

A SHORT SADHANA OF SARASVATI

According to the pure and unbroken
Gelug lineage tradition of Tibetan Buddhism

This sadhana practice is intended for those people
who have received this Sarasvati initiation from a qualified teacher

Gaden for the West

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The practice has two parts: the preparations and the actual practice.

The Preparations

The preparations are of two types: external and internal. The external preparations consist of cleaning the meditation room, setting up a shrine with images of Buddha Shakyamuni and Sarasvati, and setting out a beautiful arrangement of offerings. We can use water to represent nectar for drinking, water for bathing the feet, and perfume. For the remaining offerings - flowers, incense, light, and pure food - if possible we should set out the actual substances.

As for internal preparations, we should try to improve our compassion, bodhichitta, and correct view of emptiness through the practice of the stages of the path, and to receive empowerment of Sarasvati. It is possible to participate in group pujas if we have not yet received an empowerment, but to gain deep experience of this practice we need to receive an empowerment. The main internal preparation is to generate and strengthen our faith in Sarasvati, regarding her as the synthesis of all Gurus, Yidams, and Buddhas.

The Actual Practice

The actual practice of the instructions should be performed in conjunction with this sadhana. Sometimes we can emphasize placement meditation and sometimes we can emphasize reciting the mantra and prayers with faith and devotion. When we are reciting we should avoid any distracting thoughts and concentrate on the meaning of the words.

SHORT SADHANA OF SARASVATI

Taking Refuge and Generating Bodhichitta

To the Enlightened ones, the Dharma and the Spiritual
Community Until Enlightenment I turn for refuge.
By the spiritual energy of this practice,
May I attain Enlightenment for the benefit of all.

[3x]

The Four Immeasurables

May all beings have happiness and its
causes, May they never have suffering or
its causes.

May they constantly dwell in joy transcending
sorrow; May they dwell in equal love for both near
and far.

[3x]

Having thus taken refuge and given birth to the Mahayana attitude, commence the actual meditation session by reciting the Svabhava mantra and purifying the sphere of contemplation through meditation upon emptiness.

Self-generation as Sarasvati mother of wisdom

OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHA SARVA DHARMA SVABHAVA SHUDDHO HAM

Everything becomes empty. From within the sphere of emptiness there appears the syllable PAM. This transforms into a lotus cushion, on top of cushion AH syllable appears, AH transforms into a radiantly white moon-like cushion. Above the moon cushion syllable HRIH appeared which represents the ultimate nature of my own mind.

Lights radiate forth from the HRIH, delighting all Enlightened beings and fulfilling the needs of all living beings. The lights then withdraw into their source the syllable HRIH.

White light appeared from the HRIH I appear (from within the light transformations) as the holy goddess Sarasvati, whose mind is mother of all wisdom. I have one face and two arms. My body is white in colour and my face reflects a warmly serene smile. I got long hair with top knot. My left hand holding Vina musical instrument and right hand playing Vina musical instrument. Sitting on a white swan, my left leg is bent and my right leg is out stretched. I am clothed in silken garments, adorned by the precious ornaments. The syllable OM marks the crown of my head, AH my throat, and HUM and HRI my heart.

Invocation of Sarasvati

Lights shine forth from the HRIH at my heart, inviting Sarasvati from shore of southern ocean of pure land surrounded by a host of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, comes into the space before me.

Absorbing Sarasvati into Oneself

DZA HUM BAM HO

The summoned Wisdom Being² merges with me inseparably.

Initiation by Enlightened Beings

Once again lights radiate from the HRIH at my heart, invoking the Deities of Empowerment. I request them:

Please bestow initiation upon me.

In response, they come toward me, holding up vases filled with nectars of empowerment, and sprinkle the initiating nectars upon me. The nectars of empowerment enter via the crown of my head, completely filling my body and purifying me of negativities. The excess nectar transform into Buddha Akshobhya.

Consecrating Outer Offerings

Before me appears a set of huge, vast offering vessels made from jewels. Inside of these are the celestially produced substances that in nature are the wisdom of bliss and emptiness, in form are offerings and in function act as objects of the six senses that instill non samsaric, transcendental joy.

OM AH HUM (x3)

Presenting Outer Offerings to Oneself as self-generated Sarasvati

OM SARASVATI SAPARIWARA ARGHAM PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA	[water for drinking]
OM SARASVATI SAPARIWARA PADHYAM PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA	[water for washing]
OM SARASVATI SAPARIWARA PÜSHPE PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA	[flowers]
OM SARASVATI SAPARIWARA DHUPE PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA	[incense]
OM SARASVATI SAPARIWARA ALOKE PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA	[light]
OM SARASVATI SAPARIWARA GANDHE PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA	[perfume]
OM SARASVATI SAPARIWARA NAIVIDHYE PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA	[food]
OM SARASVATI SAPARIWARA SHABDA PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA	[music]

Praise to oneself as self-generated Sarasvati

Homage to Sarasvati mother of
wisdom, at whose lotus feet The gods
and non-gods make worship.
Homage to Sarasvati, mother of
wisdom. Who heralds freedom from
limitation.

Homage to Sarasvati, a beyond-samsara goddess
Whose form is delightful to perceive
And whose precious ornaments shine with
splendour like stars reflected from great ocean

Mantra recitation

At one's heart is a moon disc marked by the syllable HRIH with the mantra circling on the perimeter of the disc. As one recites the mantra OM SARASVATI HRIM lights emanate from the syllable HRIH and the mantra, performing the various purifications and activities

[as should be learned from the oral transmission].

OM SARASVATI HRIM [108 times or as much as possible]

Presenting Outer Offerings to Oneself as self-generated Sarasvati

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OM SARASVATI SAPARIWARA PADHYAM PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA	[water for washing]
OM SARASVATI SAPARIWARA PÜSHPE PRATICCHA HUM SVAHA	[flowers]
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Praise to Oneself as self-generated Sarasvati

Homage to Sarasvati mother of
wisdom at whose lotus feet The gods
and non-gods make worship.

Homage to Sarasvati, mother of
wisdom who heralds freedom from
limitation.

Dedication

By this merit may I quickly reach
The Enlightened state of Sarasvati mother of wisdom,
So that I may lead all living beings without exception
To the same Enlightenment.

Under the kind supervision of Zasep Tulku Rinpoche, this Gaden for the West (GFTW)
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sadhana by Michael Zlonicky.

We dedicate any and all merit of this effort to the study and pure practice of the precious
Vajrayana teachings.