

## [Maha Prajnaparamita Sastra](#)

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This page describes “definition of the eleven knowledges (ekadasha-jnana)” as written by [Nagarjuna](#) in his Maha-prajnaparamita-sastra (lit. “the treatise on the great virtue of wisdom”) in the 2nd century. This book, written in five volumes, represents an encyclopedia on Buddhism as well as a commentary on the Pancavimsatisahasrika [Prajnaparamita](#).



# I. Definition of the Eleven Knowledges (ekādaśa-jñāna)

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1. The knowledge of things ([dharmajñāna](#)) is:

- a. the pure knowledge concerning things associated with the desire realm (*kāmadhātusaṃprayukteṣu dharmeṣu yad anāsravaṃ jñānam*).
- b. the pure knowledge concerning the cause of things associated with the desire realm (*kāmadhātusaṃprayuktānaṃ dharmāṇāṃ hetau yad anāsravaṃ jñānam*).
- c. the pure knowledge concerning the cessation of things associated with the desire realm (*kāmadhātusaṃprayuktānāṃ dharmāṇāṃ nirodhe yad anāsravaṃ jñānam*).
- d. the pure knowledge concerning the path leading to the cessation of things associated with the desire realm (*kāmadhātusaṃprayuktānāṃ dharmāṇāṃ prahāṇāya mārga yad anāsravaṃ jñānam*).
- e. also the pure knowledge concerning the knowledge of the things themselves and its stage (*api khalu dharmajñāne dharmajñānabhūmau ca yad anāsravaṃ jñānam*).

2. It is the same for the subsequent knowledge (*anvayajñāna*) concerning [things associated] with the [form realm](#) and the formless realm (*rūpārūpyasahātusaṃprayukteṣu dharmeṣu*).

3. The knowledge of another’s mind ([paracittajñāna](#)) cognizes:

- a. the mind (*citta*) and mental events (*caitasikadharmā*) relating to the desire realm and the form realm (*kāmarūpadhātusaṃprayukta*) presently belonging to others,
- b. also a small part of their pure minds and mental events (*anāsravacittacaitta*).

4. Conventional knowledge ([saṃvṛtījñāna](#)) is all of the impure knowledges (*sarvasāsravajñāna*).

5. The knowledge of suffering ([duḥkhajñāna](#)) is the pure knowledge produced when the [five aggregates](#) of attachment are considered as impermanent, suffering, empty and without self (*pañcopādānaskandhān anityato duḥkhataḥ śūnyato ’nātmatāś ca manasikurvato yad anāsravaṃ jñānanam*).

6. The knowledge of the origin of suffering ([samudayajñāna](#)) is the pure knowledge produced when the cause of impure [dharmas](#) is considered as cause, origin, successive and associated causation (*sāsravahetukaṃ hetutaḥ samudayataḥ prabhavataḥ pratyayataś ca manasikurvato yad anāsravaṃ jñānam*).

7. The knowledge of the cessation of suffering ([nirodhajñāna](#)) is the pure knowledge produced by considering this cessation as cessation, peaceful, excellent and bringing salvation ([nirodham nirodhataḥ śāntataḥ praṇītato niḥsaraṇataś ca manasikurvato yad anāsravaṃ jñānam](#)).

8. The knowledge of the path of cessation ([mārgajñāna](#)) is the pure knowledge produced by considering this path as path, logical, attainment and ultimate exit ([mārgam mārgato nyāyataḥ pratipattito nairyāṇikataś ca manasikurvato yad anāsravaṃ jñānam](#)).

9. The knowledge of the cessation of the impurities ([kṣayajñāna](#) = [āsravakṣayajñāna](#)) is the pure knowledge produced by thinking: “Suffering is completely known by me ([duḥkham me parijñātam](#)); the origin has been abandoned by me ([samudayo me prahīṇaḥ](#)); cessation has been realized by me ([nirodho me sāksātkṛtaḥ](#)); the path has been practiced by me ([mārgo me bhāvitaḥ](#))”; it [233a] is a wisdom ([prajñā](#)), a seeing ([darśana](#)), a knowing ([vidyā](#)), an understanding ([buddhi](#)).

10. The knowledge of the non-rearising of the impurities ([anutpādayajñāna](#)) is the pure knowledge produced by thinking: “The suffering completely known by me is no longer to be known ([duḥkham me parijñātam na parijñātavyam](#)); the origin abandoned by me is no longer to be abandoned ([samudayo me prahīṇo na prahātavyaḥ](#)); the cessation realized by me is no longer to be realized ([nirodho me sāksātkṛto na sāksātkartavyaḥ](#)); the path practiced by me is no longer to be practiced ([mārgo me bhāvito nabhāvitaḥ](#))”: it is a wisdom ([prajñā](#)), a seeing ([darśana](#)), a knowing ([vidyā](#)), an understanding ([buddhi](#)).

11. The wisdom conforming to reality ([yathābhūtajñāna](#)) is a knowledge conforming exactly to reality and free of obstacles ([apratihata](#)) concerning the general characteristics ([sāmānyalakṣaṇa](#)) and specific characteristics ([svalakṣaṇa](#)) of all dharmas.

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