to God. Among the major targets of his criticism are external ritual, superstition and a hierarchical church order. He sees all of these as efforts to make oneself pleasing to God in ways other than conscientious adherence to the principle of moral rightness in choosing one's actions. The severity of Kant's criticisms on these matters, along with his rejection of the possibility of theoretical proofs for the existence of God and his philosophical re-interpretation of some basic Christian doctrines, allow interpretations that see Kant as thoroughly hostile to religion in general and Christianity in particular (e.g., Walsh 1967). Nevertheless, other interpreters consider that Kant was trying to mark off a defensible rational core of Christian belief. Kant sees in [Jesus Christ](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_Christ) the affirmation of a "pure moral disposition of the heart" that "can make man well-pleasing to God".

**Idea of freedom**

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant distinguishes between the transcendental idea of freedom, which as a psychological concept is "mainly empirical" and refers to "the question whether we must admit a power of spontaneously beginning a series of successive things or states" as a real ground of necessity in regard to causality, and the practical concept of freedom as the independence of our will from the "coercion" or "necessitation through sensuous impulses". Kant finds it a source of difficulty that the practical idea of freedom is founded on the transcendental idea of freedom, but for the sake of practical interests uses the practical meaning, taking "no account of... its transcendental meaning," which he feels was properly "disposed of" in the Third Antinomy, and as an element in the question of the freedom of the will is for philosophy "a real stumbling-block" that has "embarrassed speculative reason".

Kant calls practical "everything that is possible through freedom", and the pure practical laws that are never given through sensuous conditions but are held analogously with the universal law of causality are moral laws. Reason can give us only the "pragmatic laws of free action through the senses", but pure practical laws given by reason *a priori* dictate "*what ought to be done*".

**Categories of freedom**

In the *Critique of Practical Reason*, at the end of the second Main Part of the *Analytics*, Kant introduces the categories of freedom, in analogy with the categories of understanding their practical counterparts. Kant's categories of freedom apparently function primarily as conditions for the possibility for actions (i) to be free, (ii) to be understood as free and (iii) to be morally evaluated. For Kant, although actions as theoretical objects are constituted by means of the theoretical categories, actions as practical objects (objects of practical use of reason, and which can be good or bad) are constituted by means of the categories of freedom. Only in this way can actions, as phenomena, be a consequence of freedom, and be understood and evaluated as such.

**Aesthetic philosophy**

Kant discusses the subjective nature of aesthetic qualities and experiences in [*Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Observations_on_the_Feeling_of_the_Beautiful_and_Sublime), (1764). Kant's contribution to [aesthetic theory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aesthetics) is developed in the [*Critique of Judgment*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Judgment) (1790) where he investigates the possibility and logical status of "judgments of taste." In the "Critique of Aesthetic Judgment," the first major division of the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant used the term "aesthetic" in a manner that, according to Kant scholar W.H. Walsh, differs from its modern sense. Prior to this, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, to note essential differences between judgments of taste, moral judgments, and scientific judgments, Kant abandoned the term "aesthetic" as "designating the critique of taste," noting that judgments of taste could never be "directed" by "laws *a priori*". After [A. G. Baumgarten](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Gottlieb_Baumgarten), who wrote *Aesthetica* (1750–58), Kant was one of the first philosophers to develop and integrate aesthetic theory into a unified and comprehensive philosophical system, utilizing ideas that played an integral role throughout his philosophy.

In the chapter "Analytic of the Beautiful" of the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant states that beauty is not a property of an artwork or natural phenomenon, but is instead a consciousness of the pleasure that attends the 'free play' of the imagination and the understanding. Even though it appears that we are using reason to decide what is beautiful, the judgment is not a cognitive judgment, "and is consequently not logical, but aesthetical" (§ 1). A pure judgement of taste is in fact subjective insofar as it refers to the emotional response of the subject and is based upon nothing but esteem for an object itself: it is a *disinterested* pleasure, and we feel that pure judgements of taste, i.e. judgements of beauty, lay claim to universal validity (§§20–22). It is important to note that this universal validity is not derived from a determinate concept of beauty but from *common sense* (§40). Kant also believed that a judgement of taste shares characteristics engaged in a moral judgement: both are disinterested, and we hold them to be universal. In the chapter "Analytic of the Sublime" Kant identifies the sublime as an aesthetic quality that, like beauty, is subjective, but unlike beauty refers to an indeterminate relationship between the faculties of the imagination and of reason, and shares the character of moral judgments in the use of reason. The feeling of the sublime, itself officially divided into two distinct modes (the mathematical and the dynamical sublime), describes two subjective moments, both of which concern the relationship of the faculty of the imagination to reason. Some commentators, however, argue that Kant's critical philosophy contains a third kind of the sublime, the moral sublime, which is the aesthetic response to the moral law or a representation thereof, and a development of the "noble" sublime in Kant's theory of 1764. The mathematical sublime is situated in the failure of the imagination to comprehend natural objects that appear boundless and formless, or appear "absolutely great" (§ 23–25). This imaginative failure is then recuperated through the pleasure taken in reason's assertion of the concept of infinity. In this move the faculty of reason proves itself superior to our fallible sensible self (§§ 25–26). In the dynamical sublime there is the sense of annihilation of the sensible self as the imagination tries to comprehend a vast might. This power of nature threatens us but through the resistance of reason to such sensible annihilation, the subject feels a pleasure and a sense of the human moral vocation. This appreciation of moral feeling through exposure to the [sublime](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sublime_%28philosophy%29) helps to develop moral character.

