

# Japa Meditation: Mantra Recitation

Mantras are words, phrases or sounds repeated to aid concentration in meditation.

Mantras are traditionally recited in an ancient language such as Sanskrit. One good reason to use a language such as Sanskrit is that your mind will not be so stuck on your limited definition that you already assigned a concept in your own language, therefore bypassing part of the rational or ego mind.

Mantras are powerful and have a power-enhancing effect in the diligent practitioner.

The essence of the mantra builds up inside the practitioner in increments the more the practitioner recites them.



The technique of recitation and repetition of mantras is called JAPA MEDITATION.

Mantras have been used for thousands of years mainly in Buddhist and Hindu traditions and have spread widely throughout the world.

Neither Buddhism nor Hinduism are formal religions. They are considered schools of practical philosophy in the path of self-realization of the highest human potential inside each of us.

So, if you already practice a religion, don't worry about mantras, people from all religions have used mantras to enhance their religious and spiritual experiences and reciting mantras doesn't automatically convert you into a buddhism or hinduism.

It is ok to keep your religion.

You will be ok in your practice of Japa Meditation.

You will be BETTER THAN OK. You will be more empowered !

## INITIATION

Traditionally, a spiritual guide, teacher or guru, transfers the essence of a mantra directly to a student or initiate in a process called an INITIATION.



First the teacher expounds on the meaning and symbology of a mantra to give the student a certain level of knowledge and understanding. Then they both practice together reciting the mantra.

During the lecture and during the practice, the teacher uses his or her expanded consciousness to envelop and hold the consciousness of the student in the essence and spirit of the mantra, making it easier for the student to absorb positive energies and subconscious wisdom related to the mantra.

It is believed that receiving a direct initiation is a powerful way to give the student momentum into the practice and eventual mastery of the mantra.



However, the human spirit (soul) makes it possible to practice and develop mastery at your own pace, on your own, even when you do not receive a direct initiation.

So, NO, a teacher, guide or guru is NOT INDISPENSABLE. It is wise to go to one, for the efficiency of it, but definitely is not indispensable.

So, don't worry, it will work for you as you practice. The more you practice the more benefit you will receive and the higher level of mastery of the mantra you will attain.

It will be up to you how much of an investment of yourself and your time you will be willing to put in.

You will be given at least 2 options in terms of recommended length of basic practice. You will choose the best option for you and then you can begin reciting your mantra.

And you will discover the power of Japa Meditation and the power of mantras.



# THE TOOL

Prayer beads are used while reciting a mantra as an aide for concentration and also as a way to keep track of the number of recitations of the mantra.

The kind of prayer beads used in Japa Meditation or mantra recitation is called a "mala" or "mala beads" or "mala necklace," and has 108 beads.

This word (mala) has nothing to do with the Spanish word "mala" which means "bad." Mala in buddhist and hindu traditions means "garland," so don't confuse it with the Spanish definition.



Mala beads are made from wood or precious/semi-precious stones.

Either wood or stone mala beads will serve the main purpose which is to practice and keep track of your practice.

As you recite your mantra while using mala beads, not only will you be acquiring the powerful essence of the mantra in yourself, but also the mala beads absorb the energies of the mantra, thus you will be creating a power object from your mala beads - a kind of talisman infused with positive energies.

You can wear your mala beads around your neck if you'd like, and benefit from the energies absorbed or you can simply carry your mala beads in a small pouch or bag and it will have a positive effect on you.



It is believed that wood absorbs the essence and energies of mantras more easily and more quickly than stone and so wooden mala beads are recommended for beginners.

An added benefit of wooden mala beads is that they are cheaper than precious or semi-precious stone mala beads.

I have used wooden mala beads and have also used stone mala beads and I cannot discern much difference between the two other than the amount of money you have to invest into them.

So, if you don't want to spend much money, begin with a wooden 108-bead mala.

If money is not a big problem for you and you have your mind made up on stone mala beads, go for it.



# Meaning of 108

***108,  $1+0+8=9$***

9 is regarded as the highest spiritual number since after 9 you return to use of 1 and 0.

***1, 0, and 8 (108)***

1 stands for God or Higher Truth.

0 stands for emptiness or completeness.

8 stands for infinity or eternity.



***Sun and Earth***

The diameter of the Sun is 108 times the diameter of the Earth. The distance from the Sun to the Earth is 108 times the diameter of the Sun.

***Moon and Earth***

The average distance of the Moon from the Earth is 108 times the diameter of the Moon.

### ***Powers of 1, 2, and 3 (Trinity)***

1 to the 1st power = 1 (1x1)

2 to the 2nd power = 4 (2x2)

3 to the 3rd power = 27 (3x3x3)

1 x 4 x 27 = 108

### ***Desires***

There are said to be 108 earthly desires in mortals.

### ***Lies***

There are said to be 108 lies humans tell.

### ***Delusions***

There are said to be 108 human delusions or forms of ignorance.

### ***Sanskrit alphabet***

There are 54 letters to the Sanskrit alphabet. Each has masculine and feminine, Shiva and Shakti.  $54 \times 2 = 108$ .

### ***Pranayama***

If one is able to be so calm in meditation as to have only 108 breaths in a day, enlightenment is said to come.

### ***Pentagon***

The angle formed by two adjacent lines in a pentagon equals 108 degrees.

### ***Time***

Some say there are 108 feelings, with 36 related to the past, 36 related to the present and 36 related to the future.

