

Home Shrines

The key principle with a home shrine is to create a gateway to the awakened state. Also think of the shrine as a reminder of your own enlightened nature. There are many ways to create this gateway and you are encouraged to listen to your inner voice for guidance about what works for you and your situation. It is also important to stay connected with the energy of the shrine and change it (sometimes quite frequently) in order for it to be alive and energized.

Location in your Home

Creating a space, however small, for your shrine is the first step. This will typically be the spot where you do your daily meditation practice, as the energy in this space will develop and deepen over time. As you walk through your home see what space calls to you and see if you are able to clear that space of other furniture/activities.

Types of Shrines

- *Main Shrine.* Many people have just one main shrine in their homes. It is usually a table or box with the surface at about heart level, when you are seated, or higher, which might be covered with a special cloth. It will have some of the elements described below to connect with awakened mind – representations and offerings.
- *Protector Shrine.* Some people may create a separate smaller Protector Shrine at the side or back of the space, using representations of one or more of the Protectors in our lineage (Ritro Gonpo, Ekajati, Kurukulla, Mahakala). Many people only have the tea offering on the main shrine as the element that connects with Protector energy.
- *Earth Shrine.* Some people may feel inspired to create an indoor or outdoor earth shrine to connect with the earth energy, the unseen world, and aboriginal peoples. The indoor earth shrine may include earth elements such as rocks, feathers or shells. The outdoor earth shrine is a long oval in shape, with a hollow in the center. Offerings are not made in the hollow, but beside the shrine, or in the 4 directions.

Common Elements on a Shrine

- Representations (Pictures, Statues, Thangkas)
 - Lineage pictures would typically include Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche and Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. Feel free to put additional pictures on your shrine, such as a picture of Reggie, if you desire. Some pictures are available through the Dharma Ocean website, including photos of Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche and the 4 Protector thangkas.
 - There are many stores and online sources for thangkas and statues of the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Yidams, and Protectors.
- Offerings
 - **Light** (Typically two candles or lamps on the shrine.)
 - **Incense** (Lit from the candle and put in a container of sand, often at the base of the shrine.)
 - **Water** (Seven bowls of water at the front of the shrine. Water should be changed regularly so it remains fresh.)
 - **Flowers**
 - **Tea** (Offered at the beginning of the day and then poured outside during Protector Chants)