
The Amish: Choosing Simplicity in a Complex World

1. What Makes the Amish Unique?

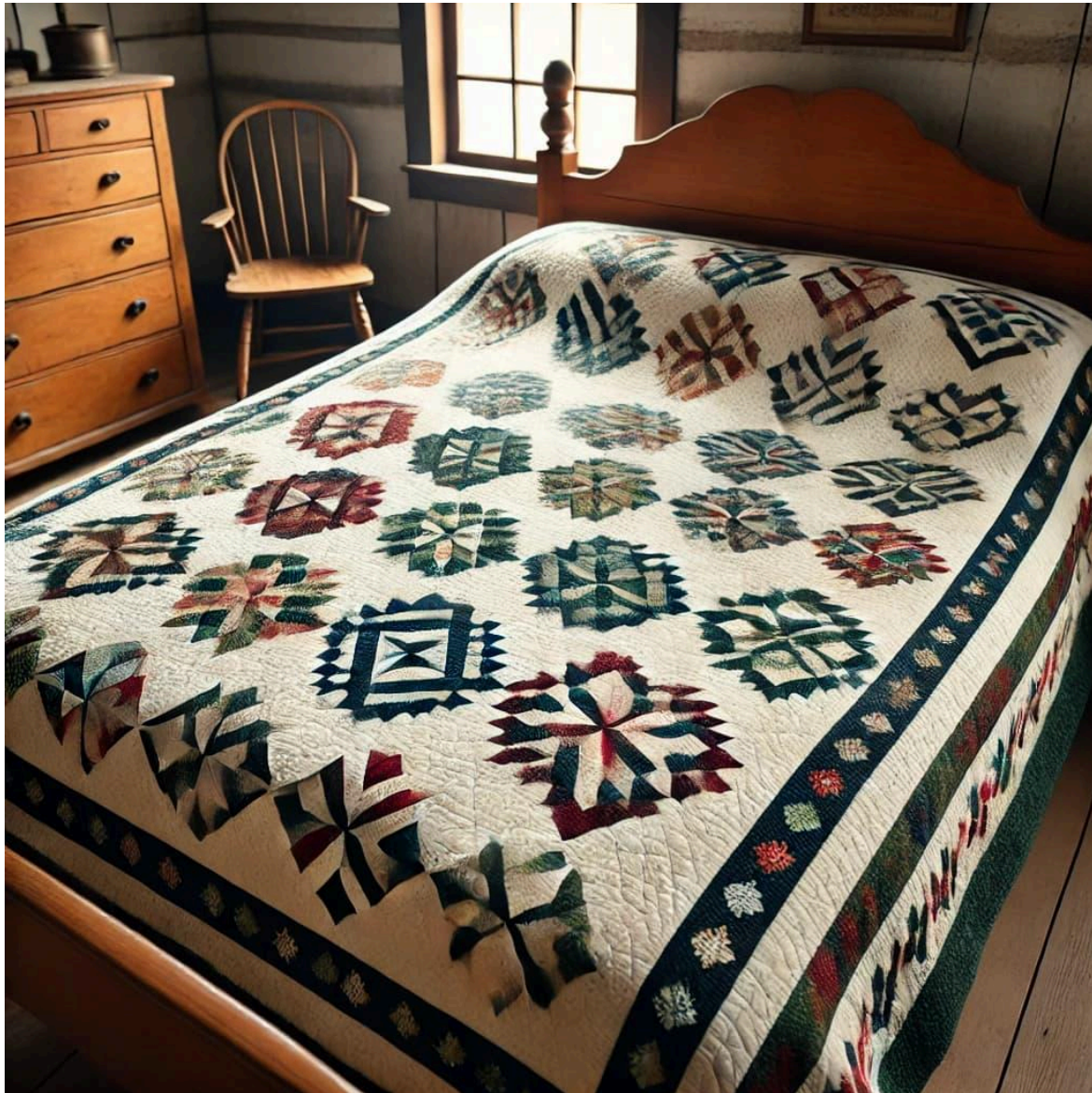
The Amish are a Christian group that began in Europe in the 1600s and migrated to North America in search of religious freedom. Today, they live mainly in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana. What makes them unique is their choice to live apart from modern society. They believe in humility, simplicity, and obedience to God, and they avoid many modern conveniences, such as electricity, automobiles, and the internet.



[photo01] – An Amish buggy travels quietly through a green countryside

2. Silence and Song: Art Without Performance

Amish culture does not focus on art in the usual sense. You won't find painting galleries or concerts—but that doesn't mean they lack artistic expression. Quilts are sewn with great care and spiritual symbolism. Music is sung in church with slow, unaccompanied voices, reflecting devotion rather than performance. There are no musical instruments or dancing. This simplicity is a kind of cultural art: quiet, orderly, and sacred.