Kant had developed the distinction between an object of art as a material value subject to the conventions of society and the transcendental condition of the judgment of taste as a "refined" value in the propositions of his *Idea of A Universal History* (1784). In the Fourth and Fifth Theses of that work he identified all art as the "fruits of unsociableness" due to men's "antagonism in society", and in the Seventh Thesis asserted that while such material property is indicative of a civilized state, only the ideal of morality and the universalization of refined value through the improvement of the mind of man "belongs to culture".

**Political philosophy**

Main article: [Political philosophy of Immanuel Kant](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_philosophy_of_Immanuel_Kant)

In *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, Kant listed several conditions that he thought necessary for ending wars and creating a lasting peace. They included a world of [constitutional republics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitutional_republic). His [classical republican](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_republicanism) theory was extended in the *Science of Right*, the first part of the [Metaphysics of Morals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphysics_of_Morals) (1797).

Kant's political thought can be summarized as republican government and international organization. "In more characteristically Kantian terms, it is doctrine of the state based upon the law ([Rechtsstaat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rechtsstaat)) and of eternal peace. Indeed, in each of these formulations, both terms express the same idea: that of legal constitution or of 'peace through law'. Taken simply by itself, Kant's political philosophy, being essentially a legal doctrine, rejects by definition the opposition between moral education and the play of passions as alternate foundations for social life. The state is defined as the union of men under law. The state rightly so called is constituted by laws which are necessary a priori because they flow from the very concept of law. A regime can be judged by no other criteria nor be assigned any other functions, than those proper to the lawful order as such."

He opposed "democracy," which at his time meant [direct democracy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Direct_democracy), believing that majority rule posed a threat to individual liberty. He stated, "...democracy is, properly speaking, necessarily a despotism, because it establishes an executive power in which 'all' decide for or even against one who does not agree; that is, 'all,' who are not quite all, decide, and this is a contradiction of the general will with itself and with freedom." As with most writers at the time, he distinguished three forms of government i.e. democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy with [mixed government](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mixed_government) as the most ideal form of it.

**Anthropology**

Kant lectured on anthropology for over 25 years. His *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* was published in 1798. (This was the subject of [Michel Foucault](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michel_Foucault)'s doctoral dissertation.) Kant's Lectures on Anthropology were published for the first time in 1997 in German. The former was translated into English and published by the Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy series in 2006.

Kant was among the first people of his time to introduce anthropology as an intellectual area of study long before the field gained popularity. As a result, his texts are considered to have advanced the field. Kant's point of view also influenced the works of philosophers after him such as Martin Heidegger, Paul Ricoeur, and Jean Greisch.

Kant viewed anthropology in two broad categories. One category was the physiological approach which he referred to as "what nature makes of the human being". The other category was the pragmatic approach which explored the things a human "can and should make of himself".

**Influence**

Kant's influence on Western thought has been profound. Over and above his influence on specific thinkers, Kant changed the framework within which philosophical inquiry has been carried out. He accomplished a [paradigm shift](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paradigm_shift): very little philosophy is now carried out in the style of pre-Kantian philosophy. This shift consists in several closely related innovations that have become axiomatic, in philosophy itself and in the social sciences and humanities generally:

* Kant's "Copernican revolution", that placed the role of the human subject or knower at the center of inquiry into our knowledge, such that it is impossible to philosophize about things as they are independently of us or of how they are for us;
* His invention of critical philosophy, that is of the notion of being able to discover and systematically explore possible inherent limits to our ability to know through philosophical reasoning
* His creation of the concept of "conditions of possibility", as in his notion of "the conditions of possible experience" – that is that things, knowledge, and forms of consciousness rest on prior conditions that make them possible, so that, to understand or to know them, we must first understand these conditions
* His theory that objective experience is actively constituted or constructed by the functioning of the human mind
* His notion of moral autonomy as central to humanity
* His assertion of the principle that human beings should be treated as ends rather than as means

Some or all of these Kantian ideas can be seen in schools of thought as different from one another as [German Idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_Idealism), [Marxism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marxism), [positivism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Positivism), [phenomenology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phenomenology_%28philosophy%29), [existentialism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Existentialism), [critical theory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_theory), [linguistic philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linguistic_philosophy), [structuralism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Structuralism), [post-structuralism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post-structuralism), and [deconstructionism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deconstructionism).

