

# Epicurus' Hierarchy of Needs

**Post by "Rolf" of June 2, 2025 at 11:48 AM**

Hey folks,

Woke up feeling a little under the weather today. While resting up in bed, I thought about Maslow's hierarchy of needs and how it does and does not relate to Epicurean philosophy. As a result, I decided to throw together this rough idea for an Epicurean hierarchy of needs.

Now, obviously in Epicurean philosophy there isn't so much of a "hierarchy" in the sense that all pleasure is good. With that in mind, this chart is meant for more practical usage.

From bottom to top:

1. First and foremost, we need basic necessities such as food, water, and shelter, along with confidence of consistent access to these things. Without these, we physically cannot live.
2. Next, we need friendship and a community. Humans are social animals and friendship is vital to a pleasant life.
3. Then we learn about Epicurean philosophy, such as the ethics and canonic, and the natural world, so that we may live a more pleasurable life and understand the limits of pleasure.
4. Finally, we have the snow sprinkled atop the mountain representing the natural but unnecessary "extravagant" desires. Once we have everything below, we may take joy in these pleasures and allow them to adorn our life, without feeling like we require them.

The mountain climber represents prudence - the tool we use in order to ascend the mountain.



