

# WILLIAM OF OCKHAM

## Biography

Born 1285 outside London

Died 1347 in Munich, Germany (likely of the Plague)

∞ Ockham will study theology but will not be embraced by any of the church's leadership circle.

∞ His writings will be condemned by the Pope, and will eventually be excommunicated.

∞ In his latter years he will lead a small band of dissidents living in exile



## Philosophy (major ideas)

### “Ockham’s Razor”

The principle of economy in theorizing. It calls for the least number of assumptions in the construction of an explanation

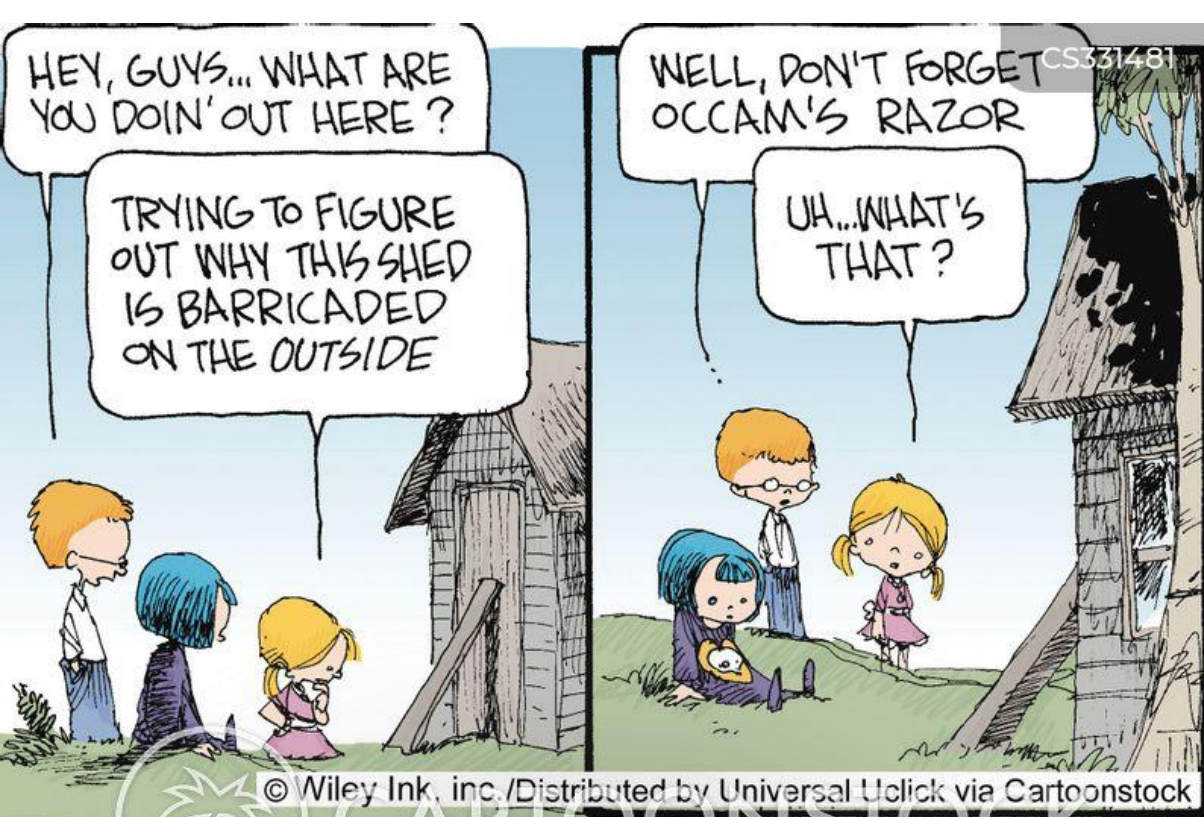
↳ It is the cutting away of a pre-existing elaborate hierarchy of ideas and concepts in the attempt to grasp the truth.

↳ It sought to remove the multiple abstractions some philosophers require to explain things

Convinced that belief in God is a matter of faith alone. Against the scholastic mainstream, he insisted that **theology is not a science** and rejected all the alleged proofs of the existence of God

The claim of the papacy/church to be supreme over the secular realm is to be rejected

Good is known by **faith** in his revelation, not by **reason** examining his creation



Occam's Razor explained, and how it differs from other rational principles (11 min, 33 sec)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BxxKE-NcRo>  
↪ Jeffrey Kaplan. PhD degree from UC Berkeley in 2018, now teaching at University of North Carolina

