

Hinduism & India

Anjali Vale

Indian Americans

- ▶ About 3.0 million Indian Americans currently living and working in the United States.
- ▶ States with the most Indian American population are: California, New York, New Jersey, Texas, and Illinois.
- ▶ About 70,000 Indian Americans live in Michigan. Most are in Oakland County, especially in Troy, West Bloomfield, Rochester Hills, and Novi/Farmington areas.
- ▶ Wayne, Macomb & Washtenaw counties have sizable numbers. Census detail are hard to get.

Indian Americans(cont.)

- ▶ High percentage are in engineering, medicine, law, finance, teaching. Many in their own businesses, factory work, vocations & service professions.
- ▶ Poor economy has affected them also.
- ▶ Interethnic and inter religious marriages are quite common especially in the second and third generations, increasing assimilation & respect for diversity.
- ▶ More than 35 social service, cultural & professional organizations and more than 20 places of worship in SE Michigan.

Historical Facts about India

- ▶ Indians are a mix of many races, cultures and religions. Indian civilization & history is now thought to be 6,000 to 10,000 years old.
- ▶ Ancient India traded/exchanged visitors with Greece, Mid East, China and Indochina(South East Asia). These civilizations have influenced each other.
- ▶ Alexander from Macedonia arrived 2,400 years ago.
- ▶ First Jews arrived 2,100 years ago & Christians 1,900 years ago. Zoroastrians from Persia (Iran) now called Parsis, arrived 1,500 years ago.
- ▶ Islam arrived from Central Asia about 1,000 years ago & Europeans 500 years ago.
- ▶ Over thousands of years, India has developed a unique identity that is spiritual, accepts change, respects freedom of thought and Diversity. This is codified in scriptures as “Paths are many, Destination is One”, “Universe is A Family” and many other verses.



Current Facts about India

- ▶ Population of 1.21 BILLION people; second most populated country. Expected to become the most populated in the future.
- ▶ The largest, fully democratic nation in the world.
- ▶ A secular democracy-with no official state religion. ALL the world's religions are freely practiced, including some which are rare everywhere else.
- ▶ Several hundred languages and dialects spoken; but 29 official languages are recognized.

Current Facts about India(contd.)

- ▶ Constitution guarantees equal rights to all.
- ▶ Some segments of population-women, disadvantaged & minorities-still lagging. They are given preferential benefits.
- ▶ Women growing rapidly in business, politics, armed forces etc. but still lagging. Reserved seats in parliament under consideration.
- ▶ Minorities-Muslims, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis, & women have played a strong role in business, politics, arts, literature, science.
- ▶ India has the 2nd or 3rd largest Muslim population (about 160 million) in the world.
- ▶ Life expectancy has doubled in 50 years, while population has grown about 250%(now slowing)
- ▶ Poverty has decreased by 35% but still high by world standards.

(some) Languages of India

Telugu **Assamese**
Gujarati

Tamil *Sindhi* **Bengali** **KANNADA**

URDU **Sanskrit** **Rajasthani**

Punjabi *Kashmiri* *Hindi*

Marathi **Konkani** **Malayalam**

Oriya



Geography of India:

- ▶ A total area of 1.2 million sq. miles
- ▶ Himalayan Mountain Range, Deccan Plateau, Ganges and Indus Rivers, as well as deserts in the West.
- ▶ A peninsula with 4,350 miles of coastline and 8,760 miles of border.

Culture

- ▶ Bollywood- Movies
- ▶ Plays/ dramas
- ▶ Vocal & Instrumental music

- ▶ Each year India produces the most movies in the world!
- ▶ They are very popular in neighboring countries and the Middle East. (Similar values and taste).

Sports

- ▶ Cricket is by far the most loved sport of India. World's star players play for Indian cricket teams.
- ▶ Soccer & field hockey are other popular sports.

