

Puja

Many Hindus worship one or more of the deities (gods and goddesses), but it doesn't matter which as they are all seen as different forms of the one supreme god, Brahman. Hindu worship is known as puja and involves praying to images of deities (murtis) and making offerings to them.



Most Hindu homes have a holy shrine where puja takes place. Puja is a daily routine and is a way of welcoming God into their home. Some shrines are decorated and others are quite simple. They can also be different sizes.



Before puja begins, everyone takes off their shoes as a sign of respect. Worshippers chant prayers (mantras) and the name of their favourite gods or goddesses, then offerings such as fruit, incense, water and flowers are made. Once puja has finished, the food which is offered to the deities to be blessed is then shared out and eaten.



'Aum' is the name given to the Hindu religious symbol. This is also chanted by worshippers.

Each shrine contains a puja tray which holds important items:

- Bell – The worshippers ring the bell to let God know that they are ready for puja;
- Incense and holder – The incense burns and gives off a pleasant smell;
- Diva lamp – The lamp is lit to remind everyone that God is with them;
- Water containers and spoon – To show respect, water is offered to the gods on a spoon;
- Kum kum powder – Hindu worshippers use it to mark their foreheads as a sign of respect to the gods. They also mark the foreheads of the gods on their shrine.



Puja can also take place at a Hindu temple known as a mandir. Family puja in the home is similar to puja in the temple. Each temple is usually dedicated to a specific god, but contains shrines for several different gods to which offerings can be made. Worshippers sit near to the main shrine whilst the priest chants. Puja is led by the temple priest. Hindus can choose to worship at the temple, or at home, during special religious festivals.

Questions about Puja

Answer the questions below in full sentences.

1. Where does puja take place in the home?

2. How often is puja carried out in the home?

3. How can shrines in Hindu homes be different?

4. Why do worshippers take off their shoes before puja?

5. Give two examples of possible offerings.

6. Why is a diva lamp lit during puja?

7. Where else can Hindus worship?

Questions about Puja

Answers

1. Where does puja take place in the home?

Most Hindu homes have a holy shrine where puja takes place.

2. How often is puja carried out in the home?

Puja is a daily routine which is carried out at least once.

3. How can shrines in Hindu homes be different?

Some shrines are decorated and others are quite simple, they can also be different sizes.

4. Why do worshippers take off their shoes before puja?

Everyone takes off their shoes as a sign of respect.

5. Give two examples of possible offerings.

Accept two of the following: fruit, incense, water, flowers.

6. Why is a diva lamp lit during puja?

The lamp is lit to remind everyone that God is with them.

7. Where else can Hindus worship?

Hindus can also worship at the temple (mandir).

Puja

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Most Hindu homes have a holy shrine where puja takes place. Puja is a daily routine, which is carried out at least once and is a way of welcoming God into the home. Some shrines are decorated and others are quite simplistic. They can also vary in size.



Before puja begins, everyone removes their shoes as a sign of respect. Worshippers chant prayers (mantras) and the name of their favourite gods or goddesses then offerings such as fruit, incense, water and flowers are made. Once puja has finished, the food, which is offered to the deities to be blessed, is then shared out and eaten. This blessed food is known as prashad.



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Puja can also take place at a Hindu temple known as a mandir. Family puja in the home is similar to puja in the temple. Each temple is usually dedicated to a specific god but contains shrines for several different gods to which offerings can be made. Worshippers sit near to the main shrine whilst the priest chants. Puja is led by the temple priest known as the pujari. Hindus can choose to worship at the temple, or at home, during special religious festivals.

Questions about Puja

Answer the questions below in full sentences.

