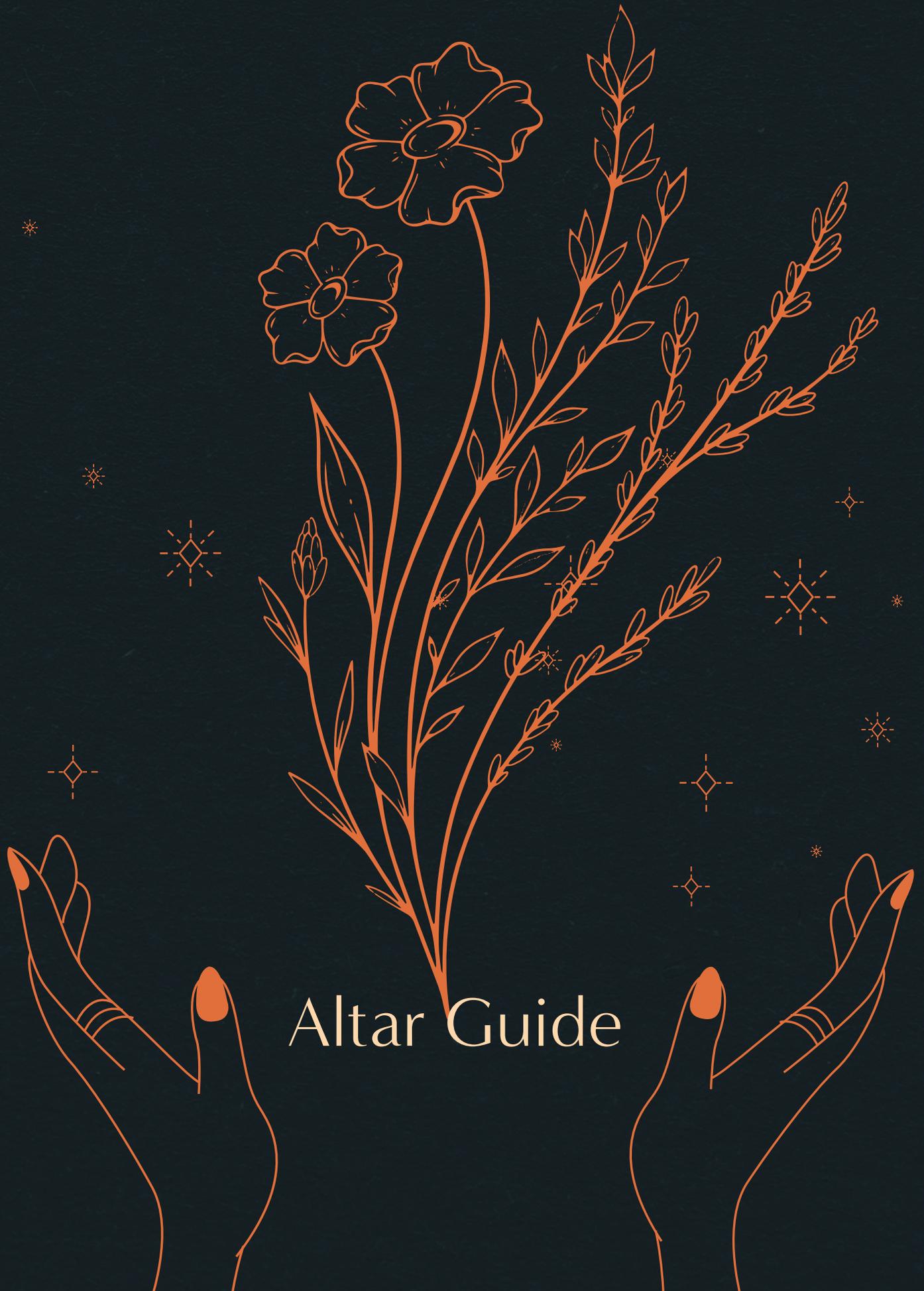


DEVI SCHOOL



Altar Guide



Amazing Goddess!

Welcome to your Heroine's Journey, which is a true Sādhanā.

Sādhanā is a Sanskrit word that means a daily spiritual practice. It is carried out for inner growth establishing one's connection to the divine in all its forms. It's a tool used to work on oneself to help reach one's purpose in life. We are asked to choose something we would like to incorporate in our lives and stick to it for a certain amount of time.

A part of the Sādhanā is to create your own Sacred Space, an Altar. You will be invited to create and tune into how you would like that space to look... so it is most meaningful to you. The word "Altar" may be new and foreign to some... for others it may seem known, but scary and distant ... or something that one cannot connect to (based on upbringing and earlier experiences).





What is an Altar?

The altar represents the whole universe, the infallible abode. The place of all places. The place of absolute validation, where I am welcomed as I am, where everything is welcomed and looked upon as sacred, as it is. It is the place where we can express blame and express our anger.

