



21 Best Examples Of Culture (For Students!)

By Chris Drew (PhD) / February 14, 2023

CULTURE

Cultures are groups of people who share a common set of values and beliefs. They may also share cultural elements like languages, festivals, rituals and ceremonies.

LOW VS HIGH

Low culture

The cultural beliefs and activities practiced by the masses. E.g. enjoying gossip magazines, pop music, and reality television.

High culture

Practiced by the elites. It can include participating in theater, the opera, fine art, horse riding, and enjoying expensive wine.

EXAMPLE TOPICS

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- 6 Counterculture

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Cultures are groups of people who share a common set of values and beliefs. They may also share [cultural elements](#) like languages, festivals, rituals and ceremonies, pastimes, food, and architecture.

Examples of cultures include western culture, youth culture, counterculture, and high culture.
Members of each of these cultures usually share values, pastimes, and languages.

While in the past cultures were built around geographical, social class, ethnic, and family ties, this is changing. The internet allows us to create our own 'tribes' of people spread out around the world who share our personal interest and values.

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Examples Of Culture

1. Youth Culture



Each generation of youths create their own cultures. This makes many people of previous generations nervous, leading to a sense of moral panic. They feel as if the [norms](#) and values of the traditional culture are being eroded.

Youths will create their own music, words and euphemisms, and even dance moves, that may seem strange to older people.

As young people all across a culture are feeling connected by their shared set of new values (that build upon the values of their parents, they're widely changing the [dominant culture](#). As they grow older, their ways of speaking and music interests can be absorbed into the dominant culture.

2. Traditional Culture

We explain a **traditional culture** as the one that has been the longstanding dominant way of life in previous years. It's also often a more conservative cultural orientation.

For example, before [globalization](#), cultures were much more defined within geographical areas. Traditional ways of living might have been oriented around cooking over open fires, wearing more traditional clothes, and listening to traditional music.

While today many people don't celebrate their traditional culture, they may be able to identify it as the way of life of their grandparents and great grandparents.

3. Media Culture

In the 20th Century, mass media has taken over the western world and beyond.

Mass media transmitted images to the masses, promoted nationalist identities, and often concentrated the power of the elite to transmit their narratives to the masses.

In cultural studies, we use the term '[media culture](#)' to refer to how mass media changed the western world. In the mid 20th Century it cohered western nations around a capitalist and consumerist way of life.

But with the rise of the internet, media culture took a turn – which is discussed next.

4. Internet Culture

Internet culture grew with the rise of the internet in the late 1990s and still heavily influences the world today.



We use this term to refer to the ways the internet has changed how people interact and relate to one another.

[Social media](#), for example, allows us to be 'publishers', sharing our beliefs with others. It's led to the rise of conspiracy theories and misinformation but has also allowed us to communicate with people who share our values across the world.

5. Western Culture

The Western world is generally believed to be based on a mix of European enlightenment values and Christianity. It had spread to new world nations such as the United States, Canada, and Australia.

Western values were central in promoting concepts like individual liberty, democracy, secularism, and feminism. However, they also have a dark history, used to justify slavery in the United States and oppressive colonialism in the new world.

6. Dominant Culture

A dominant culture is the cultural ground and values that are the most prominent within a society.

In nations like the United States, the dominant culture remains western culture, but as a multicultural nation, there are many other cultures that exist within the society, such as Mexican-American, African-American and Irish-American cultures.

In sociology and cultural studies, the dominant culture is often critiqued for being oppressive and

7. Subculture

A subculture is a culture that has emerged within a dominant culture.

There are many, many subcultures, and we outline [examples of subcultures](#) in a dedicated article. Some of them include the hippies, hipsters, graffiti artists, and punks. They often only emerge for a few short years before disappearing, but sometimes become so popular that they take over and become the dominant culture.

At other times, the main values of subculture are simply absorbed into the dominant culture.

7. Counterculture

A [counterculture](#) is a subculture that is in defiant opposition to the dominant culture.



While subcultures are often embraced or at least tolerated by the dominant culture (and they may even share a common set of values), countercultures are oppositional.

The anti-globalization movement of the late 1990s was a very prominent counterculture. They gave rise to substantial protests at events like the G7 as well as angry music riffs of bands like Rage Against the Machine.

8. Islamic Culture

Islam is one of the world's great religions and has a very long, rich [cultural history](#).

Islam brought us coffee, universities, surgery, and algebra.

But it also has very popular music and dress, two elements of culture that can help define an in-group identity. Today, Islamic culture remains very popular in parts of Asia and the Arabian peninsula.

Related: [In-Group and Out-Group Examples](#)

9. Italian-American Culture

Italian-American culture is a subculture of the United States that is popular around Boston, Chicago, New York, and other Eastern American cities.

This subculture emerged during mass immigration to the USA by Italian people in the 19th Century. It was also influential in bootlegging and other criminal activities during the prohibition era.

Today, Italian-American culture is celebrated for its food such as deep-pan pizza as well as its influence on politics (such as via the Cuomo dynasty in New York).

10. Gamer Culture

Gamer culture is one subcultural grouping that emerged thanks to the rise of the internet. It's hugely popular among young men and highly concentrated in South Korea.

