










Sanskrit Words


THINGS WE OFFER TO GOD		
Sanskrit Word	Meaning	Details
Phalam	Fruit	 General term: any fruit
Pushpam	Flower	 General term: all flowers
Dhoopam	Incense	 Something that has a calming influence and sweet smell
Deepam	Lamp	 Diwali also called Deepavali is the festival of lights
Naivedyam	Cooked food offered to God before eating	 After pooja, Naivedya is offered as prasada or prasadam to everyone

Sanskrit Word	Meaning	Details
Aasanam	Seat	 <p>Chair or an elevated place to sit Note: Simhaasana means throne Simha – lion; Aasana – seat</p>
Paadyam	Water offered to wash feet	
Arghyam	Water offered to wash hands	
Snanam	Bath	 <p>Water is poured on the idols to cleanse before the pooja.</p>
Alankaram	Decorating	Idols are generally decorated with clothing, flowers/garlands, kumkum and sandalpaste as part of the pooja.
Vastram	Cloth/Fabric	 <p>Idols are adorned with festive clothing before poojas.</p>
Gandham	Sandalwood Paste	 <p>Sandalwood trees are found in forests in many parts of India; it was used to make beautiful carvings. Its sweet smell makes the tree/wood very expensive</p>

Sanskrit Word	Meaning	Details
Kumkumam	Red colored powder	 <p>Kumkum is made out of turmeric and saffron. Kum kum is traditionally red, but is available in many dark shades – used in holi.</p>
Haridra	Turmeric	 <p>Used in poojas as well as Indian cooking; has medicinal properties</p>
Pradakshina	Circumambulation Or walking around in a circle around the deity	 <p>The ritual of pradakshina or moving in circles around the deity recognizes God as the focal point in our lives. Pradakshinas are always in a clockwise direction around the idol.</p>
Shloka	Verse	<p>Generally couplets in Sanskrit poetry: Ramayana and Mahabharatha are both written in shlokas</p>
Mantra	Repeated chanting of shlokas	<p>A sound, syllable, word or group of words capable of creating a spiritual transformation by repeating over and over</p>

Sanskrit Word	Meaning	Details
Araathi	Waving light with camphor or with wicks soaked in ghee	 <p>Aarthis are normally done while singing a song in praise of the deity</p>

Geeta	Song	Songs and dances in praise of the deities are traditionally offered as part of elaborate pooja rituals.
Nritya	Dance	
Pooja	Worship	The person that professionally performs the pooja is called pujari
Archana	Worship	Pushparchana – worship with flowers Kumkumarchana – worship with kumkum
Abhisheka	Pouring water, milk, honey, yoghurt, ghee, rosewater, etc on the idol of the deity	This devotional activity or ritual is performed amidst chanting of mantras for the deity. Liquids used for the abhisheka are collected and offered as <i>teertha</i> after the abhisheka
Havana or Homa	Offering prayers in the presence of fire	This devotional activity or ritual involves offering prayers with other symbolic offerings to Agni or fire. Havanas are performed amidst chanting of mantras for a deity.
Bhajana	Group singing	Congregational worship in the form of group singing with symbols & percussion instruments to create a lively upbeat experience

Sanskrit Word	Meaning	Details
Namana or Namaskara	Salutations	<p>Bowing down or surrendering ones ego to God.</p> <p>Namasthe: is the common Indian greeting (gesture with folded hands and bowed down head) head that means I salute you or I bow to the God within you.</p> 
Prarthana	Prayer	Part of worshipping rituals or pooja or can be a simple daily prayer offered.

COMMON WORDS REPEATED IN POOJAS & HAVANS

Sanskrit Word	Meaning	Details
Arpana/Samarpana Samarpayaami	To Offer I offer	<p>Arpana – to offer</p> <p>Samarpana – to offer (completely) a wholesome offering</p> <p>Samarpayaami – I offer</p>
Karomi/ Kaarishyaami	I will do/ I am doing	<p>Karomi – I will do</p> <p>Karishyaami – I am doing</p>
Mangalam/ Shubham	Auspicious/Good	Auspiciousness or a sense of wellbeing
Swaha	An offering	<p>Swaha is chanted during fire sacrifices of havanas at the end of each mantra when offerings are made.</p> <p>Swaha is also considered to be the wife</p>

		of Agni who presides over offerings made during a havana.
SOME SPIRITUAL WORDS		
Sanskrit Word	Meaning	Details
Shanthy	Peace	Peace, rest, calmness, tranquility, bliss Om Shanthy Shanthy Shanthy Hi – the three shanthis chanted at the end of mantras is a prayer for peace in the world around us.
Dhyana	Meditation	Meditation often involves invoking and cultivating a feeling or internal state of contemplation.
Jnana	Knowledge	Wisdom, or Intellect
Bhakthi	Devotion	Also, Bhaktha =devotee
Mukthi	Liberation	Liberation from the cycle of births and deaths.
Moksha	Salvation	Like Mukthi means liberation from the cycle of births and deaths
Aathman	Soul	Philosophical term used in Hinduism to identify the soul whether in global sense (world’s soul) or in individual sense (of a persons own soul).
Maathru	Mother	Also, Maatha = Mother
Pithru	Father	Also, Pitha = Father

Bandhu	Relative	A well wisher or relative that is not immediate family
Guru	Teacher	A guru is one who is regarded as having great knowledge, wisdom and authority in a certain area, and who uses it to guide others (teacher)
Deva/Devi	Deity	Deva – God; Devi - Goddess Celestial being, or any benevolent supernatural beings – they possess powers and abilities that humans do not possess; they use these powers to do good.
Ahimsa	Non-violence	Ahimsa, or refraining from causing pain to any living creature, is a distinctive quality emphasized by Indian ethics & culture from the earliest days of its history. Ahimsa was popularized by Mahatma Gandhi - he preached non-violence or ahimsa in India's fight for independence. (also, Himsa means violence)
Dharma	Righteousness or duty	There is no proper equivalent word in English for the Sanskrit term Dharma. Although, generally defined as 'righteousness' or 'duty', Dharma includes all external deeds as well as thoughts that tend to elevate the character of man. (Adharma: antonym)

Karma	Action or deed	There is no proper equivalent word in English for Karma. Although, it means action or deed, Karma is sometimes referred to as a "moral law of cause and effect." The moral law of Karma maintains that good deeds will be returned with good; evil deeds with evil
--------------	-----------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------