If we express our frustrations to a person, it often backfires on us, unless the person is very mature and can hold space for us. But anger is an expression of helplessness and pain.

We are not helpless anymore because we can pray and ask for help. There are infinite options in every situation, yet often we are caught in a tunnel vision and we cannot see further than what is in front of us. We need to have the whole picture, see the big picture, but we only have limited knowledge.

The altar where we place our Devīs - Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī, Durgā or any other deity - that represent the all knowing all powerful all pervasive, non-manipulating, agendaless god, becomes our place of refuge, our sanctuary, until we know our real face, until we can accept everything as lovable and adorable and look at it as non-separate from her/me.

As I grow, I discover all that is here, is given. It is grace. Grace given is contained in the word 'gratitude'. We know that we are not the creator or author of anything that we possess or know.

It is all given, we acknowledge the infinite given through expressing our gratitude at the altar with our words, offerings, stories, prayers, songs, dances, flowers, water, food, etc.

It doesn't matter what we offer. What matters is the gesture. The action that we make to show our gratitude and to create cosmic harmony. We don't wait anymore for anyone, we have been given a free will, we have a choice and we choose to take action.

Actions of compassion, actions of reaching out, actions of support, actions that convey my care and love. Actions that are prayerful that turn into an offering.

My life becomes an offering. And the ultimate offering is you.

*Bring out your Devīness when you create this altar.
Let your heart be free and let it express anyway it wants to express.
Let it express you, your love, your devotion, your vision, your inspiration,
your goals, your care -- you as a woman.*





Possible Items to Include on the Altar:

- * Deity statues - Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī, Durgā, Annapūrṇa, Lalitā, Bhūmi, Guanyin, Yoni Egg etc.
 - * Stone and/or Crystal
- * Any other deity/image that represents to you the infallible one, that which is compassion, sanctity, safety, agendalessness, trust, love, non-judgmentalness, patience, commitment
 - * Images of deities
 - * Pictures of people who have passed away
 - * Ancestors
 - * Any other item that is sacred to you
 - * Mirror
 - * Candle/s
 - * Incense holder

Priestess Pūjā Offering Kit

- * Oil essence/ Sandalwood powder/ Kumkum
 - * Flowers
- * Organic Incense/ sage/ palo santo
 - * Water & food
 - * Ornaments
 - * Bell
 - * Candle
- * Camphor & camphor holder





The Place of Your Altar

The best location for the Altar in the house is the northeast.

North representing death. "I am ready to die to my wrong notions I want to give up my ignorance and face the truth."

East representing where the Sun rises. "I am invoking the light of the sun which represents the all-knowing and all-powerful to guide me and point me in the right direction in my life."

If you cannot place the Altar North or East, choose another beautiful place. The space you choose for your Altar is very important.

Let it be a space where you feel comfortable, where you feel held, where you feel you want to be. It can be anywhere as long as it has sanctity or you can bring the sanctity to it.

Setting up Your Altar

Choose a beautiful cloth and connect to it as it represents Mother Earth.

Hold the cloth to your heart and bring your love, appreciation and gratitude to the Goddess Earth for being your home. Ask her to always protect you.

If you have a pedestal, that can also be a box, hold it to your heart and bring your love, appreciation and gratitude to the Goddess Pārvatī. She who represents the Goddess of the Mountain. The mountain represents the center of the Universe.

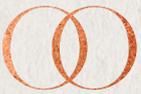
Choose the main form and place it on the pedestal. That form can change depending to what you want to offer the Pūjā.

Place all other items you have brought on the Altar.

Connect to each item first, hold it to your heart and bring your love, appreciation and gratitude to what that form represents to you.

Have a minimum of 1 main candle that you put in front of the pedestal or the main form. The candle represents the light of knowledge which also represents happiness, that light removes the darkness of ignorance which represents pain.





Consecration of the Altar

Sprinkle water around the Altar and on all the Altar forms. Invoke the blessing of the Goddess and all unseen factors to bless your Altar.

Light the main candle invoking Truth into your life. Here you can be all of you and offer everything back that is not yours; all pain, all wrong judgments, blame, anger, hate, depression, anxiety, mistrust. Here, you claim the Truth; love, power, worthiness, strength, abundance, the fullness that you are.

Light the incense and wave it clockwise over the altar as you ring the bell (if you have one) asking to remove all that is not serving you in life and to call in all that is going to support you on your feminine and spiritual awakening.

You can offer flowers, food, songs, mantras and anything else you want to gift from your heart.

Close the Consecration with chanting:
Om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ (pronounced: shaantih)
Let there be peace, peace, peace.

Bow in front of your altar showing your devotion and love. This gesture symbolizes that we are getting out of offense-defense posture and want to abide again in trust in the greater order of things.

