Navaratri and Dasara at Home

Thursday 30 September to Saturday 9 October 2027

Short puja: about 20 minutes a day



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.

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.

Short puja, step by step

1. Day 1: set up the dolls and the kalasha, light the lamp, pray to Ganesha and invite the Goddess.
2. Every evening: light the lamp, offer flowers, do arati, and offer sundal or a sweet.
3. Invite friends to see the dolls; give them sundal, turmeric and kumkum and a small gift.
4. Saraswati Puja: place books and instruments before the Goddess, offer flowers and rest from study for the day.
5. Ayudha Puja (8 Oct): clean tools, laptops and vehicles, mark them with turmeric and kumkum, and give thanks.
6. Vijayadashami (9 Oct): do a final puja, open the books again and write the first letters, then lay one doll down to close the display.

Prayers to chant

शुभं करोति कल्याणम् आरोग्यं धनसम्पदः । शत्रुबुद्धिविनाशाय दीपज्योतिर्नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

I bow to the light of the lamp, which brings goodness, health and wealth, and removes harmful thoughts.

सर्वमङ्गलमाङ्गल्ये शिवे सर्वार्थसाधिके । शरण्ये त्र्यम्बके गौरि नारायणि नमोऽस्तु ते ॥

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 ॥

Salutations to Saraswati, giver of boons. I begin my learning; may it always succeed.

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

Whatever I have offered, without the right words, actions or devotion, please accept it as complete.

With children

- Let children choose and arrange one step of the doll display themselves.
- Have them make a park or village scene with clay, sand and small toys.
- Vijayadashami is a lucky day to start learning something new: music, a language or a craft.

A simple home guide from VedaVidesh. Every family and region has its own customs, so follow yours where they differ, and check a local panchanga for the exact time in your city. Dates are for India; abroad they can differ by a day. Members also get the full puja with every mantra.