India's Contributions to World

Science

- Gravity
- Heliocentric Earth
- Astrology
- Anatomy
- Metabolism
- Days it takes for the Earth to orbit the Sun

Math

- 'Pi' - 3.14
- Calculus
- Trigonometry
- Zero
- Geometry
- Decimals
- Algebra

Arts

- Many classical dance forms
- Sanskrit. Origin of Indo-European languages.
- Hindustani Music
- Carnatic Music
- Mahabharata/Ramayana
- Vedas, Upnishads, Geeta
- Origin of Martial Arts

History

- Early Indian Civilizations
- First travelers/explorers
- Hindu Faith is mother of Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism
- Rich culture dating back to before the mark of time. (6 to 10,000 years)



Manipuri

Classical Dance Forms of India



Mohini Attam

Bharata Natyam



Kathak

Odissi



Kuchipudi



Kathakali

Festivals: Diwali

Festivals are celebrated by moon calendar.

Diwali is the festival of lights... Indians generally celebrate by setting of fireworks, like the fourth of July, and lighting candles.



Festivals: Holi

Holi is the Festival of colors. It is celebrated widely in the streets of India. People wear white clothing and then throw colored powders at one another. It is A LOT of fun.



Religion in India

- ▶ ALL religions of the World and their many denominations are freely practiced in India.
- ▶ Hinduism
- ▶ Islam
- ▶ Christianity
- ▶ Sikhism
- ▶ Jainism
- ▶ Buddhism
- ▶ Zoroastrianism
- ▶ Judaism
- ▶ Bahai
- ▶ Other

Some Key Words & Concepts

- ▶ Namaste, Pranaam, Salaam Alekum, Inshaallah, Sat Sri Akaal.
- ▶ Trimurty, Om(Aum),Moksha,Nirvana, Dharma, Karma, Mantra, Reincarnation, Guru, Pandit,Yoga,Meditation,Pranayam.
- ▶ Vedas, Puranaas,Upnishads,Bhagvad Geeta, Ramayana, Mahabharata.
- ▶ Sanskrit, Sanatana Dharma, Khalsa
- ▶ Cremation, Burial, Tower of Silence.



Hinduism

The majority
religion in India



The Lingaraja Temple



The Sun Temple, Konark



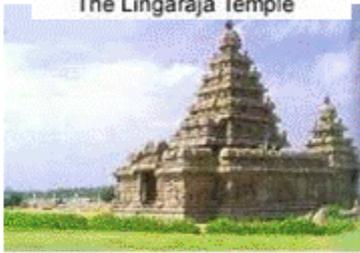
Meenakshi Temple



Khajuraho



Jagannath Puri Temple



The Shore Temple



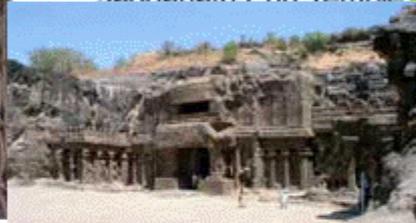
The Brihadishwara Temple



Temple at Thanjavur



Figurines of Vidya Devis



Kailashnath Cave Temple, Ellora



Mahabalipuram Rathas



The Natraj Temple



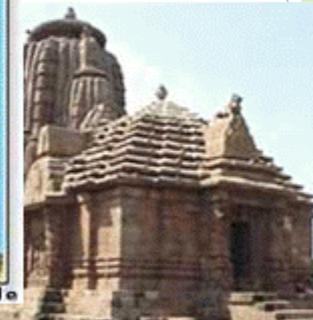
Meenakshi Sundareshwar Temple



Buddha sculpture at Borobudur, Java



Brihadeshwara Temple



The Rajarani Temple



Maiden's figurine



Dilwara temple - exquisitely carved



Lakshmi Narayana Temple



Hari Mandir (the Golden Temple)



The Hoysaleswara Temple, Halebid

Facts about Hindu Faith

- ▶ Hinduism is one of the world's oldest wisdom or faith traditions.
- ▶ No one person created this religion; it is the sum total of thoughts developed by sages and seers over many centuries.
- ▶ Also called as “Sanatana Dharma”, Sanatana means eternal & Dharma means fundamental truths or spiritual laws which exist at all times, in all places and in all conditions.

