

# What does Lamp Lighting Signify?

In Hindu Culture, Light is a powerful metaphor for knowledge and consciousness. Lighting a lamp signifies the value Hindus attach to education, self-awareness, and improvement, bringing harmony to individuals and communities. The act of lighting the lamp affirms the fact that knowledge dispels ignorance like light dispels darkness.

असतोमा सद्गमय । तमसोमा ज्योतिर् गमय । मृत्योर्मामृतं गमय ।

asato mã sad gamaya tamaso mã jyotir gamaya mrtyor mã amrtam gamaya

From ignorance, lead me to truth; From darkness, lead me to light; From death, lead me to immortality

Reference: (Brihadaranyaka upanishad 1.3.28)



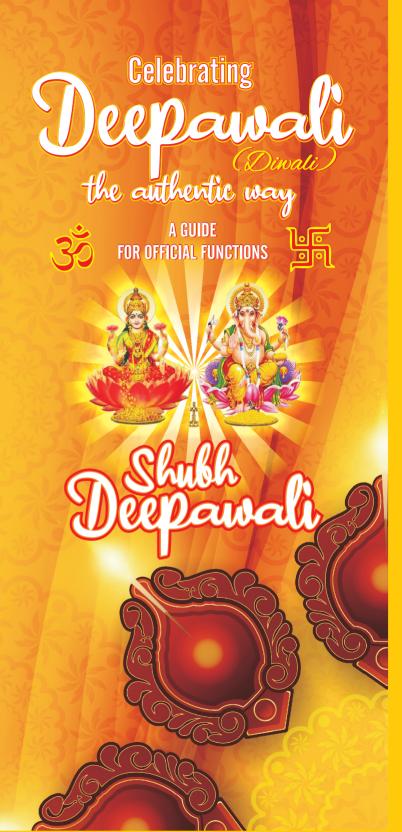


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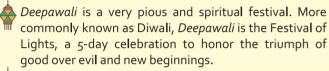
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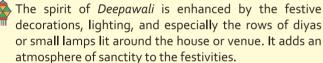


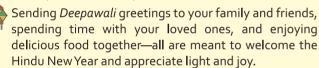


# Guidelines for celebrating Olephanic Oinali in an authentic way

Whether an organization is having a public *Deepawali* Party or a quieter private celebration, below is a guide on how to celebrate it in an authentic spirit in a culturally appropriate way.







Wearing an ethnic dress is welcome to make the occasion very colorful and vibrant.

The purity of *Deepawali* is best honored in an environment where no alcohol is served, no tobacco is used and the food is strictly vegetarian. Poultry products, meat, and fish are strictly avoided.

Usually, a group of people celebrating *Deepawali* together brings in a plate of sweets or other savories to the occasion.

"Happy Diwali" or "Shubh Deepawali" are the most common greetings that are exchanged.

We wish you success in making this occasion a memorable, safe, healthy, and joyous celebration for all your friends and family.



In an increasingly culturally diverse Australia, many organizations including workplaces - private and public institutions now celebrate multicultural festivals. *Deepawali (Diwali)* is one of the biggest and brightest festivals that Hindus celebrate. Thus it is an important community event that is organized every year. Here are some essential information about this festival and how to celebrate it in an authentic and culturally appropriate way – be it private, public, or at your workplace.

#### The Meaning of Deepawali

Deepawali is a Sanskrit word composed of 2 roots ('deep' and 'awali') which mean "row of lights". The word is often contracted to "Diwali". On Deepawali day, rows of traditional small clay lamps (deep/ diyas) are lit and placed in houses. Besides, fireworks brighten up the sky as they are let off by many, giving Deepawali its description — "The festival of lights"

#### The Deepawali Festival

Deepawali is one of the most significant festivals celebrated by Hindus around the world. The festival of Deepawali implies the victory of knowledge symbolized by light over the darkness of ignorance. In Hindu culture, removing ignorance and imparting knowledge is the primary goal of life. Deepawali is marked by five days of celebration. Each of these five days denotes a different tradition with a common theme of reverence towards goodness in the natural order and celebration of life.

#### Origins of Deepawali

Deepawali was the day thousands of years ago when the kingdom of Ayodhya erupted with joy on the homecoming of Lord Ram after victory over the tyrannical King Ravan. Also on this day, Devi Lakshmi, the goddess of peace and prosperity, incarnated. Hence the association of Deepawali with the worship of Goddess Lakshmi. Deepawali also marks the victory of Lord Krishna over the diabolical Narkasur and freeing 16,000 women from his captivity.



# Day 1: Dhan-Teras

The "festival of wealth" (Dhan = Wealth/ Prosperity, Teras = Thirteenth Day) is celebrated on the thirteenth day of the fortnight of the waning moon (Krishna Paksha) in the Hindu month of Karthik (October-November); marking the arrival of Goddess Lakshmi.

### Day 2: Chhoti Deepawali

Chhoti (mini) Deepawali, also called Narak Chaturdashi, is celebrated on the eve of Deepawali. The demonic Narakasur was slain on this day by Lord Krishna.

#### Day 3: Deepawali

Celebrating the triumphant return of Lord Rama to Ayodhya after vanquishing the evil king Ravan. Ever since then, this day symbolizes the victory of good over evil.

# Day 4: Govardhan Pooja/ Annakoot

Govardhan pooja follows the day of Deepawali. It commemorates Lord Krishna's feat of lifting the Govardhan mountain on his little finger to save the residents of Vrindayan from torrential rain.

## Day 5: Bhai Duj

Bhai Duj is a celebration of the bond between brothers and sisters. Gifts are exchanged and the siblings pray together for the well-being of each other on this day.