**Historical influence**

Statue of Immanuel Kant in [Kaliningrad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaliningrad) ([Königsberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%B6nigsberg)), Russia. Replica by [Harald Haacke](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Harald_Haacke&action=edit&redlink=1) ([de](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harald_Haacke)) of the original by [Christian Daniel Rauch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_Daniel_Rauch) lost in 1945.

During his own life, there was much critical attention paid to his thought. He had an influence on [Reinhold](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Leonhard_Reinhold), [Fichte](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Gottlieb_Fichte), [Schelling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Wilhelm_Joseph_von_Schelling), [Hegel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georg_Wilhelm_Friedrich_Hegel), and [Novalis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Novalis) during the 1780s and 1790s. The school of thinking known as [German Idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_Idealism) developed from his writings. The German Idealists Fichte and Schelling, for example, tried to bring traditional "metaphysically" laden notions like "the Absolute", "God", and "Being" into the scope of Kant's critical thought. In so doing, the German Idealists tried to reverse Kant's view that we cannot know what we cannot observe.

Hegel was one of Kant's first major critics. In response to what he saw as Kant's abstract and formal account, Hegel brought about an ethic focused on the "ethical life" of the community. But Hegel's notion of "ethical life" is meant to subsume, rather than replace, [Kantian ethics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kantian_ethics). And Hegel can be seen as trying to defend Kant's idea of freedom as going beyond finite "desires", by means of reason. Thus, in contrast to later critics like Nietzsche or Russell, Hegel shares some of Kant's most basic concerns.

Kant's thinking on religion was used in Britain to challenge the decline in religious faith in the nineteenth century. British Catholic writers, notably [G. K. Chesterton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G._K._Chesterton) and [Hilaire Belloc](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hilaire_Belloc), followed this approach. [Ronald Englefield](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Englefield) debated this movement, and Kant's use of language. See Englefield's article, reprinted in Englefield. Criticisms of Kant were common in the realist views of the new positivism at that time.

[Arthur Schopenhauer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Schopenhauer) was strongly influenced by Kant's [transcendental idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transcendental_idealism). He, like [G. E. Schulze](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G._E._Schulze), [Jacobi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Heinrich_Jacobi), and Fichte before him, was critical of Kant's theory of the thing in itself. Things in themselves, they argued, are neither the cause of what we observe nor are they completely beyond our access. Ever since the first *Critique of Pure Reason* philosophers have been critical of Kant's theory of the thing in itself. Many have argued, if such a thing exists beyond experience then one cannot posit that it affects us causally, since that would entail stretching the category 'causality' beyond the realm of experience. For a review of this problem and the relevant literature see *The Thing in Itself and the Problem of Affection* in the revised edition of Henry Allison's *Kant's Transcendental Idealism*. For Schopenhauer things in themselves do not exist outside the non-rational will. The world, as Schopenhauer would have it, is the striving and largely unconscious will. Michael Kelly, in the preface to his 1910 book *Kant's Ethics and Schopenhauer's Criticism*, stated: "Of Kant it may be said that what is good and true in his philosophy would have been buried with him, were it not for Schopenhauer...."

With the success and wide influence of Hegel's writings, Kant's influence began to wane, though there was in Germany a movement that hailed a return to Kant in the 1860s, beginning with the publication of *Kant und die Epigonen* in 1865 by [Otto Liebmann](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Otto_Liebmann). His motto was "Back to Kant", and a re-examination of his ideas began (See [Neo-Kantianism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neo-Kantianism)). During the turn of the 20th century there was an important revival of Kant's theoretical philosophy, known as the [Marburg School](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marburg_School), represented in the work of [Hermann Cohen](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermann_Cohen), [Paul Natorp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Natorp), [Ernst Cassirer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernst_Cassirer), and anti-Neo-Kantian [Nicolai Hartmann](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicolai_Hartmann).

