

Magh Navaratri (30th January - 6th February 2025)

Navaratri is one of the most observed festivals observed by Hindus all across the material world. The word Navaratri (nava-nine and ratri-nights) literally means nine nights dedicated to the worship of the Mother in her three main forms i.e. Durga Devi, Lakshmi Devi and Saraswati Devi. Navaratri is observed four times a year but the main Navaratri is the one that is observed in this period for nine days and nights. During this period, devotees of the Mother observe a fast, feed Brahmins and pray to the Mother for protection, better health and the fulfillment of one's desires.

Magha Gupta Navaratri is the festival of nine days dedicated to the nine forms of Mother Durga or the three main forms of the Mother namely Mother's Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati in the month of Magha (January/February).

Magha Gupta Navaratri 2025

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30th January - 6th February 2025 - Magha Gupta Navaratri is observed over 8 Gregorian days.

During the "nine Vedic" Magha Gupta Navaratri days, devotees may worship Devi in three formats, namely:

First format:

30th January - 1st February Is dedicated to Mother Durga
2nd February - 3rd February Is dedicated to Mother Lakshmi
4th February - 6th February Is dedicated to Mother Saraswati

Second format: (each day represents a form of the Supreme Devi):

30 th January	Day 1 (Pratipada)	Mother Shailputri is worshipped
31 st January	Day 2 (Dwitiya)	Mother Brahmacharini is worshipped
1 st February	Day 3 (Tritiya)	Mother Chandraghanta is worshipped
2 nd February	Day 4 (Chaturthi)	Mother Kushmanda is worshipped
	Day 5 (Panchami)	Mother Skandamata is worshipped
3 rd February	Day 6 (Shashti)	Mother Katyayani is worshipped
4 th February	Day 7 (Saptami)	Mother Kalaratri is worshipped
5 th February	Day 8 (Ashtami)	Mother Mahagauri is worshipped
6 th February	Day 9 (Navami)	Mother Siddhidatri is worshipped
7 th February	Day 10 (Dashami)	Vijay Dashami

Third format:

The predominating devi deity for Magha (Gupta) Navaratri is the Tantrik form of Mother Saraswati called MAATANGI DEVI.

Who is Maatangi devi? A brief synopsis...

Devi Maatangi (Sanskrit: मातङ्गी, Maatāṅgī) is one of the Das Mahavidyas, ten Tantric goddesses and an aspect of the Vedic Divine Mother. Devi Maatangi is named as the ninth Mahavidya devi. She is the Tantric form of Mother Saraswati, the goddess of music

and learning. Maatangi devi governs speech, music, knowledge and the arts. Her worship is prescribed to acquire supernatural powers, especially gaining control over enemies, attracting people to oneself, acquiring mastery over the arts and gaining supreme knowledge.



MAATANGI DEVI

The beginning of summer and winter are two very important junctions of climatic and solar influence. These periods are taken as sacred opportunities for the worship of Durga Devi, the "warden of the material world." Jai Mata Di.

Many misunderstand the importance of Mother Durga and Lord Shiva. So we shall explain briefly. Mother Durga is the warden of the material world. Durga means "fort, prison house". So this material world is a mega prison house where one who has committed a great sin is sent. What is this great sin I am talking about? Well at one stage we were very envious of Lord Krsna and thought that we are greater than Lord Krsna and due to this grave sin we were cast into this prison house we suffer in this material world. And guess what most of them have not learnt their lesson. Don't you find so much of envy still taking place? It seems this world is being engulfed with hate and enviousness. In this material world Mother Durga punishes us with the Trishul (the 3-pointed spear), which she holds in the hand. The 3-pointed Trishul represents the three fold miseries of life, which are as follows: - miseries caused by the higher beings, miseries caused by natural disasters and finally miseries caused by envious people. Now in the prison if the warden is favorable to one then that person's prison life can be heavenly, but if one is not in favorable terms with the warden, then life can be worse than hell. That's why we should be very humble towards Mother Durga. And remember that she is no ordinary personality. One of her names in the Durga Sahasranama is "Vaishnavi" - the female devotee of Lord Krsna. Also in Shree Krsna Lila Mother Durga appears as Lord Krsna's sister. Now when one serves his sentence he is sent to the spiritual world. But waiting for you on the outskirts of the spiritual world is Lord Shiva (Vaishnava yatha shambu -the greatest devotee of Lord Krsna) in Shiva-loka. If one has even the slightest amount of materialism, desire, or obstacle he is sent back down by Lord Shiva to rid himself of that desire, etc.

