

Navaratri and Dasara at Home

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.



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.

Simple 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

Shubham karoti kalyanam arogyam dhana sampadah, shatru buddhi vinashaya deepa jyotir namostute.

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

Sarva-mangala-mangalye shive sarvartha-sadhike, sharanye tryambake gauri narayani namostute.

Salutations to the Goddess, the most auspicious one, who fulfils every good aim and protects all.

Saraswati namastubhyam varade kamarupini, vidyarambham karishyami siddhir bhavatu me sada.

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

Mantra-hinam kriya-hinam bhakti-hinam janardana, yat pujitam maya deva paripurnam tad astu me.

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 muhurta in your city. Dates are for India; abroad they can differ by a day.