Kant's notion of "Critique" has been quite influential. The Early German Romantics, especially [Friedrich Schlegel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karl_Wilhelm_Friedrich_Schlegel) in his "Athenaeum Fragments", used Kant's self-reflexive conception of criticism in their Romantic theory of poetry. Also in [Aesthetics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aesthetics), [Clement Greenberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clement_Greenberg), in his classic essay "Modernist Painting", uses Kantian criticism, what Greenberg refers to as "immanent criticism", to justify the aims of [Abstract painting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abstract_Art), a movement Greenberg saw as aware of the key limitiaton—flatness—that makes up the medium of painting. French philosopher [Michel Foucault](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michel_Foucault) was also greatly influenced by Kant's notion of "Critique" and wrote several pieces on Kant for a re-thinking of the Enlightenment as a form of "critical thought". He went so far as to classify his own philosophy as a "critical history of modernity, rooted in Kant".

Kant believed that mathematical truths were forms of [synthetic a priori](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synthetic_a_priori) knowledge, which means they are necessary and universal, yet known through intuition. Kant's often brief remarks about [mathematics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mathematics) influenced the mathematical school known as [intuitionism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intuitionism), a movement in [philosophy of mathematics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_mathematics) opposed to [Hilbert's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Hilbert) [formalism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Formalism_%28mathematics%29), and the [logicism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Logicism) of [Frege](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frege) and [Bertrand Russell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bertrand_Russell).

**Influence on modern thinkers**

West German postage stamp, 1974, commemorating the 250th anniversary of Kant's birth

With his [*Perpetual Peace*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perpetual_Peace), Kant is considered to have foreshadowed many of the ideas that have come to form the [democratic peace theory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_peace_theory), one of the main controversies in [political science](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_science).

Prominent recent Kantians include the British philosopher [P. F. Strawson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P._F._Strawson), the American philosophers [Wilfrid Sellars](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilfrid_Sellars) and [Christine Korsgaard](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christine_Korsgaard). Due to the influence of Strawson and Sellars, among others, there has been a renewed interest in Kant's view of the mind. Central to many debates in [philosophy of psychology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_psychology) and [cognitive science](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cognitive_science) is Kant's conception of the unity of consciousness.

[Jürgen Habermas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J%C3%BCrgen_Habermas) and [John Rawls](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Rawls) are two significant political and moral philosophers whose work is strongly influenced by Kant's moral philosophy. They have each argued against relativism, supporting the Kantian view that universality is essential to any viable moral philosophy.

Kant's influence also has extended to the social, behavioral, and physical sciences, as in the sociology of [Max Weber](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_Weber), the psychology of [Jean Piaget](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Piaget), and the linguistics of [Noam Chomsky](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Noam_Chomsky). Kant's work on mathematics and synthetic a priori knowledge is also cited by theoretical physicist [Albert Einstein](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert_Einstein) as an early influence on his intellectual development. Because of the thoroughness of the Kantian paradigm shift, his influence extends to thinkers who neither specifically refer to his work nor use his terminology.

Scholars have shown that Kant's critical ethos has also inspired nonwestern political thinkers, including the Muslim political reformer [Tariq Ramadan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tariq_Ramadan).

**Tomb and statue**

Kant's tomb in [Kaliningrad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaliningrad), 2007

5 DM 1974 D silver coin commemorating the 250th birthday of Immanuel Kant in [Königsberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%B6nigsberg)

Kant's [tomb](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tomb) is today in a [mausoleum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mausoleum) adjoining the northeast corner of [Königsberg Cathedral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%B6nigsberg_Cathedral) in what is now known as [Kaliningrad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kaliningrad), Russia. The mausoleum was constructed by the architect [Friedrich Lahrs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Lahrs) and was finished in 1924 in time for the bicentenary of Kant's birth. Originally, Kant was buried inside the cathedral, but in 1880 his remains were moved outside and placed in a [neo-Gothic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neo-Gothic) chapel adjoining the northeast corner of the cathedral. Over the years, the chapel became dilapidated before it was demolished to make way for the mausoleum, which was built on the same spot, where it is today.

The tomb and its mausoleum are among the few artifacts of German times preserved by the [Soviets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviets) after they conquered and annexed the city. Today, many newlyweds bring flowers to the mausoleum.

Artifacts previously owned by Kant, known as *Kantiana*, were included in the [Königsberg City Museum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%B6nigsberg_City_Museum). However, the museum was destroyed during [World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II).

A replica of the statue of Kant that stood in German times in front of the main [University of Königsberg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_K%C3%B6nigsberg) building was donated by a German entity in the early 1990s and placed in the same grounds.