Lord Shiva's duty is to make sure that only qualified persons are allowed to enter the spiritual world. So the husband-wife team of Durga-Shiva really plays an extremely important role in Sanatana Dharma (the eternal religion). Lord Krsna would not have given these important jobs to just anyone other than the two most qualified personalities who are also great devotees of Lord Krsna.

Jai Durga Mata Jai Uma pati Mahadeva



There are many versions of Mother Durga's activities. Many ask but isn't this confusion? Which do we believe? Well all are correct. You see different pastimes are enacted in different Yugas hence there are many many pastimes. Now who said Hinduism is boring.

So some of the Kathas are as follows: Durga Devi's mother desired to see her daughter. So Lord Shiva permitted her to go and see her mother only for nine days in a year. The festival of Durga Puja marks this brief visit and ends on Vijaya Dasami, when Mother Durga leaves for her return to Mount Kailash. Another katha is that these nine days are held in commemoration of the victory of Mother Durga's over the great demon Mahishasura, the buffalo-headed demon. Another version is that Mother Durga fought with Bhandasura and his forces for nine days and nine nights. This Bhandasura had a wonderful birth and life. When Lord Shiva burnt Kama (Cupid) with the fire from his third eye, Shree Ganeshji playfully molded a figure out of the ashes, and the Lord breathed life into it. Thus the terrible demon Bhandasura was created. He engaged himself in great penance and on account of it obtained a boon from Lord Shiva. With the help of that boon, he began harassing the three worlds. Then Mother Durga could not stand this and fought with him for nine nights - the demons have extraordinary strength during the night and killed him on the evening of the tenth day, known as Vijaya Dasami.

(Vijaya Dasami is a very auspicious day. On this day Mother Durga bestows her divine blessings upon those who have observed a vrat/fasting for the 10 days for Her.) Also since learning of any science is begun on this day. It was on this day that Shree Arjuna worshipped Mother Durga before starting the battle against the Kauravas on the field of Kurukshetra. Also Shree Raam worshipped Mother Durga at the time of the fight with Ravana, to invoke her aid in the battle. This was on the days preceding Vijaya Dasami. He fought and won through her grace. (But please understand that Shree Raam did not need Mother Durga's help, after all He is the Supreme Lord, but to engage His devotee He allowed it. This is the Lord's mercy upon His devotees.)

A child is more familiar with the mother than with the father, because the mother is very kind, loving, tender and affectionate, and looks after the needs of the child. In the same way we cannot go to Lord Krsna, Lord Shiva, Lord Rama, etc without the mercy of their consorts (wives), i.e. Radharani/Rukmini, Ma Durga, and Sita-devi respectively. So in the same way one can easily attain the mercy of the Lord once one receives the mercy of Their consort. So one has to receive the mercy of Mother Durga first to receive the mercy of Lord Shiva. Durga Devi's grace and mercy, compassion, knowledge, power, glory are endless. She can bestow upon the devotee material prosperity as well as spiritual freedom. Remember she is a devotee of Lord Krsna, and to go to Lord Krsna one has to receive the mercy of a devotee and who better than Mother Durga.

Approach Ma with an open heart. Lay bare your heart to her with frankness and humility. Be as simple as a child. Ask Ma to remove your egoism, pride, vanity, envy, cunningness, selfishness and meanness but also pray to Ma to bless you with wealth (material and spiritual), auspiciousness, prosperity, knowledge and so forth. Make a total, unreserved self-surrender to Ma. Sing Ma's glories and chant Ma's names with total faith. Navaratri is one of the most suitable times to perform intense spiritual practices. So do not waste this opportunity.

So the first three days we pray to Mother Durga - we pray to Ma to destroy our impurities, our vices and our defects. We pray to Ma to guide us through the many dangers and pitfalls that we experience in our lives, and to prevent such negative occurrences in the future. Thus the first three days mark the first stage of the destruction of impurities and the determined effort to root out the evil tendencies in us.

