Ganesh Chaturthi: Puja Vidhi

Saturday 4 September 2027 · Gowri Habba on Friday 3 September

Ganesha, the remover of obstacles, is welcomed home as a guest in a clay idol and worshipped for one, three, five or more days. In Karnataka, his mother Gowri is worshipped the day before. This guide gives the full home puja step by step. Instructions are in English; every mantra is printed in Kannada script with a Roman transliteration below it.

What you need

- An eco-friendly clay Ganesha idol
- A small mandapa or plank with a cloth, and a decoration of banana leaves or flowers
- 21 blades of durva grass, red flowers (hibiscus) and other flowers
- Turmeric, kumkum, akshate, sandalwood paste and the sacred thread
- Lamps, incense and camphor
- Modak or kadubu, laddoo, fruits and coconut
- A bucket or tub of water for visarjane at home

Before the puja

- Clean the altar and set up the mandapa.
- Bring the idol home with its face covered, and uncover it at the altar.
- Have a bath and wear fresh clothes.

Food to offer

Modak or kadubu, panchakajjaya, laddoo, chakli, coconut and bananas.

Opening

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

> ಶುಭಂ ಕರೋತಿ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣಮ್ ಆರೋಗ್ಯಂ ಧನಸಮ್ಪದಃ । ಶತ್ರುಬುದ್ಧಿವಿನಾಶಾಯ ದೀಪಜ್ಯೋತಿರ್ನಮೋಽಸ್ತು ತೇ ॥
>
> 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.

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

> ಓಂ ಕೇಶವಾಯ ಸ್ವಾಹಾ । ಓಂ ನಾರಾಯಣಾಯ ಸ್ವಾಹಾ । ಓಂ ಮಾಧವಾಯ ಸ್ವಾಹಾ ॥
>
> oṃ keśavāya svāhā | oṃ nārāyaṇāya svāhā | oṃ mādhavāya svāhā ||

3. Pray to Ganesha first, to remove obstacles.

> ವಕ್ರತುಣ್ಡ ಮಹಾಕಾಯ ಸೂರ್ಯಕೋಟಿ ಸಮಪ್ರಭ । ನಿರ್ವಿಘ್ನಂ ಕುರು ಮೇ ದೇವ ಸರ್ವಕಾರ್ಯೇಷು ಸರ್ವದಾ ॥
>
> 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 Ganesha, then let them fall on a plate.

> ಮಮ ಸಕುಟುಮ್ಬಸ್ಯ ಕ್ಷೇಮಸ್ಥೈರ್ಯ ಆಯುರಾರೋಗ್ಯ ಐಶ್ವರ್ಯಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧ್ಯರ್ಥಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ಪ್ರೀತ್ಯರ್ಥಂ ಯಥಾಶಕ್ತಿ ಧ್ಯಾನಾವಾಹನಾದಿ ಷೋಡಶೋಪಚಾರಪೂಜಾಂ ಕರಿಷ್ಯೇ ॥
>
> mama sakuṭumbasya kṣemasthairya āyurārogya aiśvaryābhivṛddhyarthaṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye prītyarthaṃ 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 mahāgaṇapataye namah", then the line below, and make the offering.

The sixteen offerings

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

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಧ್ಯಾಯಾಮಿ ॥
>
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | dhyāyāmi ||

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

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಆವಾಹಯಾಮಿ ॥
>
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | āvāhayāmi ||

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

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಆಸನಂ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
>
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | āsanaṃ samarpayāmi ||

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

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಪಾದ್ಯಂ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
>
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | pādyaṃ samarpayāmi ||

5. Arghya: offer water for the hands.

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಅರ್ಘ್ಯಂ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
>
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | arghyaṃ samarpayāmi ||

6. Achamana: offer water to sip.

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಆಚಮನೀಯಂ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
>
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | ācamanīyaṃ samarpayāmi ||

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

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಸ್ನಾನಂ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
>
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | snānaṃ samarpayāmi ||

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

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ವಸ್ತ್ರಂ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | vastraṃ samarpayāmi ||

9. Yajnopavita: offer the sacred thread.

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಯಜ್ಞೋಪವೀತಂ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | yajñopavītaṃ samarpayāmi ||

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

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಗನ್ಧಂ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | gandhaṃ samarpayāmi ||

11. Pushpa: offer flowers.

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಪುಷ್ಪಾಣಿ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | puṣpāṇi samarpayāmi ||

12. Dhupa: wave the incense.

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಧೂಪಮ್ ಆಘ್ರಾಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | dhūpam āghrāpayāmi ||

13. Dipa: show the lamp.

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ದೀಪಂ ದರ್ಶಯಾಮಿ ॥
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | dīpaṃ darśayāmi ||

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

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ನೈವೇದ್ಯಂ ನಿವೇದಯಾಮಿ ॥
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | naivedyaṃ nivedayāmi ||

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

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ತಾಮ್ಬೂಲಂ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | tāmbūlaṃ samarpayāmi ||

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

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ನೀರಾಜನಂ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | nīrājanaṃ samarpayāmi ||

17. Mantrapushpa: offer flowers with folded hands.

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಮನ್ತ್ರಪುಷ್ಪಂ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | mantrapuṣpaṃ samarpayāmi ||

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

> ಓಂ ಶ್ರೀ ಮಹಾಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ । ಪ್ರದಕ್ಷಿಣನಮಸ್ಕಾರಾನ್ ಸಮರ್ಪಯಾಮಿ ॥
> oṃ śrī mahāgaṇapataye namaḥ | pradakṣiṇanamaskārān samarpayāmi ||

Mantras for Ganesh Chaturthi

> ಓಂ ಗಂ ಗಣಪತಯೇ ನಮಃ ॥
>
> oṃ gaṃ gaṇapataye namaḥ ||
> Salutations to Ganapati. Chant it 21 or 108 times.

Closing

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

  > ಮನ್ತ್ರಹೀನಂ ಕ್ರಿಯಾಹೀನಂ ಭಕ್ತಿಹೀನಂ ಜನಾರ್ದನ । ಯತ್ಪೂಜಿತಂ ಮಯಾ ದೇವ ಪರಿಪೂರ್ಣಂ ತದಸ್ತು ಮೇ ॥
  >
  > mantrahīnaṃ kriyāhīnaṃ bhaktihīnaṃ janārdana | yatpūjitaṃ mayā deva paripūrṇaṃ tadastu me ||
  > Whatever I have offered, without the right words, actions or devotion, please accept it as complete.

A home puja guide from VedaVidesh. 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.