

How to become a monk on Mount Athos



First of all, if you want to come to Mount Athos and become a monk, you must be sure that you are free of legal bindings. One of the most common bindings, is of one's debts in this world, which you must to pay yourself. Another binding is that of marriage.

If someone else—for example, your family members — are willing to pay off your binding debts and, in the case of marriage, you have the consent of your spouse, then you are free to enter into the monastic yoke of obedience and spiritual struggles.

Then, you may simply come to Mount Athos as a pilgrim, to visit some settlements and to state your intention to the Abbot / Elder of the brotherhood. Of course, at the beginning, if the brotherhood is large, you cannot speak straightaway with the Abbot—you will tell this to a spiritual father/elder there. Many times, the first Guest-master in rank or a Hieromonk fits this role. In any case, the last ones who will evaluate your desire, and make a final decision, will be the Abbot and you.

Until then, you will simply stay at the settlement and enter the daily program which is comprised of services, tasks, rest, and [a daily rule of personal prayer](#) which you will receive from the Abbot—either directly from him, or through a Confessor. Any assigned task and the personal prayer rule for you will be in accordance with your bodily constitution and abilities.

Usually at the beginning, such a task received is easy, in order to allow you, as a novice, to hit the ground running and, in time, come to a decision as to whether or not you really want this lifestyle (because, many a times, this desire for monasticism may be just a passing thought). In order to realize that this calling is truly from God, you may stay a certain period without any obligations; you may just help the brotherhood during the cycle of the daily chores.

Knowing the language of the settlement (usually Greek) is preferable; but English will also be okay, in most places.

The secret to succeed as a spiritual man—especially as a monk on Mount Athos—are [obedience, humbleness and maintaining a constant program](#).

[Take care for your zeal](#) as to not diminish or vanish, and do not lose time because, if your candle burns out, then you will remain in darkness.

Also, of course, you must take care to avoid [the common pitfalls](#), at the beginning of your spiritual journey of discovery in Christ Jesus .

A glimpse from Easter, Vatopedi monastery, Mount Athos



— Source: asceticexperience.com