

UPSC Philosophy Optional Syllabus

PHILOSOPHY PAPER – I (Indian and Western Philosophy)

1. Plato and Aristotle: Ideas; Substance; Form and Matter; Causation; Actuality and Potentiality.
2. Rationalism (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz): Substance; Attribute; Monads; God; Mind-Body Dualism; Determinism and Freedom.
3. Empiricism (Locke, Berkeley, Hume): Theory of Knowledge; Substance and Qualities; Self and God; Scepticism.
4. Kant: Possibility of Synthetic a priori Judgments; Space and Time; Categories; Ideas of Reason; Antinomies; Critique of Proofs for the Existence of God.
5. Hegel: Dialectical Method; Absolute Idealism.
6. Moore, Russell and Early Wittgenstein: Defence of Common Sense; Refutation of Idealism; Logical Atomism; Logical Constructions; Picture Theory of Meaning.
7. Logical Positivism: Verification Theory of Meaning; Rejection of Metaphysics; Linguistic Theory of Necessary Propositions.
8. Later Wittgenstein: Meaning and Use; Language Games; Critique of Private Language.
9. Phenomenology (Husserl): Intentionality; Phenomenological Reduction; Essence.
10. Existentialism (Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Sartre): Existence and Essence; Choice; Responsibility and Authenticity; Being and Nothingness; Freedom and Facticity; Angst; Death.
11. Quine and Strawson: Critique of Empiricism; Theory of Basic Particulars and Persons.

PHILOSOPHY PAPER – II (Socio-Political Philosophy and Philosophy of Religion)

1. Social and Political Ideals: Equality; Justice; Liberty.

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2. Sovereignty: Austin, Bodin, Laski, Kautilya.
3. Individual and State: Rights; Duties and Accountability.
4. Political Ideologies: Anarchism; Marxism; Socialism; Liberalism.
5. Humanism; Secularism; Multiculturalism.
6. Crime and Punishment: Corruption, Mass Violence, Genocide, Capital Punishment.
7. Development and Social Progress.
8. Gender Discrimination; Caste Discrimination.
9. Religion and Morality.
10. Religious Pluralism and the Problem of Absolute Truth.
11. Nature of Religious Language: Analogical and Symbolic; Cognitive and Non-cognitive.
12. Reason, Revelation and Faith.
13. Problem of Evil.
14. Soul, Immortality and Rebirth.
15. Liberation and God.