

वक्रतुण्ड महाकाय सूर्यकोटी समप्रभः
निर्विघ्नं कुरु मे देवः सर्वकार्येषु सर्वदा

GANESHA

Family of Ganesha:

- Father: Shiva
- Mother: Parvati
- Brother: Kartikeya
- Wives: Riddhi, Siddhi
- Sons: Shubh, Labh
- Favorite Offerings: Modak, Ladoo
- Favorite Flower: Red Hibiscus
- Lord of: Water Element
- Main Weapons: Pasha (noose), Ankusha (goad)



Ganesha is the son of Shiva and Parvati and the husband of Riddhi and Siddhi. His vehicle is the mouse. Being the lord of the Ganas (attendants of Shiva), he is also known as Ganapati. In astrology, he is considered the ruling deity of Ketu. He is the lord of all worldly resources. Due to his elephant-like head, he is also called Gajanan. According to Hindu beliefs, invoking Ganesha's name is considered auspicious at the start of any endeavor.

Ganesha holds a significant place in Hindu culture. Before starting any auspicious work, Hindus often worship Ganesha. He is also known as the remover of obstacles. People pray to him to remove any obstacles that may come their way before beginning any new venture or task. Ganesha has an elephant's head, and there's a story behind it.

Ganesha is the son of Lord Shiva and Parvati and the younger brother of Kartikeya. He is also the husband of Riddhi and Siddhi. Once, when his mother Parvati was about to take a bath, she instructed Ganesha not to allow anyone to enter the house until she finished. She appointed him as the gatekeeper and went inside for her bath. At that moment, his father Shiva arrived with Nandi. Ganesha did not recognize Shiva and did not allow him to enter. Enraged, Shiva threw his trident at Ganesha, and Ganesha's tusk was broken. He fell to the ground. Later, when Parvati learned about this, she became furious and asked Shiva to revive Ganesha. Shiva then instructed Nandi to bring the head of the first living being he encountered in the forest. Nandi found an elephant, and its head was brought to Shiva, who fixed it onto Ganesha's body, thus reviving him. From then on, Ganesha came to be known as Gajanan (one with an elephant's head). Parvati says, "If anyone looks at the elephant's face, people will ridicule him." Then Lord Shiva grants her a boon that from today onwards people will call him the Vignaharta (remover of obstacles) , and before performing any auspicious task, they will worship Ganesha.

Ganesha is very intelligent and wise. He always acts wisely and is very devoted to his parents. His vehicle is a mouse.

Once, during a battle with Parashurama, one of Ganesha's tusks broke. Because of this, he is also known as Ekadanta (one-tusked). Due to his appearance, no Goddess was ready to marry Ganesha. Therefore, Ganesha was very unhappy. Sometimes, when he attended someone else's wedding, he thought to himself that if he couldn't marry, then no other deity's marriage should take place either. This thought led him to create disputes even during the weddings of other deities. Mouse would assist in such matters. Following Ganesha's orders, he would damage the wedding hall. He caused various misfortunes in the wedding hall. Because of Ganesha's actions, other deities became troubled. The deities went to Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati to express their concerns. At that time, Parvati said that Brahma alone could solve this problem. Then, all the deities went to Brahma and discussed the matter with him. Upon hearing this, Brahma manifested two daughters from his own form. Both were the mind-born daughters of Brahma. Their names were Riddhi and Siddhi. Taking his daughters, Brahma approached Ganesha and said, "They are here to give you education." Ganesha was prepared to receive education. Whenever the information of marriages would come to Lord Ganesha, Riddhi and Siddhi would distract his attention, thus every deity's marriage took place without any obstacles. Then, the mouse would bring information about the marriages of the deities. When Ganesha understood everything, he became angry. Before he got angry, Brahma took Riddhi and Siddhi and went to Ganesha. He said, "You have given them education. I haven't found any suitable role for them. So you marry them." Then Ganesha's marriage happened very grandly with Riddhi and Siddhi. And he had two sons. Their names are Shubha and Labha.

Ganesha's Twelve Names: Sumukh, Ekdant, Kapil, Gajkarnak, Lambodar, Vikat, Vighnharta, Vinayak, Dhumketu, Ganadhyaksh, Bhalchandra, Gajanan.



TAMIL NADU'S VERSION OF GANESHA:

Uma wanted to bathe in a pond, so she created a boy from a plant to act as a guard. Shiva misunderstood the boy's intentions towards Uma and beheaded him. When Uma explained the truth, Shiva revived the boy by attaching an elephant's head, and the boy became known as Vinayaka. Uma then had seven more children, but only six could be embraced by Shiva, and the seventh child ran away. These six children united to form Muruga, who has six heads.

Thus, Shiva and Uma had two sons, Vinayaka and Muruga.

There are many stories illustrating Ganesha's wisdom. One famous story involves Narada challenging both Ganesha and Kartikeya to complete three rounds of the earth, promising a mango to the winner. Kartikeya began his journey around the earth, while Ganesha circled his parents and declared himself the winner, as his parents represented the universe to him. Narada awarded the mango to Ganesha. Dissatisfied, Kartikeya left for the south, where he is known as Muruga in Tamil Nadu. In another story, Muruga fell in love with Valli, a tribal girl, but she ignored him. Muruga sought Ganesha's help, who appeared as a wild elephant, scaring Valli. Muruga then rescued Valli and married her.

Controversies about Ganesha's Marital Status: There are debates regarding whether Ganesha is married. In South India, he is considered a child, and due to the absence of a suitable companion, he remains single. While in North India, he is considered married to Brahma's daughters, Riddhi and Siddhi. In tantric traditions, he is sometimes shown with consorts. Shubh and Labh are considered the two sons of Ganesha. However, there isn't much specific information available about both wives and children. According to Bengali tradition, due to the shape of an elephant's head, Ganesha was not considered suitable for marriage. At that time, Mother Durga made him wear a sari by leaving his trunk out and thus married him. Hence, on Durga Puja, during the time of Navaratri, an idol of Ganesha is placed next to Durga wearing a sari, which is called "Kola Bou." On the tenth day of Durga Puja, a ritual called "Nava Aushti" is performed, during which the sari worn by the idol of Durga is transferred to the Kola Bou idol along with nine types of herbs.

Ganesha Chaturthi: The festival is celebrated on the fourth day of the bright fortnight of the Bhadarva month in the Vikram Samvat calendar, marking Ganesha's birthday. It is known by various names in different languages, including Vinayaka Chaturthi or Vinayaka Chauth in Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, and Kannada, Vinayaka Chavath in Konkani, and Vinayaka Chauth in Nepali.



Ganesha's Avatars:

Ganesha is considered a prime deity who is believed to incarnate in each age:

1. In Sat Yuga, he was born as "Mahotkat Vinayak" to Sage Kashyap and Aditi, defeating demons Devantaka and Narantaka.
2. In Treta Yuga, on the Shukla Paksha Chaturthi of the Bhadarva month, he was born as "Ganesha" to Uma, defeating the demon Sindhu and marrying Brahma's daughters, Riddhi and Siddhi.
3. In Dwapar Yuga, he was born to "Parvati" as Ganesha, with well-known stories.
4. In Kal Yuga, "Bhavishya Purana" mentions his avatar as "Dhumketu" or "Dhumravarna".