Once you have accomplished your task on the negative side- that of breaking down all the impure propensities and old, vicious habits - the next step is to build up a sublime spiritual personality, to acquire positive qualities in place of the demoniac qualities. Now the devotee must cultivate and develop all the auspicious qualities that a devotee should possess. The devotee has to earn spiritual wealth to enable him/her to receive the rare gem of divine wisdom. If this is not achieved then the old demoniac natures will surface again and again. Hence, this stage is as important in a devotee spiritual life as the first step. The difference between the first step and the second step is that the first step is ruthless and determined annihilation of the impure egoistic self and the latter is an orderly, steady, calm and serene effort to develop purity. Now this serene side is depicted by the worship of Mother Lakshmi. Ma (being the wealth-giving aspect of Lord Narayana) bestows upon the devotee the inexhaustible divine wealth. Once the devotee succeeds in rooting out the evil propensities, and develops pure, divine qualities, he/she becomes competent to attain wisdom. He/she is now ready to receive the light of supreme wisdom and divine knowledge. At this stage comes the devout worship of Mother Saraswati, who is divine knowledge personified, the embodiment of knowledge of the eternal truths. Ma bestows on the devotee the rarest gem i.e. knowledge of the Supreme Lord. (Please note Mother Saraswati is no ordinary personality. Besides being the wife of Lord Brahma, Ma along with Shree Ganesh-ji is always worshiped first at the commencement of any studying or pujas. In the Srimad Bhagavatam 1.2.4 Shree Sukadeva Goswami chants "Devim sarasvatim" - "Before reciting this Srimad Bhagavatam I offer my respectful obeisance's to Lord Narayana, Mother Saraswati, the goddess of learning and to Srila Vyasadeva." So for Sukadeva Goswami to chant Saraswati Devi name says it all. He gives Ma plenty of importance.



So briefly once again during on the first three days worship a Mother Durga murti/picture at your altar place. The murti/picture should be garlanded and looking very beautiful. Offer Ma arati (incense, lamp, flowers and finally sweets/fruits/or milk). The sweets/fruits/or milk should be consumed later. Then you should chant the mantras that we have supplied below as a guide. If you have a special mantra you can also chant that as well. Mother Durga only had Dhaar to drink in the 9 days, Mata didn't eat anything until the demons were all destroyed hence many devotees to show their commitment to Mother Durga also observe a fast/vrat for 9 days like Mother Durga did. If it's possible, try to perform a salt less fast until the evening in these nine-days or try to perform it according to your abilities. (If you suffer from diabetes, etc it will not be possible, so as I have mentioned perform this vrata according to your abilities. The idea is to try to perform the vrata with faith and not be fanatical.

On Vijaya Dasami, Kanya Puja is performed. Nine young girls below the age of 10 are worshipped as the embodiments of the Divine Mother. They are fed sumptuously and, amongst other things, presented with new clothes (or gifted something as a present according to your means). On this day you can perform a grand puja glorifying the three mothers.

Mantras of Mother Durga/Kali to chant during this period:

Om hreeng dung durgaayai namah

Om hreeng shreeng kleeng durgati naashin-yai mahaa maayaa yai namah (this is a wish fulfilling mantra)

Om Aing hreeng kleeng chaamun-daaayai vich-chai namah

Please note the **n** and **d** are pronounced with the tip of tongue on the roof of your mouth.

Mantras of Mother Lakshmi to chant during this period:

Om Shreeng mahaa lakshma-yai namah

Om shreeng hreeng kaleeng hreeng shree mahaa lakshmai ya namah

Mantras of Mother Saraswati to chant during this period:

Om shreeng hreeng sarasvat-yai namah

Om aing hreeng shreeng vaag-dev-yai saras-wat-yai namah

On the **30th January 2025**, after having a bath, Jau seeds (a.k.a barley seeds, jau seeds, jav seeds, yava, hordeum vulgare) are planted on a tray which has sand in it so that this grows in front of the lota for the next 10 days which the Mothers will be worshipped (all of which are explained below, in the Simple D.I.Y. Navaratri Puja). In the evening of the **29th January 2025**, add one handful of Jau seeds in water and let it soak overnight. Every day a little water is sprinkled over the seeds. These seeds will germinate for the 10 days. "Why this is performed?" one may ask - this is done to honour Mother Shakambhari devi (who is mentioned in the 11th chapter of the Durga Paath and is none other than an expansion of Mother Durga). Mother Shakambhari devi is the mother of nourishments.

