KARTHIKA MASA 2026

Karthika Deepam

Family Kit

A month of light: stories, a lamp diary,
colouring pages and ideas for the whole family

10 November – 8 December 2026



Free printable • Print on A4 or Letter (choose "Fit to page") • Colour pages are best on plain white paper

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Why do we light lamps in Karthika?

FOUR STORIES, ONE MONTH OF LIGHT

Karthika is the month that follows Diwali. The evenings turn cool, the days grow short, and families light a lamp at dusk: at the doorstep, beside the tulsi plant, in the temple. Each lamp is a small wish that light will win over darkness. Here are four stories families tell about this month.

1

The pillar of fire

One story says Brahma and Vishnu once argued about who was greater. Shiva appeared as an endless column of fire. Vishnu dived down to find its foot and Brahma flew up to find its top, but neither could. Both bowed, understanding that some things are beyond measuring. At Tiruvannamalai, at the hill called Arunachala, this moment is remembered with a great flame lit on the hilltop: the Karthigai Deepam.

2

Tripurari Pournami

On the full moon of the month (24 November this year), families remember how Shiva ended the power of the three flying cities of the asura Tripura. The gods lit lamps in joy, and the night is still called Dev Deepawali, the Diwali of the gods. Many families light 365 wicks together, one for every day of the year.

3

Vishnu wakes up

On Prabodhini Ekadashi (20 November), Vishnu is said to wake from his four-month rest. A day or two later comes Tulasi Vivah, when the tulsi plant is decorated like a bride and "married" to Vishnu, with lamps all around. Children often help make the little wedding mandap.

4

Why is it called Karthika?

The month is named after the Krittika star cluster (the Pleiades, six or seven tiny stars close together). The full moon of this month shines near them. On clear evenings you can go outside, look up and try to count the stars.

These are traditional stories, told in slightly different ways in different families and regions.

The Karthika Calendar 2026

10 NOVEMBER TO 8 DECEMBER

Tue 10 Nov	Karthika Masa begins. Light the first lamp at dusk.
Fri 13 Nov	Nagula Chavithi, a day to honour snakes and nature.
Mon 16 Nov	1st Karthika Somavaram (Monday of the month).
Tue 17 Nov	Gopashtami, a day to honour cows and the cowherd Krishna.
Fri 20 Nov	Prabodhini Ekadashi: Vishnu wakes up (some traditions: Sat 21 Nov).
Sat 21 Nov	Tulasi Vivah and Ksheerabdi Dwadashi (some families on 22 Nov).
Mon 23 Nov	2nd Somavaram. Also Vaikuntha Chaturdashi.
Tue 24 Nov	**KARTHIKA POURNAMI: Tripurari Purnima, Dev Deepawali, Karthigai Deepam. Light 365 wicks!**
Mon 30 Nov	3rd Somavaram.
Mon 7 Dec	4th Somavaram. Also Karthika Masa Shivaratri.
Tue 8 Dec	Karthika Amavasya: the month ends.

Please check your local panchangam

These dates follow the Telugu / Kannada (Amanta) calendar used in South India. Tithi-based days can shift by one day depending on where you live. In North India the month called Kartik runs 27 Oct to 24 Nov. The Tamil Karthigai Deepam follows the Krittika star; most 2026 sources place it on 24 Nov, with Pournami. Ask your temple or a local panchangam, then colour in the right days on your lamp diary.

Lighting a Lamp, Together

A SIMPLE EVENING ROUTINE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

1. **Pick a safe spot**
   A flat surface, on a plate or tray, away from curtains, paper and the edge of a table.

2. **Prepare the lamp**
   Clean lamp, fresh cotton wick, and oil or ghee. Children can roll the wick between their fingers.

3. **A grown-up lights it**
   Use a long matchstick or lighter. Children can hold the plate steady and say the verse below.

4. **Pause for a minute**
   Sit quietly, breathe slowly and say one thing you are grateful for today.

5. **Stay close, then put it out safely**
   Never leave a burning lamp alone. Let it burn down with a grown-up nearby, or cover it with a small metal lid.

A VERSE OFTEN SAID WHEN LIGHTING THE EVENING LAMP

Deepajyoti Parabrahma, Deepa Sarva Tamopahah,
Deepena Sadhyate Sarvam, Sandhya Deepam Namostute.

"The light of the lamp is the Supreme. The lamp removes all darkness. Through light everything is accomplished. I bow to the evening lamp."

No open flame? That is fine.

Many apartments and some countries do not allow open flames. A small LED or battery lamp works well. What matters is the family pausing together at dusk, so use whatever is safe where you live.

My Karthika Lamp Diary

COLOUR A FLAME EACH EVENING YOU LIGHT A LAMP

10 Nov Tue	11 Nov Wed	12 Nov Thu	13 Nov Fri	14 Nov Sat
15 Nov Sun	16 Nov Mon SOMAVARAM	17 Nov Tue	18 Nov Wed	19 Nov Thu
20 Nov Fri	21 Nov Sat	22 Nov Sun	23 Nov Mon SOMAVARAM	24 Nov Tue POURNAMI
25 Nov Wed	26 Nov Thu	27 Nov Fri	28 Nov Sat	29 Nov Sun
30 Nov Mon SOMAVARAM	1 Dec Tue	2 Dec Wed	3 Dec Thu	4 Dec Fri
5 Dec Sat	6 Dec Sun	7 Dec Mon SOMAVARAM	8 Dec Tue	Month done! Draw your own lamp

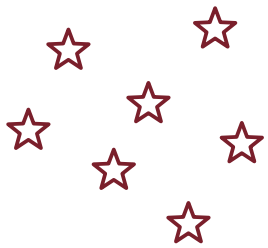
Colour the Deepam

Karthika is the month of lamps. Use warm colours for the flame and bright ones for the rangoli.