[photo02] – A handmade quilt with traditional Amish patterns

3. Daily Life: Simple, Shared, Sustainable

Amish families work together on farms, bake bread in wood stoves, and travel by horse-drawn buggy. Their clothes are homemade and plain, often in black, blue, or gray. Men wear beards but no mustaches, and women wear bonnets and long dresses. Daily routines follow a predictable rhythm, shaped by community needs and religious beliefs. Life is slower—but deeply connected.



[photo03] – Amish women hanging laundry outside in traditional dress

4. Life Transitions: Rumspringa and Marriage

Around age 16, Amish teenagers enter a period called *Rumspringa* (“running around”) when they may explore the outside world. Afterward, they must decide whether to be baptized and join the church. Most return. Marriages are arranged within the community, and weddings are simple but joyful events—often celebrated with handmade food, hymn singing, and the support of extended families.



[photo04] – Young Amish couple during a traditional wedding gathering

5. Old World Meets New: Tradition and Tension

Although the Amish avoid modern life, they are not frozen in time. Some use solar panels or phones in barns for business. Many run successful small businesses, such as furniture making and baking. They pay taxes and interact with outsiders, but always on their own terms. This balance of isolation and limited participation keeps their culture strong.



[photo05] – An Amish-run market stand, blending tradition with outside commerce

6. Why It Still Matters

In a world that values speed, technology, and individualism, the Amish remind us that another way is possible. Their lifestyle challenges modern assumptions and offers a living example of community, purpose, and quiet strength. Whether we agree with their choices or not, their way of life forces us to reflect: What do we really need to live a good life?



[photo06] – Amish children playing together in open fields

Vocabulary List

- **Humility** /hju:'mɪl.ə.ti/ – not thinking you are more important than others
- **Obedience** /ə'bi:.di.əns/ – following rules or instructions without resistance
- **Unaccompanied** /,ʌn.ə'kʌm.pə.nɪd/ – without musical instruments or support
- **Rumspringa** /'rʌm,spɪŋ.ə/ – a time for Amish teens to explore before baptism
- **Devotion** /dɪ'vəʊ.ʃən/ – deep religious commitment or love
- **Plain** /pleɪn/ – simple, not decorated
- **Baptized** /'bæp.taɪzd/ – officially joined a church through a ritual
- **Tension** /'ten.ʃən/ – conflict or strain between two different forces
- **Isolation** /,aɪ.sə'leɪ.ʃən/ – being apart from others
- **Simplicity** /sɪm'plɪs.ə.ti/ – the quality of being simple and clear

Day 1 Questions

1. Why did the Amish move to North America?
2. What is the Amish attitude toward modern technology?
3. What kind of artistic expression is important to the Amish?
4. Choose the correct meaning: **Unaccompanied**
 - A. With many instruments
 - B. Without instruments or support
 - C. Performed for an audience
 - D. Played by a band
5. True or False: Amish children leave their families permanently after Rumspringa.
☐ True ☐ False

Matching – Match the word with its meaning (shuffled):

- A. Baptized
- B. Humility
- C. Obedience
- D. Simplicity
- E. Tension


1. Following rules or guidance
2. Conflict or strain between different ideas or groups
3. A peaceful and clear lifestyle
4. Joining a church through a special ceremony
5. Not thinking you are more important than others

Day 2 Questions

1. Describe how Amish people dress. Why is this important to them?
2. What happens during Rumspringa, and what decision must follow it?
3. Fill in the blank:
The Amish sing slowly and _____ in church, reflecting quiet _____.
4. Multiple Choice:
Which idea best explains the Amish way of life?
A. Speed and efficiency are everything
B. Simplicity and devotion build strong communities
C. Isolation is dangerous
D. Modern business is more important than tradition
5. Which event comes first in a typical Amish life?
 - A. Rumspringa
 - B. Baptism
 - C. Marriage
 - D. Running a family business

Discussion Prompts

1. What parts of the Amish lifestyle do you find admirable or surprising?
2. Would you be able to live without electricity and technology? Why or why not?
3. How does the Amish idea of “community” differ from modern urban life?
4. If the Amish are choosing a different way to live, what does that say about our world?

 *This is the beginning of our journey into the world of the Amish. In the next lesson, we'll dive deeper into the sounds, choices, and values that shape this quiet but resilient community. Stay curious—we're just getting started.*
