

Visiting A Mandir



What is a mandir?

A **mandir** is a Hindu place of worship. Hindus go to the mandir to worship their gods. Some Hindus call the mandir the temple.



In a mandir there are usually statues of gods and goddesses.

The statues are called **murtis**.



Many Hindus say that the gods and goddesses help them to know and love something special about God.

Hindu Worship

Hindu worship is called
Puja.

When Hindus arrive in
the **mandir** they ring a
bell to tell the **murtis**
that they have come
for **Puja**.



Hindus put their hands together and bow their heads to greet the **murtis**.
They give the priest food and gifts for the **murtis**.

The priest is called a **pujari**.
The priest offers food and gifts to the **murtis**.



The Aarti Ceremony

The **pujari** offers light to the **murtis** in a ceremony called **aarti**.

He sings and rings a bell and waves the **aarti** lamp in circles in front of each murti. Then he sends the light towards the murtis.





An aarti lamp is an oil lamp with five flames. The oil and wicks are put into the five little wells.



The people join in the singing. At the end of **Puja** the people receive the **aarti** light. They move their hands over the light and over their head.

The people also receive food called **prashad**. Hindus receive the light and the **prashad** as blessings from the **murtis**.



'Namaste' - Welcome

The pujari and his wife welcome visitors to the mandir. The pujari shows them the Hindu greeting.



They put their hands together, bow their heads respectfully and say "Namaste".



Outside the **mandir** visitors take off their shoes. Hindus do not wear shoes in the **mandir**. This shows respect.



Most Hindus who go to this **mandir**
speak **Gujarati**.



This writing tells
Hindus about the
right way to
behave.

Hindus tell exciting stories about Rama and Sita. In these stories, Hanuman is Rama's devoted friend.

He helped Rama to rescue Sita, when she was taken by an evil king.

The murti of Hanuman always has a mace, because Hanuman used a mace to fight for Rama.



This **murtis** is of the goddess **Durga**.



She is very powerful and rides on a lion.

How many hands does she have?

Can you see what she is holding in her hands?

When Hindus do Puja they listen to a sound that helps them to feel close to their god.



At the beginning and the end of the Puja Hindus chant the sound "Aum".

It is written like this.

Sometimes Hindus have a coloured mark on their forehead. This is to show that they have done Puja.

