

# Ontology

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**Ontology** is the [philosophical study](#) of the nature of [being](#) , [becoming](#) , [existence](#) and/or [reality](#) , as well as the basic [categories of being](#) and their relations.

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Traditionally listed as a part of the major branch of philosophy known as [metaphysics](#)

, ontology often deals with questions concerning what [entities](#)

exist or may be said to exist and how such entities may be grouped, related within a [hierarchy](#)

, and subdivided according to similarities and differences. Although ontology as a philosophical enterprise is highly hypothetical, it also has practical application in [information science](#)

and

[technology](#)

, such as

[ontology engineering](#)

. A very simple definition of ontology is that it is the examination of what is meant, in context, by the word 'thing'.

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