

How do Hindu families practise their faith and what are the deeper meanings of some Hindu festivals?



Key Vocabulary

Mandir: A special place for Hindus to worship.

Puja: Act of worship for Hindus.

Murtis: Special statues or images of Hindu gods and goddesses.

Shrine: A holy place to pray.

Dharma: Duty to act in the right way as God teaches.

Hindu: Someone who follows Hinduism.

Vishnu: Hindu god who protects the universe.

Brahma: Hindu god of creation.

Trimurti: The three aspects of the universal supreme God.

Brahman: Hindus recognise one God, Brahman.

Bhajan: Devotional song.

Holi

Holi is the 'festival of colours' and marks the beginning of spring with bonfires and lots of singing and dancing. Old rubbish is burnt to mark a fresh start and colour is thrown on people.



Diwali

Diwali is the 'festival of lights' and is celebrated in late autumn. Diwali celebrates good's victory over evil with lots of lights around homes. Fireworks, presents and new clothes are used to celebrate.



Worship at Home

Hindus see their faith as being a complete way of life – all of life is part of their dharma. They show their faith in God through puja. During worship, the aarti lamp is lit and offered to the deity. It is then seen as having become filled with the deity's blessings and energy



Worship at the Mandir

Hindus worship together at a mandir or temple. There are many shrines inside the temple. Worshipping at a shrine is like visiting the gods and goddesses. Hindu worshippers ring a bell at the shrine to awaken God. Prayers are said and offerings such as food are made. Hinduism has a rich musical tradition. There are many 'bhajans' devoted to different deities; some fast and upbeat, some peaceful and meditative.

Key Knowledge

- Hinduism is the oldest of the world's religions. It is now practised all over the world but originated in South East Asia. It is a mix of different beliefs, cultures and traditions dating back over 4000 years.
- Hindus recognise one God, Brahman. The gods of Hinduism are different aspects of Brahman.
- The main three aspects of Brahman (Trimurti) are: Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva
- Hindus can pray to different gods and goddesses for help with different needs.
- Hindus can worship at home or in a mandir – this is called puja.
- In a mandir, there are shrines and lots of murtis for different gods. Offerings of flowers are brought to the murtis.
- Two important Hindu festivals are Holi and Diwali both festivals celebrate good overcoming evil.