After the expulsion of [Königsberg's](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K%C3%B6nigsberg) German population at the end of [World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II), the University of Königsberg where Kant taught was replaced by the Russian-language Kaliningrad State University, which took up the campus and surviving buildings of the historic German university. In 2005, the university was renamed [Immanuel Kant State University of Russia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immanuel_Kant_State_University_of_Russia). The change of name was announced at a ceremony attended by President [Vladimir Putin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Putin) of Russia and Chancellor [Gerhard Schröder](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerhard_Schr%C3%B6der) of Germany, and the university formed a Kant Society, dedicated to the study of [Kantianism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kantianism).

**Criticism**

[Ayn Rand](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ayn_Rand) criticized Kant's ethics, opining, "As to Kant’s version of morality, it was appropriate to the kind of zombies that would inhabit that kind of Kantian universe: it consisted of total, abject selflessness. An action is moral, said Kant, only if one has no desire to perform it, but performs it out of a sense of duty and derives no benefit from it of any sort, neither material nor spiritual; a benefit destroys the moral value of an action. (Thus, if one has no desire to be evil, one cannot be good; if one has, one can.) Those who accept any part of Kant’s philosophy—metaphysical, epistemological or moral—deserve it".

* [Johann Georg Hamann](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Georg_Hamann)
* [Schopenhauer's criticism of the Kantian philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schopenhauer%27s_criticism_of_the_Kantian_philosophy)
* [Schopenhauer's criticism of Kant's Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schopenhauer%27s_criticism_of_Kant%27s_Groundwork_of_the_Metaphysic_of_Morals)
* [Arthur Schopenhauer's criticism of Immanuel Kant's schemata](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Schopenhauer%27s_criticism_of_Immanuel_Kant%27s_schemata)

**List of major works**

* (1746, but published in 1749) *Thoughts on the True Estimation of Vital Forces* (*Gedanken von der wahren Schätzung der lebendigen Kräfte*)
* (1755) *A New Elucidation of the First Principles of Metaphysical Cognition* (*Principiorum primorum cognitionis metaphysicae nova dilucidatio* (Doctoral Thesis))
* (1755) [*Universal Natural History and Theory of Heaven*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_Natural_History_and_Theory_of_Heaven) (*Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels*)
* (1756) *Monadologia Physica*
* (1762) [*The False Subtlety of the Four Syllogistic Figures*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_False_Subtlety_of_the_Four_Syllogistic_Figures) (*Die falsche Spitzfindigkeit der vier syllogistischen Figuren*)
* (1763) [*The Only Possible Argument in Support of a Demonstration of the Existence of God*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Only_Possible_Argument_in_Support_of_a_Demonstration_of_the_Existence_of_God) (*Der einzig mögliche Beweisgrund zu einer Demonstration des Daseins Gottes*)
* (1763) *Attempt to Introduce the Concept of Negative Magnitudes into Philosophy* (*Versuch den Begriff der negativen Größen in die Weltweisheit einzuführen*)
* (1764) [*Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Observations_on_the_Feeling_of_the_Beautiful_and_Sublime) (*Beobachtungen über das Gefühl des Schönen und Erhabenen*)
* (1764) *Essay on the Illness of the Head* (*Über die Krankheit des Kopfes*)
* (1764) *Inquiry Concerning the Distinctness of the Principles of Natural Theology and Morality* (the *Prize Essay*) (*Untersuchungen über die Deutlichkeit der Grundsätze der natürlichen Theologie und der Moral*)
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|  | [***Philosophy portal***](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal%3APhilosophy) |

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* [Agnosticism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agnosticism)
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* [Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perpetual_Peace%3A_A_Philosophical_Sketch)
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* [Subjective idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subjective_idealism)

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| [Library resources](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia%3ALIBRARY) about**Immanuel Kant** |
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Any suggestion of further reading on Kant has to take cognizance of the fact that his work has dominated philosophy like no other figure after him. Nevertheless, several guideposts can be made out. In Germany, one important contemporary interpreter of Kant and the movement of [German Idealism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/German_Idealism) he began is [Dieter Henrich](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dieter_Henrich), who has some work available in English. [P.F. Strawson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/P.F._Strawson)'s "The Bounds of Sense" (1969) played a significant role in determining the contemporary reception of Kant in England and America. More recent interpreters of note in the English-speaking world include [Lewis White Beck](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis_White_Beck), [Jonathan Bennett](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jonathan_Bennett_%28philosopher%29), Henry Allison, [Paul Guyer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Guyer), [Christine Korsgaard](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christine_Korsgaard), Stephen Palmquist, [Robert B. Pippin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_B._Pippin), [Roger Scruton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Scruton), [Rudolf Makkreel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudolf_Makkreel), and [Béatrice Longuenesse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/B%C3%A9atrice_Longuenesse).

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