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Calculating Festival Dates

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INTRODUCTION

Since India is a relatively small country with little variation in terms of sunrise / sunset, a panchanga computed for one area of the country is generally useable as-is throughout the country. However, residents in other countries do not have this luxury.

The date of observance for festivals is not a trivial subject, as it takes into account a variety of factors. It really requires someone knowledgeable in the area to set festival dates correctly.

However, many of us who now find ourselves in various parts of the globe do not have the luxury of such a knowledgeable person in our local vicinity. The table below contains some basic information on determining the date of observance for common festivals.

The legend at the bottom of the page may be useful in deciphering the terminology. When an explicit time isn't mentioned, it is generally safe to pick the day when the tithi prevails at sunrise, or when the tithi prevails at the time of observance (if the observance does not commence near sunrise).



COMMON FESTIVALS

Festival	Rule
Rama Navami	Chaitra Shukla Navami Madhyahna-vyapini Parividdha
Hanuman Jayanti	Chaitra Pournima
Shankara Jayanti	Vaishakha Shukla Panchami
Skanda Shashthi	Jyeshtha Shukla Shashthi Purvaviddha
Bhagavat Sevai	Ashadha
Guru Purnima	Ashadha Pournima Paraviddha
Naga Panchami	Shravana Shukla Panchami Paraviddha
Janmashtami	Shravana Krishna Ashtami Madhyaratri-vyapini Paraviddha, or Shravana Krishna Ashtami Nishita-vyapini Paraviddha
Thiru Onam	Bhadrapada Shravana nakshatra Madhyahna-vyapini
Ganesh Chaturthi	Bhadrapada Shukla Chaturthi Madhyahna-vyapini Purvaviddha

Navatatri begins	Ashvina Shukla Pratipada
Diwali	Shukla Chaturdasi Purvaviddha
Skanda Shashthi	Kartika Shukla Shashthi
Kartikai Deepam	Kartika Krittika nakshatra
Naga Panchami	Kartika Krishna Panchami Paraviddha
Ratha Saptami	Margashirsha Shukla Saptami
Vaikuntha Ekadashi	Margashirsha Shukla Ekadashi
Dattatreya Jayanti	Margashirsha Pournima Pradosha-vyapini
Thai Poosham	Pushya Pushyami nakshatra
Shiva ratri	Phalguna Krishna Chaturdashi Nishita-vyapini

ॐ COMMON VRATAS

Observance	Rule
Satyanarayana Puja	Pournima Apaharna-vyapini Purvaviddha
Sankashtha Chaturthi	Krishna Chaturdashi at moonrise Purvaviddha
Ekadashi	Krishna Ekadashi Paraviddha
Pradosham	Trayodashi Suryasta-vyapini

ॐ LEGEND

Solar Rasi	Lunar Month	Approx
Ari	Chaitra	Apr - May
Tau	Vaishakha	May - Jun
Gem	Jyeshtha	Jun - Jul
Can	Ashadha	Jul - Aug
Leo	Shravana	Aug - Sep
Vir	Bhadrapada	Sep - Oct
Lib	Ashvina	Oct - Nov
Sco	Kartika	Nov - Dec
Sag	Margashirsha	Dec - Jan
Cap	Pushya	Jan - Feb
Aqu	Magha	Feb - Mar
Pis	Phalguna	Mar - Apr

Term	Definition
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Vyapni	Prevails - Observe the festival when the tithi / nakshatra prevails during the appropriate time
Purvaviddha	If the tithi prevails at the required time on consecutive days, pick the day when it begins
Paraviddha	If the tithi prevails at the required time on consecutive days, pick the day when it ends
Dinamana	Daytime - The time between sunrise and sunset
Ratrimana	Nighttime - The time between sunset and the next sunrise
Madhyahna	The 3rd 1/5th portion of dinamana
Pradosha	The 1st 1/15th portion of ratrimana
Nishita	The 3rd 1/15th portion of ratrimana
Madhyaratri	The 8th 1/16th portion of ratrimana

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