

Navaratri and Dasara: Puja Vidhi

Thursday 30 September to Saturday 9 October 2027

Nine nights honour the Goddess as Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. In Karnataka, many homes set up a bombe habba, a display of dolls on steps, and invite friends to see it. Vijayadashami celebrates the victory of good over evil. This guide gives the full home puja step by step. Instructions are in English; every mantra is printed in Devanagari script with a Roman transliteration below it.

What you need

- Steps (3, 5, 7 or 9) made from boxes or shelves, covered with cloth
- Dolls: the pattada gombe (king and queen pair), gods, animals and everyday scenes
- A kalasha, lamp, flowers, turmeric and kumkum
- Books, notebooks and musical instruments for Saraswati Puja
- Tools, laptops and vehicles to clean for Ayudha Puja
- Sundal (chickpeas or lentils) and small gifts for visitors

Before the puja

- Set up the dolls on the first day, with the pattada gombe on the top step and gods above.
- Light a lamp near the display each evening.
- Plan which friends to invite on which evening.

Food to offer

Sundal, payasa, chitranna, kosambari and a different sweet each day.

Opening

- Sit facing east or north. Light the lamp and say the lamp prayer.

शुभं करोति कल्याणम् आरोग्यं धनसम्पदः । शत्रुबुद्धिविनाशाय दीपज्योतिर्नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

śubhaṃ karoti kalyāṇam ārogyaṃ dhanasampadaḥ | śatrubuddhivināśāya dīpajyotirnamo'stu te ||
I bow to the light of the lamp, which brings goodness, health and wealth, and removes harmful thoughts.

- Achamana: sip a few drops of water from the right palm three times, once with each name.

ॐ केशवाय स्वाहा । ॐ नारायणाय स्वाहा । ॐ माधवाय स्वाहा ॥

oṃ keśavāya svāhā | oṃ nārāyaṇāya svāhā | oṃ mādhavāya svāhā ||

- Pray to Ganesha first, to remove obstacles.

वक्रतुण्ड महाकाय सूर्यकोटि समप्रभ । निर्विघ्नं कुरु मे देव सर्वकार्येषु सर्वदा ॥

vakratuṇḍa mahākāya sūryakoṭi samaprabha | nirvighnaṃ kuru me deva sarvakāryeṣu sarvadā ||
O Lord with the curved trunk and mighty body, shining like a million suns, remove the obstacles from all my work, always.

4. Sankalpa: hold a little water and akshate, say the resolve for worshipping the Goddess Durga, then let them fall on a plate.

मम सकुटुम्बस्य क्षेमस्थैर्य आयुरारोग्य ऐश्वर्याभिवृद्धयर्थ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै प्रीत्यर्थ यथाशक्ति ध्यानावाहनादि षोडशोपचारपूजां करिष्ये ॥

mama sakuṭumbasya kṣemasthairya āyurārogya aiśvaryābhivṛddhyartham śrī durgādevyai prītyartham yathāśakti dhyānāvāhanādi ṣoḍaśopacārapūjāṃ kariṣye ||

For the safety, long life, health and prosperity of my family, and to please the deity, I perform this worship with the sixteen offerings, as well as I can.

5. The sixteen offerings (shodashopachara). Before each one say "Om Shri durgādevyai namah", then the line below, and make the offering.

The sixteen offerings

1. Dhyana: close your eyes and picture the deity.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । ध्यायामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | dhyāyāmi ||

2. Avahana: invite the deity into the image or kalasha.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । आवाहयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | āvāhayāmi ||

3. Asana: offer a seat; place a few grains of akshate.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । आसनं समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | āsanam samarpayāmi ||

4. Padya: offer water for the feet with a spoon.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । पाद्यं समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | pādyaṃ samarpayāmi ||

5. Arghya: offer water for the hands.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । अर्घ्यं समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | arghyaṃ samarpayāmi ||

6. Achamana: offer water to sip.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । आचमनीयं समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | ācamanīyaṃ samarpayāmi ||

7. Snana: bathe a metal image, or sprinkle water on a picture.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । स्नानं समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | snānam samarpayāmi ||

8. Vastra: offer a cloth or a cotton thread.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । वस्त्रं समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | vastraṁ samarpayāmi ||

9. Abharana: offer ornaments, bangles or a turmeric thread.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । आभरणानि समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | ābharaṇāni samarpayāmi ||

10. Gandha: offer sandalwood paste, turmeric and kumkum.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । गन्धं समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | gandhaṁ samarpayāmi ||

11. Pushpa: offer flowers.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । पुष्पाणि समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | puṣpāṇi samarpayāmi ||

12. Dhupa: wave the incense.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । धूपम् आघ्रापयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | dhūpam āghrāpayāmi ||

13. Dipa: show the lamp.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । दीपं दर्शयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | dīpaṁ darśayāmi ||

14. Naivedya: offer the food, sprinkling water around it.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । नैवेद्यं निवेदयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | naivedyaṁ nivedayāmi ||

15. Tambula: offer betel leaves, nut and fruit.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । ताम्बूलं समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | tāmbūlaṁ samarpayāmi ||

16. Nirajana: do arati with camphor or ghee lamp.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । नीराजनं समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | nīrājanaṁ samarpayāmi ||

17. Mantrapushpa: offer flowers with folded hands.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । मन्त्रपुष्पं समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | mantrapuṣpaṁ samarpayāmi ||

18. Pradakshina: turn around once clockwise and bow down.

ॐ श्री दुर्गादेव्यै नमः । प्रदक्षिणनमस्कारान् समर्पयामि ॥

om śrī durgādevyai namaḥ | pradakṣiṇanamaskārān samarpayāmi ||

Mantras for Navaratri and Dasara

सर्वमङ्गलमाङ्गल्ये शिवे सर्वार्थसाधिके । शरण्ये त्र्यम्बके गौरि नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

sarvamaṅgalamāṅgalye śive sarvārthasādhike | śaraṇye tryambake gauri nārāyaṇi namo'stu te ||
Salutations to the Goddess, the most auspicious one, who fulfils every good aim and protects all.

सरस्वति नमस्तुभ्यं वरदे कामरूपिणि । विद्यारम्भं करिष्यामि सिद्धिर्भवतु मे सदा ॥

sarasvati namastubhyaṁ varade kāmārūpiṇi | vidyārambhaṁ kariṣyāmi siddhirbhavatu me sadā ||
Salutations to Saraswati, giver of boons. I begin my learning; may it always succeed.

Closing

- Ask forgiveness for anything missed, then share the prasada with everyone.

मन्त्रहीनं क्रियाहीनं भक्तिहीनं जनार्दन । यत्पूजितं मया देव परिपूर्णं तदस्तु मे ॥

mantrahīnaṁ kriyāhīnaṁ bhaktihīnaṁ janārdana | yatpūjitaṁ mayā deva paripūrṇaṁ tadastu me ||
Whatever I have offered, without the right words, actions or devotion, please accept it as complete.

A home puja guide from VedVidesh. Mantras are given in their common short forms; families and regions vary, so follow your own tradition where it differs, and ask a priest or elder to check pronunciation if you are learning. Dates are for India.