

From “Nine Noble Virtues”, by [Patti Wigington](#)
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In many branches of Norse Paganism, such as [Asatru](#), follow a set of guidelines known as the Nine Noble Virtues. Ásatrú, as it has been practiced in Iceland, is a religion of nature and life, stressing the harmony of the natural world and the search for harmony in the life of individuals.

“Ásatrú is a religion which teaches you how to live in harmony with your surroundings and yourself, and how to deal with the different phases of your life, how to become of age and then how to age.”
Hilmar Örn Hilmarsson, the high priest of Ásat

Courage: both physical and moral courage.

Courage isn't necessarily about running into a fight with guns blazing. It's about standing up for what you believe in and what you know to be right and just. Living your beliefs in the face of opposition requires as much courage as going into battle.

Discipline: using one's personal will to uphold honor and other virtues. Upholding the virtues is a *choice*, and it's a much simpler to just ignore them and do what society expects or what's easy. Discipline is the ability to show your courage, your loyalty, your sense of self-reliance, in the face of personal challenges.

Fidelity: remaining true. In many early heathen cultures, an oath was a sacred contract. The Nine Noble Virtues tie in together: if you fail to adhere to one, you may have trouble following the others. If you let down a friend or member of your Kindred or the Gods, you're turning your back on your entire community and all that they stand for.

Honor: one's reputation and moral compass. Our deeds, words, and reputation will outlive our bodies, and the person we are in life will be remembered for a long time. Without honor we are nothing. We remember two types of peoples from ancient times: those whose honor was so clean that they shine as examples to us and those who were so without honor that their names are cursed a thousand years after they lived.

Hospitality: The *Havamal* says:

*Fire is needed by the newcomer
Whose knees are frozen numb;
Meat and clean linen a man needs
Who has fared across the fells,
Water, too, that he may wash before eating,
Hand cloth's and a hearty welcome,
Courteous words, then courteous silence
That he may tell his tale.*

Industriousness: hard work as a means to achieve a goal. Working hard was inherent to their survival. You didn't work, you didn't eat... Try to keep your mind and body working at all times - that doesn't mean you don't have down time, it simply means it is to feel the best when there is a sense of accomplishment.

Perseverance: to continue pushing onward, despite potential obstacles, to rise up in the face of defeat, to learn and grow from our mistakes and poor choices. If we want to live up to our fullest potential, then we must push on even when things are hard and frustrating, or even if it seems like things are completely impossible. If we don't persevere, then we have nothing to strive for.

Self-Reliance: the virtue taking care of oneself, while still maintaining relationships with Deity. It's important to honor the gods, but also to take care of the body and mind. To do this, find a balance between doing for others and doing for the self. To thrive as part of a community, we must also be able to thrive as individuals.

Truth: spiritual truth and actual truth.

[Havamal](#) (The Words of Odin the High One) says that must speak of what we know as Truth, rather than what we think others wish to hear. Truth is the one that most led our kindred to embrace this statement of values as our own.

*My name is not my own,
It is borrowed from my ancestors,
I must return it unstained.
My honor is not my own,
It is on loan from my descendants,
I must give it to them unbroken.
Our blood is not our own,
it is a gift to generations yet unborn,
We should carry it with responsibility.*