Onam at Home

Sunday 12 September 2027

Short puja: about 15 minutes



Ten days welcoming the legendary King Mahabali, whose return is celebrated with flower carpets, grand vegetarian feasts served on banana leaves, snake-boat races and dances.

What you need

- Fresh flowers
- Banana leaves
- Kasavu saree or mundu
- Vegetables for the sadya
- Vermicelli or rice for payasam
- Banana chips

Before the puja

- Clean the puja place and take a bath; wear fresh clothes.
- Set out a lamp, incense, flowers, turmeric, kumkum, rice and water.
- Read the story to the family before you begin.

Short puja, step by step

1. **Light the lamp** and say the lamp prayer, then pray to Ganesha.
2. **Pookalam.** Each morning for ten days, children draw a flower carpet at the door, adding a ring for each day.
3. **Thrikkakara Appan.** On Thiruvonam morning, place a clay or wooden pyramid (Onathappan) in the centre of the pookalam to stand for Vamana and Mahabali.
4. **Puja.** Offer flowers, rice and a lamp, and the first portion of the feast.
5. **Onakodi.** Elders give new clothes to the family.
6. **Sadya.** Serve the meal on a banana leaf in the right order, from salt and pickles on the left to payasam at the end.
7. **Arati.** Wave the lamp, ask forgiveness for anything missed and share the prasada.

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.

> वक्रतुण्ड महाकाय सूर्यकोटि समप्रभ । निर्विघ्नं कुरु मे देव सर्वकार्येषु सर्वदा ॥
>
> O Lord with the curved trunk, shining like a million suns, remove the obstacles from all my work, always.

ॐ नमो नारायणाय ॥

Salutations to Narayana.

ॐ प्राणाय स्वाहा । ॐ अपानाय स्वाहा । ॐ व्यानाय स्वाहा । ॐ उदानाय स्वाहा । ॐ समानाय स्वाहा ॥

Offering the food to the five breaths of life.

यानि कानि च पापानि जन्मान्तरकृतानि च । तानि तानि विनश्यन्ति प्रदक्षिण पदे पदे ॥

With every step around the altar, may all past wrongs fall away.

With children

- Make a pookalam: Draw a circle and divide it into rings and petals with chalk.
- Tell the story of Onam before the puja.

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.