



## **5 Starter Facts About the Amish and Mennonites**

1. There are ~290,000 Amish and Mennonite community members in North America, mostly in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Indiana. Communities are only about 25-35 families each. More traditional groups are called ‘Old Order.’
2. The Ordnung, meaning “order” in German, is the unwritten set of rules that guide everyday life, including prohibition of public electricity, suing in a court of law, using certain technologies, running for political office, and divorce.
3. The Amish and Mennonites share beliefs in baptism, non-resistance, and basic Bible doctrines, but differ in dress, technology, language, worship, and Biblical interpretation. Mennonites tend to be less conservative: worship services are held weekly in their meeting houses, most have relaxed dress codes, and their occupations have expanded outside the farm. While Old Order Mennonites still drive all-black carriages, most groups allow cars and electricity.
4. The Amish believe in a literal interpretation of Scripture as the Word of God. They devoutly adhere to Biblical commands separating themselves from the rest of the world, believing worldliness keeps them from being close to God. By restricting access to television, radio, and phones, the Amish are better able to keep the modern world from intruding into their lives. Old Order Amish do not own or operate cars and instead ride horses and buggies on local roads.
5. They pursue farming as a way of life so as to better maintain faith and family in a rural environment. While they do not permit the use of tractors in their fields, Old Order Amish will use modern farm equipment pulled by horses or mules.

Learn more at:

<http://amishamerica.com/>

*These five points are not meant to be comprehensive or authoritative. We hope they encourage you to explore this spirituality more deeply and seek out members of this community to learn about their beliefs in action. In understanding our differences we will better understand our common humanity.*

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