

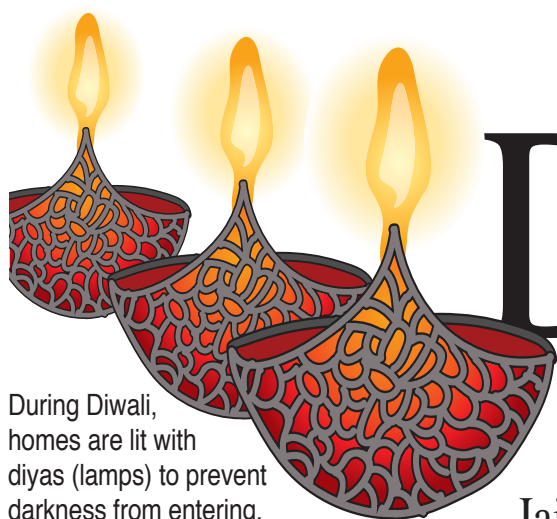
# KEEPING STUDENTS WELL INFORMED AT HOME WHILE THEY'RE DISTANCE LEARNING.



## WORLD OF WONDER

Exploring the realms of history, science, nature and technology

# DIWALI



During Diwali, homes are lit with diyas (lamps) to prevent darkness from entering.

### What's in a name?

**Diwali**, also known as Divali or Dipawali, gets its name from the Sanskrit term *dipavali*, which translates as "row of lights."

Hindus light **avali** (a row) of **deepa** or **diyas** (clay lamps) outside their homes, shops and public areas to symbolize the spiritual inner light that protects from darkness and evil.

### When it happens

Diwali has been celebrated for more than 2,500 years. In India, Diwali has become a national festival.

Diwali falls between October and November, but the exact dates change each year based on the Hindu lunar calendar. In 2020, the third day (the main day) of Diwali is celebrated on Saturday, November 14.

Diwali is celebrated during the Hindu lunar month Kartika (between mid-October and mid-November). This festival is so important to Hindus that it could be compared to how Christians feel about Christmas.

### Different thoughts

People from different regions and faiths observe and interpret Diwali in their own ways or alongside Diwali. The common theme among them all is the victory of good over evil.

The festival is widely associated with **Lakshmi**, goddess of prosperity and wealth.

In northern India, they celebrate the story of **King Rama's** return to Ayodhya after he defeated Ravana.

Southern India celebrates it as the day that **Lord Krishna** defeated the demon Narakasura.

In western India, the festival marks the day that **Lord Vishnu** sent the demon king Bali to the netherworld.

In Bengal, the goddess **Kali** is worshipped.

Jains celebrate the final liberation of **Mahavira**.

Sikhs celebrate **Bandi Chhor Divas** to mark the release of Guru Hargobind from a Mughal Empire prison.

Diwali, a five-day festival of lights, is celebrated by millions of Hindus, Sikhs and Jains around the world. One of the most important holidays of the year in India, Diwali is all about light conquering darkness, good defeating evil and knowledge overcoming ignorance.

During Diwali, many people wear their best and newest clothing.



Sometimes doorsteps are decorated with rangoli to welcome guests.

### Rangoli

Rangoli is a type of unique art practiced by people across India. Rangoli is created on floors and sidewalks. The patterns are made with colored powders or sand.

If you would like to try to make rangoli, there are kits for sale online.

A typical kit comes with some patterns, a variety of colored sands, an applicator and sometimes some cool stencils.



Among the many popular sweets made for Diwali are **sugar cookies** decorated with icing.

### How to celebrate

The Diwali festival is celebrated with friends and family feasting and exchanging gifts, colored sand patterns called **rangoli** and lighting special candles or lamps called **diyas**.

Fireworks have traditionally been part of the festival but have recently been banned in India due to the risk of fire and injury.

### Five days

**DAY ONE:** People clean their homes and shop for gold, jewelry or kitchen gadgets to help bring good fortune. It is common to open windows and doors so that **Lakshmi** (goddess of prosperity) can enter the home.

**DAY TWO:** People decorate their homes with clay lamps and create colorful rangoli.

**DAY THREE: Lakshmi Puja** is the main day of the festival. Many families gather for a prayer to Goddess Lakshmi. Afterward, they enjoy delicious food and sometimes fireworks.

**DAY FOUR:** Known as **Padwa** or **Varsha Pratipada**, this is the first day of the new year, when friends and relatives visit with gifts and best wishes for the season.

**DAY FIVE:** The fifth day is known as **Bhai Duj**. It's dedicated to celebrating sisters.

A young person paints a diya.



SOURCES: World Book Encyclopedia, World Book Inc.; <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com>; <https://www.bbc.co.uk>; <https://www.history.com>; Hindu American Foundation.; <https://www.diwalifestival.org>

LEARN ABOUT **TURKEY (THE BIRD)** IN THE NEXT INSTALLMENT OF WORLD OF WONDER

CASA GRANDE  
**Dispatch**  
Pinal County's Daily Newspaper

Newspapers  
in Education

OUR WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION PAGE CAN BE A FUN LEARNING TOOL FOR YOUR KIDS. CHECK BACK EACH THURSDAY FOR A NEW, EXCITING TOPIC!

CASA GRANDE  
**Dispatch**

TO SUBSCRIBE:  
**(520) 423-8685**