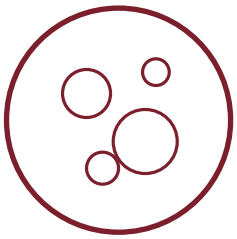


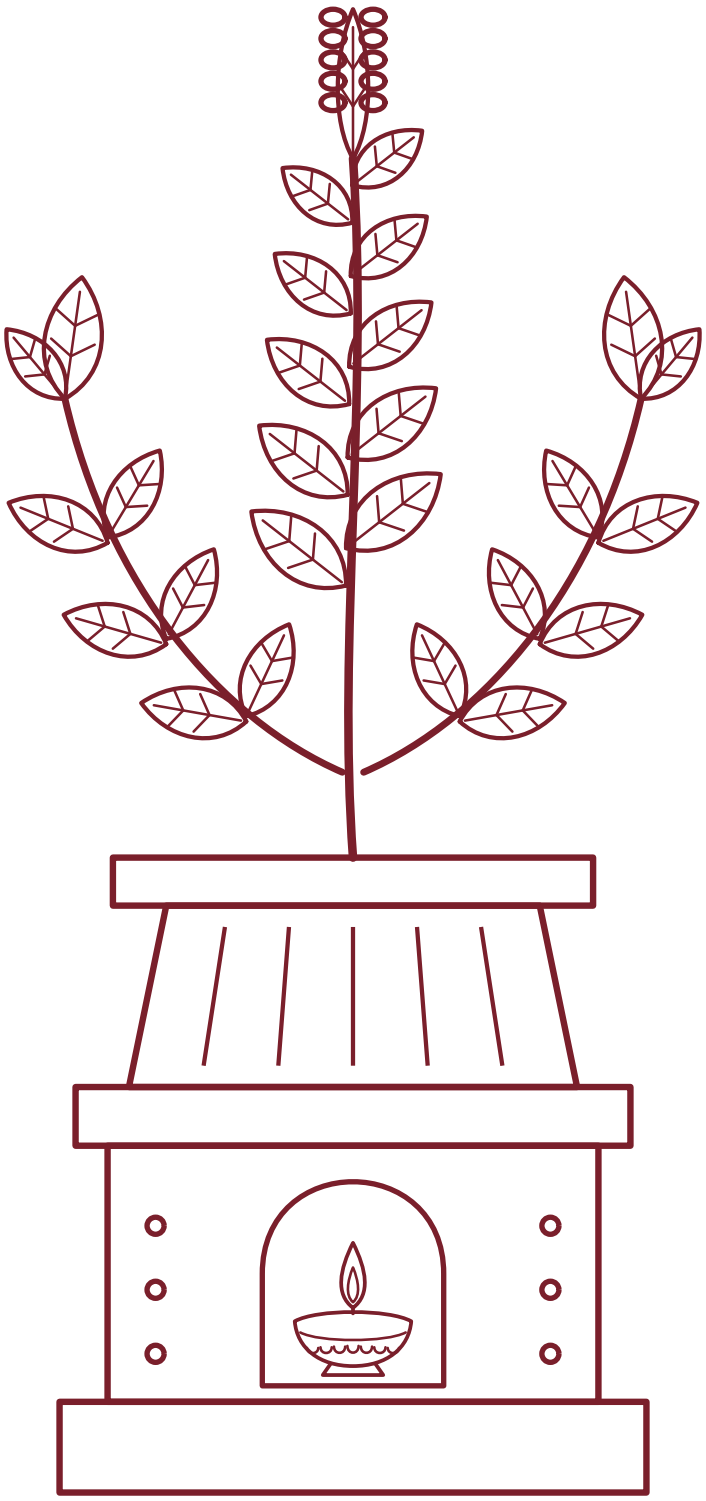
Tulasi and Her Little Lamp

Tulasi Vivah is on 21 November. Colour the plant, the pot and the glowing lamp.



The Krittika stars









Seven Ways to Celebrate at Home

PICK ONE A WEEK, OR TRY THEM ALL

1. **A lamp at the door**
   Light a lamp at dusk at the front door every day, and one beside the tulsi plant if you have one.

2. **Decorate a diya**
   Paint a clay lamp with poster paints or glue on tiny stones and sequins. Let it dry fully before using it.

3. **Make a rangoli or kolam**
   Draw it with rice flour or chalk at the entrance. Children can fill the shapes with colour or flower petals.

4. **A quiet Somavaram evening**
   On the four Mondays: switch off screens, light the lamp, sit together and share one good thing from the week.

5. **Vana Bhojanam picnic**
   A Karthika tradition: a family meal outdoors under a tree, often an amla (gooseberry) tree. A park picnic works well too.

6. **Dedicate a lamp**
   On Karthika Pournami, light a lamp "for" someone: a grandparent, a teacher, a friend who is far away. Call or write to them.

7. **Give some light away**
   Karthika is also a month of dana, giving. Share food, warm clothing or lamp oil with someone who needs it.

Questions to ask at the dinner table

- What is the smallest light you have ever seen that still made a difference?
- If you could light a lamp for one person today, who would it be and why?
- What does a lamp do that the sun cannot do?

Lamps of Gratitude

FOR WHOM OR WHAT WILL YOU LIGHT A LAMP THIS KARTHIKA?

Write or draw inside each lamp. You can fill them in on the four Mondays, on Karthika Pournami, or whenever you like.



I light this lamp for...



I am thankful for...



I will help someone by...



I will be kind to...



A wish for the world...



My own lamp, my own idea...