Simplified Navaratri prayers for this period.

This prayer process is very simple and cost effective.

If you cannot pronounce the Sanskrit mantras then read the English translations I have translated.

Lord Ganesh Prayer Procedure.

At the prayer place, place a Lord Ganesh murti or photo. Firstly offer an agarbatti, lamp (with either ghee or oil with a wick or a small piece of camphor) and a flower (or all three on a tray) to Shree Ganesh (turn seven times clockwise around the murti or photo), and pray to Shree Ganesh, praying to him to remove all obstacles in the path of your prayer to the Mother.

Mother Durga Prayer Procedure.

(kindly note you may replace the name "Durga" with "Kali" or "Lakshmi" or "Saraswati".)

At the prayer place, place a Mother Durga murti or photo.

Now chant the following:

1) Hold your palms in the Namaste position and chant:

Om swagatam su swagatam - Om Durga-yai namah
(Swagatam means "O Mother Durga I welcome you".)

2) Offer one or three incense sticks (dhoopam) by turning it seven times clockwise around Mother Durga's deity/photo.

Om tato dhoopam aghraa-payaami - Om Durga-yai namah
O Mother Durga I offer you this incense, kindly accept my offering.

3) Then offer a clay or brass lamp (deepam) with either ghee or oil with a wick or a small piece of camphor by turning it seven times clockwise around the deity/photo.

Om prat-yaksha deepam darshayaami - Om Durga-yai namah
O Mother Durga I offer you this lamp offering, kindly accept my offering.

4) Then offer flower (pushpam) or flower petals by turning it seven times clockwise around Mother Durga's deity/photo.

Om idam pushpam - Om Durga-yai namah
O Mother Durga I offer you this flower, kindly accept my offering.

5) Then offer cut fruit or sweet meats or sweet rice (Naivedyam). It should be in a small bowl with a teaspoon. Turn the bowl seven times clockwise around the deity/photo and bring the bowl near the lips of Mother Durga suggesting she partakes in the food offering. Then leave this in front of the deity/photo. This is later consumed by the family as the Devi's Prashad.

Om naivedyam samar-payaami - Om Durga-yai namah
O Mother Durga I offer you this food offering, kindly accept my offering.

6) Then in a cup (lota/chumbhu) which has * Dhaar turn the lota seven times clockwise around the deity/photo and bring the lota near the lips of Devi suggesting she drink the Dhaar offering.

○ Mother Durga I offer you your favourite drink Dhaar, kindly accept my offering.

* (What is DHAAR?. I have included more information below)

7) Offer prayers for forgiveness

Om yaani kaani cha papani janmaantara kritaani cha
taani sarvaani nashyanti pradakshina pade pade //

"O Compassionate Mother! Victory to You! Please do forgive all the errors committed by me with the hands, legs, speech, body, through actions, through the ears, eyes, mind or by not doing ordained actions or by doing prohibited actions".

Then offer your personal prayers to Mother Durga. Ask Mother Durga for whatever you desire (within reason) and Devi being so merciful will grant what you desire. But be careful what you desire for. Bow down and leave the prayer place. The Dhaar is offered in your Devi than. The food offerings are eaten as prashadam.

1. Optional: Suggested Mother Durga mantra you may chant 11, 21 or 108 times:

Om Dum Durga-yai namah

"Salutations to the Devi who bestows compassion, fearlessness and patience".

2. Optional: You may sing or hear the Durga Chalisa.

Durga Chalisa click ([HERE](#)).

3. Optional: on the first day you may offer the Mother a lime or lemon. You may write your name on the lime or lemon. Hold the lime or lemon and pray for what you desire like good health or a better job etc. This is kept for the 9 days by the Photo or Murti of the Mother. On the 10th day it is discarded in the garden or in a river.