1. What is a murti?

2. How often is puja carried out in the home?

3. How can shrines in Hindu homes vary?

4. What is the significance of removing shoes before puja?

5. Give three examples of possible offerings.

6. Explain 'Aum'.

7. What is the significance of the bell, diva lamp and water during puja?

8. Give one similarity and one difference between puja in the home and at the temple.

Questions about Puja

Answers

1. What is a murti?
A murti is an image of a deity (god or goddess).
2. How often is puja carried out in the home?
Puja in the home is a daily routine carried out at least once.
3. How can shrines in Hindu homes vary?
Some shrines are decorated and others are quite simplistic. Shrines can also vary in size.
4. What is the significance of removing shoes before puja?
Worshippers remove their shoes before puja as a sign of respect.
5. Give three examples of possible offerings.
Accept three of the following: fruit, incense, water, flowers.
6. Explain 'Aum'.
'Aum' is the name given to the Hindu religious symbol and is also chanted by worshippers during puja.
7. What is the significance of the bell, diva lamp and water during puja?
Bell – The worshippers ring the bell to let God know that they are ready for puja.
Diva lamp – The lamp is lit as a symbol of God's presence.
Water containers and spoon – To show respect, water is offered to the gods on a spoon.
8. Give one similarity and one difference between puja in the home and at the temple.
Accept any of the following;
Similarity– Offerings can be made to different deities; both at home, and at the temple, worshippers sit near the shrine during puja.
Difference – In the mandir, puja is led by the temple priest (pujari) but by a family member in the home.

Puja

Many Hindus worship one or more of the deities, but it doesn't matter which, as they are all seen as different aspects of the one supreme god, Brahman. Hindu worship is known as puja and involves praying to images of deities (murtis) and making offerings to them.



Most Hindu homes have a holy shrine where puja takes place. Puja is a daily routine which is carried out at least once a day and is a way of welcoming God into the home. Some shrines are elaborately decorated and others are quite simplistic. They can also vary in size.



Before puja commences, everyone removes their shoes as a sign of respect. Worshippers chant prayers (mantras) and the name of their favourite gods or goddesses then offerings such as fruit, incense, water and flowers are made. Once puja has finished, the food, which is offered to the deities to be blessed, is then shared out and eaten. This blessed food is known as prashad.



'Aum' (the name given to the Hindu religious symbol) is chanted during puja. Hindus believe that this was the first sound at the beginning of creation.

Each shrine contains a puja tray which holds important items:

- Bell – The worshippers ring the bell to let God know that they are ready for puja;
- Incense and holder – The incense burns and gives off a pleasant smell;
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Questions about Puja

Answer the questions below in full sentences.

1. Explain what Hindus believe about the deities and the one supreme god, Brahman.

2. What is a murti?

3. How often is puja carried out in the home?

4. What is the significance of removing shoes before puja?

5. What are mantras?

6. Give four examples of possible offerings.

7. Explain prashad.

8. Explain 'Aum'.

9. What is the special religious significance of the bell, incense, diva lamp, water and kum kum powder?

10. Give one similarity and one difference between puja in the home and at the temple.

11. Why do you think Hindus choose to worship at the temple?

Questions about Puja

Answers

1. Explain what Hindus believe about the deities and the one supreme god, Brahman.
Hindus believe that the deities are all different aspects of the one supreme god, Brahman.
2. What is a murti?
A murti is an image of a deity.
3. How often is puja carried out in the home?
Puja in the home is a daily routine carried out at least once.
4. What is the significance of removing shoes before puja?
Worshippers remove their shoes before puja as a sign of respect.
5. What are mantras?
Mantras are prayers.
6. Give four examples of possible offerings.
Four offerings could be fruit, incense, water and flowers.
7. Explain prashad.
Once puja has finished, the food which is offered to the deities to be blessed is then shared out and eaten. This blessed food is known as prashad.
8. Explain 'Aum'.
'Aum', the name given to the Hindu religious symbol, is chanted during puja. Hindus believe that this was the first sound at the beginning of creation.
9. What is the special religious significance of the bell, incense, diva lamp, water and kum kum powder?
**Bell – The worshippers ring the bell to let God know that they are ready for puja.
Incense and holder – The incense burns and gives off a pleasant aroma, it also purifies the air around the shrine.
Diva lamp – The lamp is lit as a symbol of God's presence.
Water containers and spoon – To show respect, water is offered to the gods on a spoon.
Kum kum powder – Hindu worshippers use it to mark their foreheads as a sign of respect to the gods. They also mark the foreheads of the gods on their shrine.**
10. Give one similarity and one difference between puja in the home and at the temple.
**Accept any of the following; Similarity – Offerings can be made to different deities; both at home, and at the temple, worshippers sit near the shrine during puja.
Difference – In the mandir, puja is led by the temple priest (pujari) but by a family member in the home.**
11. Why do you think Hindus choose to worship at the temple?
**Accept any relevant answer:
Hindus may worship at the mandir during special religious festivals.
To feel part of a wider Hindu community.**