The rise and professionalization of gamers has meant that being a 'professional' gamer is now a reality, where people are sponsored and win prize money in contests.

It's also given rise to specific concerns for gamers such as mental health worries for people who spend their whole lives in front of computer games.

11. Chinese Culture



China is one of the world's great nations and has been for millennia. It [gave us](#) fireworks, tea, paper, and gunpowder.

We can juxtapose Chinese culture to Western culture as they are two dominant competing forces in today's world.

China is a much more hierarchically oriented society where questioning authority is frowned upon and democracy does not exist. It values political strength and more conformist ideas about gender, but remains largely secular.

The West celebrates individual liberty, is heavily influenced by Christianity, and is a strong proponent of democracy.

12. European Culture

Many Europeans celebrate their own shared cultural identity that, since World War II, has been oriented around liberalism, compromise, and social democracy.

It's also given us café culture, excellent food and drink, and myriad amazing artists. Europe today remains a 'shared project' that is best exemplified through the European Union.

13. Nordic Culture

While the Nordic nations are within Europe, they also have their own cultural orientations. Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, and Iceland comprise the Nordic nations.

While each nation has its own national identity, the countries are also known to have shared values and traditions. They share a common Viking history and similar folk music. They're also an area of the world where heavy metal music is very common.

Lastly, Nordic countries are some of the most progressive in the world with strong social democratic traditions.

14. Punk Culture

Punk culture is one of the most well-known subcultures of the 20th Century. Today, it is very much a small and shrinking underground cultural grouping that has been overcome by other music-oriented subcultures.

It had its heyday in the 1970s with bands like *The Ramones* who positioned themselves as anarchistic and anti-corporate. It had other less successful resurgences in the following decades, perhaps most notably in

the pop punk movement of the 1990s and early 2000s with bands like *Green Day*.



15. Amish Culture

The Amish are an orthodox cultural group who resist the use of technology and embrace traditional Christianity.

An organizing principle of the Amish is that they consider technology to be a corrupting force in society. They embrace the toil of non-electric means of transportation and farming. They wear plain and conservative clothes and adhere to traditional [gender stereotypes](#).

16. Global Culture

The idea that there is one dominant [global culture](#) emerged after the rapid rise of globalization in the late 20th Century.

The idea is that globalization led to the spread of a shared set of beliefs in fundamental human rights, social respect, and geopolitical norms.

Global culture is promoted through international institutions such as the United Nations as well as the soft diplomacy of mass media, global sports events, and popular entertainment.

There is also a backlash to 'global elitism' by nationalists who resent the idea that nations should be held to a set of shared norms of behavior.

17. Low And High Culture

Low and high culture are two cultural concepts used in sociology to describe the split between social classes.

Low culture is the cultural beliefs and activities practiced by the masses. These can include enjoying gossip magazines, pop music, reality television, and even participating in the 40-hour work week.

High culture, on the other hand, is practiced by the elites. It can include participating in theater, the opera, fine art, horse riding, yachting, and enjoying expensive wine.

18. Popular Culture

Popular culture is similar to low culture, but generally used in everyday language to refer to popular music and entertainment.



Pop music, for example, is the music that we tend to find on the most popular radio stations. It's music designed to have the widest mass appeal. Television shows such as American Idol also embrace pop culture to appeal to the masses.

Mass produced action movies, released into cinemas, are also a clear example. Movies featuring action heroes and comic book figures are released to appeal to the popular imagination.

For more on popular culture, read out A to Z list of [Pop Culture Examples](#)

19. Working-Class Culture

Working-class people have long been seen as having their own culture. This includes their own phrases and euphemisms, accents, and preferences for food and drink.

We can imagine working-class people usually value a hard day's work, football, and mass-produced lagers. They may also have their own dresswear, including wearing ['blue collar' work](#) outfits rather than suits.

20. Syncretic Culture

Syncretic culture occurs when two cultures merge and blend. The result is a brand new third culture that's unique in its own right but influenced by its two 'parent' cultures. An [example of syncretism](#) is the Metis people of Canada. The Metis emerged when the European and Indigenous cultures of North America started to meld.

Metis people are a culture in their own right, with their own dance, food, and traditions. However, elements of both Indigenous and European traditions are evident.

Another example is the blending of Indigenous and Catholic religious traditions in Latin America. What resulted was a religion called Santería. In this religion, Catholic saints are worshiped, but traditional Indigenous spirituality is still celebrated.

When global cultures mix with local cultures, we also call this [glocalization](#).

21. Indigenous Culture

Indigenous cultures are the cultures of the first people to live on a continent. For example, the Aboriginal people in Australia, the Maori in New Zealand, and the Sioux people of North America all had their own cultures before Europeans arrived.

In the case of Aboriginal Australians, they are known as the longest continuous culture in the world.

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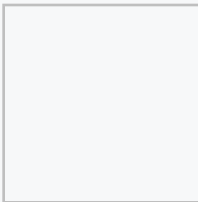
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Conclusion

There are many different examples of cultures and ways to identify them. You may even feel like you belong to multiple different cultural groupings. That's because they overlap and mix together. You don't have to choose one!



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