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The significance of DHAAR offerings to the Divine Mother.

In any puja to Devi, particularly in Her Divine forms as Mothers Durga/Bandi/Kali, Dhaar is offered. Unfortunately there is no direct English translation of Dhaar from Sanskrit. The nearest being "The Divine Wine". Now I said wine, but it does not refer to the famous wines we produce here in South Africa, rather this beverage - the "wine" - is especially Devi's favourite. Many have been offering Devi Dhaar but have never had an idea as to why. So, below we are furnishing you with shastric proof of Dhaar and its importance in Devi puja.

What Dhaar consists of: Turmeric sticks, cloves, nutmeg (Jaiphal/Jaifar), almonds, elachie, flowers petals (Hibiscus), sugar candy, camphor, turf, cows's milk, honey, akshat (white unbroken rice) and syringaberry leaves. (kindly view the attached photo)

One may chant the following mantra from the "Shree Artha Argala Stotram" when offering Dhaar but if it's rather difficult to pronounce then recite the English meaning...

Om Jayanti Mangala Kaali Bhadra Kaali Kaapaalini
Durga Shamma Shivaah Dhaatri Swaahaa Swaadhaa Namostute

(Oh! Conqueror of all, Remover of darkness, Auspicious one, beyond time, the bearer of Skulls of Impure thoughts, Reliever of difficulties, loving forgiveness, supporter of the

Universe. You are the one who truly receives the sacrificial offerings and the offerings to the Pitrs (Ancestors). To you I bow most merciful Devi.)

A question will be asked by some aspirants - "how many lotas of Dhaar should one offer?" I would humbly suggest one lota of Dhaar and from that one lota offer 9 times on your Thaan. Yes you can offer 9 Lotas of Dhaar, but if you offering the Dhaar to a plant you going to drown that poor plant... So common sense should always prevail.

References of Dhaar From the Durga Paath

Devi is often depicted carrying a wine-cup enjoying Her divine wine, as noted in Devi Mahatyama (a.k.a Durga Saptashati, Chandi Homa or Durga Paath) below:

In **CHAPTER 2 of the Durga Path "Slaughter of the armies of Mahishasura"**

"I resort to Mahalakshmi, the destroyer of Mahishasura, who is seated on the lotus, is of the complexion of coral and who holds in her (*eighteen*) hands rosary, axe, mace, arrow, thunderbolt, lotus, bow, pitcher, rod, sakti, sword, shield, conch, bell, wine-cup, trident, noose and the discus Sudarshana."

Shloka 34. "Enraged, Chandika, the Mother of the worlds, quaffed a divine drink again and again, and laughed, her eyes became red."

Shlokas 30-33. "The lord of wealth (*Kubera*) gave Devi a **drinking cup, ever full of wine**. Sessa, the lord of all serpents, who supports this earth, gave Devi a serpent-necklace bedecked with best jewels. Honoured likewise by other devas also with ornaments and weapons, Devi gave out a loud roar with a decrying laugh again and again. By her unending, exceedingly great, terrible roar the entire sky was filled, and there was great reverberation. All worlds shook, the seas trembled."

Shloka 36. "And Devi, with showers of arrows, pulverized those mountains hurled at her, and spoke to him in flurried words, the colour of her face accentuated with the **intoxication of the divine drink.**"

CHAPTER 3 of the Durga Paath "The Slaying of Mahishasura"

Shlokas 37-38. "Roar, roar, O fool, for a moment while I **drink this wine**. When you will be slain by me, the devas will soon roar in this very place."

Question: When does one break their salt-less Navaratri vrat?

Answer: Generally, after the Durga Visarjan ritual, one break their Navaratri fasting. Hence Durga Visarjan timing can also be considered for Navaratri Parana (breaking with salted foods). If you had observed a salt-less vrat then break your vrat with salted vegetarian foods after your Vijaya-dasami prayers on the **7th February 2025**. Many staunch devotees do break their salt-less fast after sunset on the **7th February 2025**.

* If you are implying about breaking with non-veg foods then I am not the appropriate person to answer that. I am an advocate of vegetarianism.