Some Key Hindu Principles

- ▶ Truth (God) is One, people see it in various ways.
- ▶ Paths are many, Destination is One. Respect for everyone's religious beliefs and freedom of choice.
- ▶ Hindu Trinity: Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. One God presented as Creator, Sustainer and Destroyer.
- ▶ Ultimate goal of human being is to be one with God (Nirvana) thru good Karma, doing individual Dharma, freedom from desire & attachment, and liberation from the cycle of life and death.(Moksha)
- ▶ Moksha and Nirvana can be achieved thru Bhakti Yoga, Raj Yoga, Karma Yoga, Gyan Yoga or any combination.

Swami Vivekananda

- ▶ Swami Vivekananda, who was a scholar, a Philosopher and saint (also a celibate monk) visited United States,

for the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago in 1893. His message included:

- ▶ *Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this Divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal.*
- ▶ *Do this either by work, or worship, or mental discipline, or philosophy—by one, or more, or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details.*

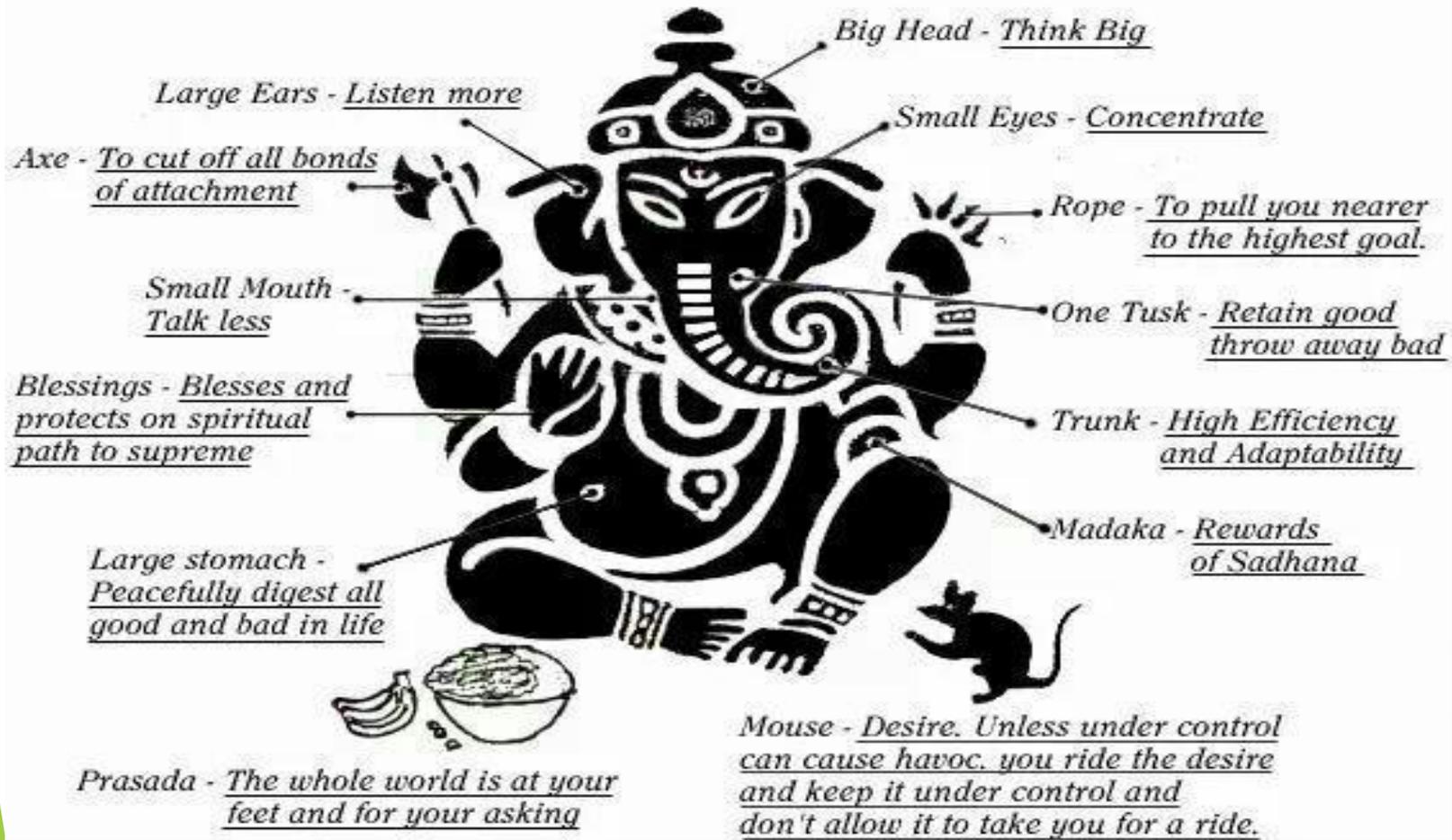
Four paths by Swami Vivekananda:

