

# Epicurus vs Aristotle: the Role of Reason vs Sensation Seeking?

Post by “Kalosyni” of December 11, 2025 at 3:07 PM

Quoting Joshua, quoting the Letter to Herodotus:

[38] For this purpose it is essential that the first mental image associated with each word should be regarded, and that there should be no need of explanation, if we are really to have a standard to which to refer a problem of investigation or reflection or a mental inference. And besides we must keep all our investigations in accord with our sensations, and in particular with the immediate apprehensions whether of the mind or of any one of the instruments of judgment, and likewise in accord with the feelings existing in us, in order that we may have indications whereby we may judge both the problem of sense perception and the unseen.

## [Quote from Joshua](#)

the difference between a priori and a posteriori claims of knowledge

I looked up the difference because I don't use those words in everyday life, and wanted to get a better understanding:

## Quote

The following is from Google AI:

A priori and a posteriori claims are types of knowledge distinguished by how they're justified:

**A priori** knowledge is independent of experience (e.g., math, logic, definitions like "bachelors are unmarried"), known through pure reason; **A posteriori** knowledge depends on empirical experience and observation (e.g., "it's raining," scientific facts). The former relies on thought, the latter on senses or data from the world.

## A Priori Knowledge (From the Earlier)

- **Definition:** Knowledge justified independently of experience, often through understanding concepts or definitions.

- **Key Idea:** You don't need to go out into the world to verify it; understanding the terms is enough.
- **Examples:**
  - "All triangles have three sides."
  - " $2 + 2 = 4$ ."
  - "All bachelors are unmarried men." (True by definition)

#### A Posteriori Knowledge (From the Later)

- **Definition:** Knowledge justified through empirical evidence, observation, or experience.
- **Key Idea:** Requires stepping outside of pure thought to gather facts about the world.
- **Examples:**
  - "The sky is blue."
  - "Water boils at  $100^{\circ}\text{C}$  at sea level."
  - "Socrates is drinking wine." (Requires seeing or knowing about Socrates's actions)

#### Key Differences Summarized

- **Source:** A priori comes from reason/logic; A posteriori comes from senses/experience.
- **Justification:** A priori is conceptual; A posteriori is empirical.
- **Necessity:** A priori truths often seem necessary (couldn't be otherwise); A posteriori truths are often contingent (could have been different).

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