*** Kindly note that all the pooja ingredients should be disposed off in a way that it should not harm our environment as well as our religious sentiments should also be maintained.

How to perform your DIY Navaratri Havan

The Havan can only be performed during the Navaratri period and NOT on Vijay Dasami (7th February 2025).

The Navaratri Havan is performed in your home. You should have a bath and put on clean clothes before proceeding to the puja place. Have all the requirements for the Puja and the havan arranged on a tray beforehand. Sit facing East or North.

Wash your hands and then place some water in your right hand and sip water from the palm of the right hand, chant Om Vishnu, wash your hands again and do this two more times.

Say in English "O Lord Krsna on this day (which ever day you are performing the havan), in this month of Ashwina, your name, I am performing my Navaratri Havan.

Take a betel leaf, betel nut, rice and flowers and pray to Shree Ganeshji "Om ganapataye aavaahayaamee sthapayamee" and keep on the bedi. Offer Lord Ganesha incense, lamp, flowers and some sweet rice and then betel leaf and then finally lamp. Then offer Lord Ganesha his favourite food viz. kheer (sweet rice), sugar candy and laddus.

Take another betel leaf, betel nut, rice and flowers and pray to The Three Mothers "Om Durga-devi, Lakshmi-devi Sarasvati-devi aavaahayaamee sthapayamee" and keep on the bedi. Then offer The Three Mothers incense, lamp, flowers and some sweet rice and then betel leaf and nut and then finally lamp.

Then light the fire with a pieces of camphor and place in the havan kund. Place some wood in the kund now. You can add more camphor in the kund.

Chant the mantra Om Agni Devtaa bhyo Namah

Offer a Tulsi Twig into the fire. (this is optional).

The Samaghree mixture consists of (Til, white rice, jaw {jau}, nav-daan, and lobhan).

Now we start the havan... every time "swaahaa" is chanted, offer samaghree into the fire.

Om Ganapata-ye swaahaa
Om Sarasvati-yai swaahaa
Om sooryaaye swaahaa
Om somaaye swaahaa
Om angaarkaaye swaahaa
Om budhaaye swaahaa
Om brihaspataye swaahaa
Om shukraaye swaahaa
Om shanaish-charaaye swaahaa
Om raahave swaahaa
Om ketave swaahaa
Om Prajaapataye swaahaa
Om Indraaya swaahaa
Om Agnaye swaahaa
Om Bhoooh swaahaa
Om Bhuvah Swaahaa
Om Swah Swaahaa
Om Hanumate swaahaa

Om aim hreem kleem chaamun daayai vich chai swaahaa x 9
"Om trayam bakkam yajaa-mahe sugan-dhim pushti-varadhanam urvaa-rooka-miva
bandha-naam mrityor mooksheeya maamritaata" Om swaahaa x 11
om shareng hareng kaleeng hareng shri maha lakshmiyai swaahaa X 9
Om Namō Naaraaya-naaye swaahaa
Om Namō Bhagavate Vaasudevaayaa swaahaa
Om Shree Vishnave swaahaa
Om shreng hreng sarasvat-yai swaahaa X 9
Om Brahmāye Swaahaa
Om Sarva Devee Devebhyo swaahaa.

Offer samaghree 9 times with the Maha Mantra "Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna
Krishna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare" to atone for any mistakes
committed during the havan.

Offer water three times around the havan kund in a clockwise direction.

Finally place two purees on top of each other, place the balance of the samaghree on top
of these, on top of this place a betel leaf, a betel nut, some white rice, a few drops of
ghee and place whole into the fire while chanting "Om sarvam vai poornam swaahaa",
and place this in the middle of the fire. Offer the rest of the ghee into the fire. Thereafter
you should bow down before the fire and then stand up and you can offer Artee to the
fire and to your family Deities with a lamp. Your final prayer is to chant the Maha-mantra
three times which is as follows ("Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Hare
Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare") to nullify any mistakes you made while
performing this prayer to the Three Mothers.

Jaya Durga Ma
Jaya Lakshmi Ma
Jaya Sarasvati Ma

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Compiled for the upliftment of Sanatan Dharma
Narottam Das & Arjun Nandlal

T.N.

E-mail info@dipika.org.za

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