- ▶ Karma Yoga (Yoga of Actions)
- ▶ Jnana Yoga (Yoga of Knowledge)
- ▶ Bhakti Yoga (Yoga of Devotion)
- ▶ Dhyana Yoga (Yoga of Self Control).





Ganesha Symbolism



Hindu Customs in General

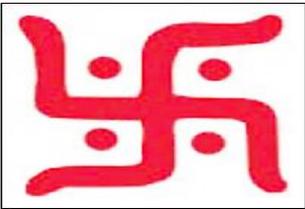
- ▶ Many Hindus have a mini prayer-room in their homes. They pray each morning before work or school.
- ▶ Many Indians(Hindus) shave their children's head at a young age. This is done to respect your family god as well as to ensure the growth of thick and healthy hair.
- ▶ Indians consider people, books, and other objects to be sacred; if one were to mistakenly place their feet upon them, they would touch the object with their hands to their eyes asking for forgiveness.
- ▶ Indians pay their respects to the elderly and spiritual leaders by bowing down and touching their feet in 'pranaam.'

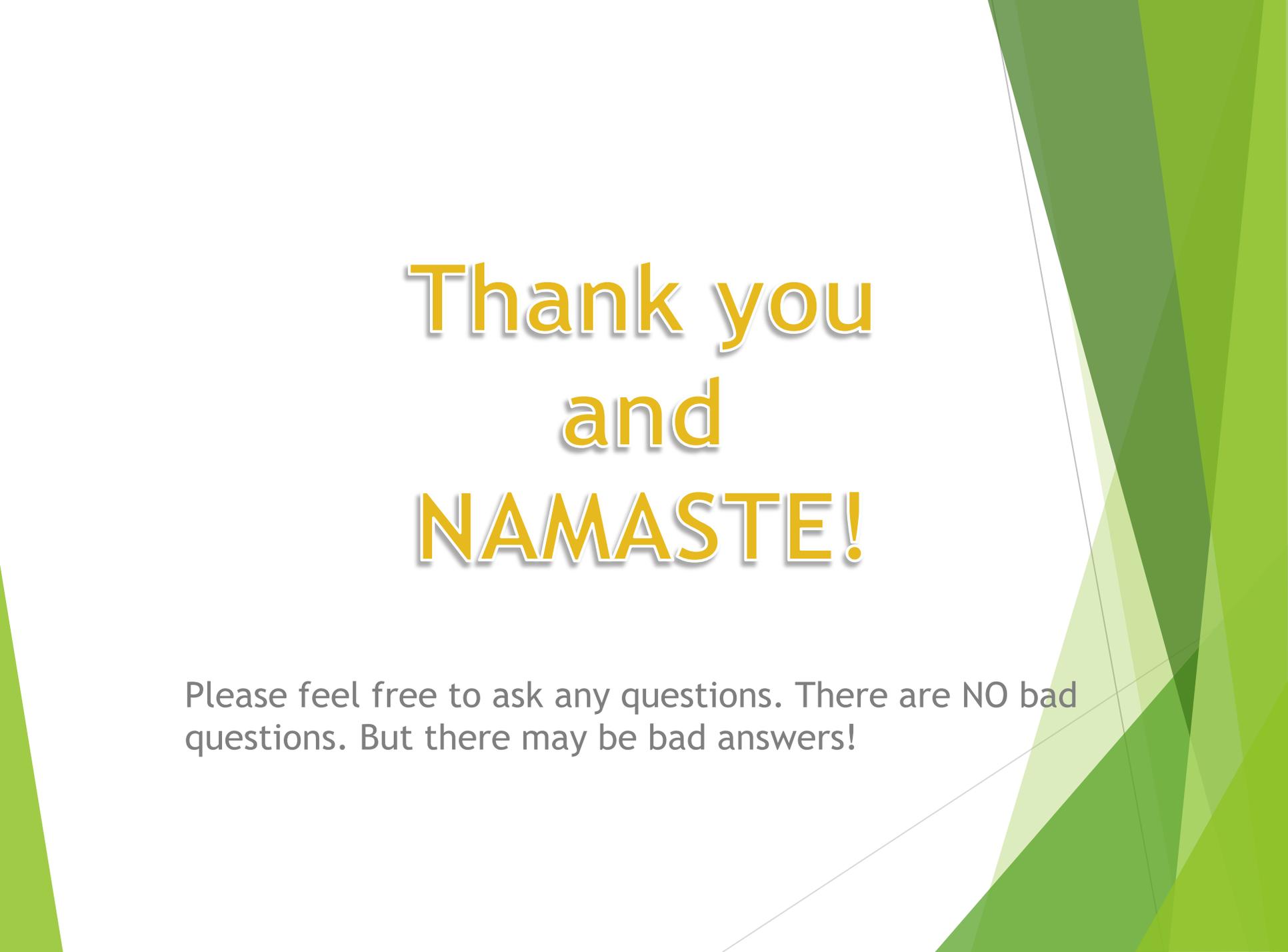
Frequently Asked Questions

- ▶ Why does Hinduism has so many GODs?
 - ▶ In Reality, Hindus believe in one supreme GOD, who they believe created Universe and is pervasive.
 - ▶ Hindus all worship one GOD but with different forms and different names. This is due to diversity of languages and cultures have understood GOD in their own unique way.
 - ▶ Important belief in Hindu faith is GOD not far away or living in remote, but is inside each & every soul. GOD is consciousness, Prana (breath) that we breath in & out. Reaching GOD or realizing GOD is not impossible but achievable with our own efforts and meditation, may be in one life or in many lives.

Frequently Asked Questions

- ▶ What are those dots that Indian women wear on their foreheads, and why do they wear them?
 - ▶ The dots are called Bindis in the North or Pottus in the South.
 - ▶ Also called as “Inner eye” or third eye, two eyes to see external world and this third eye to see your inner self.
 - ▶ They represent a married woman. Also, it is a symbol of wisdom and moral strength.
 - ▶ In current time, its also used cosmetically, matching to your costume.
- ▶ Is the Swastika an Indian/Hindu Symbol?
 - ▶ Yes, but it is slightly modified; See the four dots? Even though in the west it became a Nazi symbol, the ancient Indian/Hindu symbol is actually a symbol of peace, welcome, auspiciousness and protection from evil.
 - ▶ It’s used in most of the festivals and spiritual ceremonies.
 - ▶ Many homes have this symbol on their entrances.





Thank you
and
NAMASTE!

Please feel free to ask any questions. There are NO bad questions. But there may be bad answers!