### ***Astrology***

There are 12 constellations, and 9 arc segments called namshas or chandrakalas. 9 times 12 equals 108. Chandra is moon, and kalas are the divisions within a whole.

### ***Silver and the moon***

In astrology, the metal silver is said to represent the moon. The atomic weight of silver is 108.

### ***Stages of the soul***

It is said that Atman, the human soul or center goes through 108 stages on the journey.

# The 9X12 Basic Charge

The basic charge for mantras in the Japa Meditation technique is as follows:

Do 9 Malas per day for 12 days straight.

This is also referred to as the *9X12 basic charge*.

Each mala has 108 beads. This means that doing one mala equals to repeating a mantra out loud 108 times.

The recitation is done out loud. It doesn't have to be loud so others hear you. It only needs to be loud enough so you hear yourself pronouncing the mantra.

Of course since more than likely you will practice when you are by yourself, you can choose, if you wish, to turn up the volume as much as you feel it helps you to focus or as loud as it is enjoyable for you.

Doing 9 malas each day means you will recite the mantra 972 times each day (9X108).

$$9+7+2 = 18$$

$$1+8 = 9$$

As mentioned earlier (symbology of 108) 9 is the highest number in spirituality.

$$1+0+8 = 9$$





Every time you complete 1 mala you are reinforcing the power of 9. This represents your willingness to reach the highest levels of practice in self development and self empowerment.

Each day that you complete 9 malas you have just reinforced the power of 9, nine times = 81.

81 translates to  $8+1=9$

9 becomes a spiritual symbol for the highest attainment in your practice of self realization.

**IMPORTANT:**

If you miss one day in your 12 day practice, simply add the missed day at the end, on day 13.

However, if you miss more than 1 day during your 12 day practice, you must start over.

**ALSO:**

You may split up the 9 malas during the day. In other words you can do either 4 or 5 malas in the morning and the rest some time later during that day.

You may even do 3 malas in the morning, 3 in the afternoon and 3 in the evening.

You may finish your 9 malas late into the night as long as you finish before light starts to come up for the new day.

In the *Mahajrya Buddhist Tradition*, which is the spiritual tradition I am ordained as an Acharya (equivalent to being a Bishop), we say that **FREEDOM IS ABSOLUTE**.



**Maha Raja**

Acharya in the Mahajrya Buddhist Tradition

I know that some of you will choose to practice less than the recommended basic practice, and it's ok. It's just you exercising your free will, and freedom is absolute.

For those of you who are not ready or willing to practice the recommended 9X12 basic charge, we have an alternative.

## *Alternate Recommendation*

Do 1 mala per day for 9 days straight.

This means each day you do 1 mala you are doing 108 recitations and therefore reinforcing the power of 9.

By the end of your 9-day practice you will have reinforced the power of 9, nine times or 81.

$$8+1=9.$$

You are still persevering in reaching an efficient level of practice even if it's not the recommended 9X12 basic charge.

## *Alternative to the Alternate Charge*

Yes, there will be some of you who are not willing to do even 1 mala per day. And to you I say, do any amount you wish to do each day.

It is better than no practice at all.

Do it for any amount each day and do it for any number of days you wish. You still receive some benefit and therefore some self empowerment, commensurate with your practice.

It's ok to take baby steps if this is where you are. No judgement.

Who knows, maybe doing a small charge of a mantra will gradually motivate you to eventually do the recommended 9X12 basic charge.

Definitely know that mastery requires work and perseverance and requires not only that you do the basic charge but to eventually go beyond the basic charge into uncharted territories.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves.

One step at a time.

For now choose what level of charge you are going to do and as you practice, the benefits will compound into more and more blessings.



### **As a side note:**

We call it 9X12 Basic Charge because it is a very basic, beginner level practice.

Some spiritual traditions out there actually require their students to charge a mantra everyday for a whole year before they can be considered to have charged the mantra at all.

So, you see, we are very lenient in our approach to guiding students. We are very flexible in our recommendations to get you started on mantras.

Using a mala to charge a mantra is highly recommended. However, it is not absolutely necessary.

If you don't want to spend money or don't have money to spend on a Mala, you can still begin your Japa Meditation practice using a timer or clock.





That's right, you can charge your mantra by deciding how much time you are going to spend reciting it.

Most people who have charged mantras in the Japa Meditation technique have discovered that it can take anywhere from 25 minutes to 30 minutes of quick repetitions to complete 9 malas.

So, my recommendation for basic charge using a timer or clock is for you to do 30 minutes each day for 12 days straight. This will be the equivalent of doing the 9x12 basic charge using a mala.

### *The Alternate Recommendation*

The alternate charge using a timer or clock is to do 3 minutes per day of quick recitations for 9 days straight.

## The Alternative to the Alternate Charge

Do any amount of time of quick recitations you wish to do for any number of days you'd like.

Freedom is absolute.

Self realization and enlightenment has to be sought out of complete free will and not because of any outside pressure.

So work on yourself according to your free will.



# Correct Way to Handle Your Mala

- 1 Hold your mala resting on the middle fingers.
- 2 Turn the beads using your thumb.
- 3 DO NOT USE YOUR INDEX (pointing) FINGER.
- 4 Begin on the first bead next to the guru bead.
- 5 DO NOT BEGIN ON THE GURU BEAD.
- 6 Recite the mantra once for each bead until you get to the last bead next to the guru bead but do not recite the mantra on the guru bead.
- That's 108 beads excluding the guru bead or 108 recitation.
- 7 Now hold the guru bead to your 3rd Eye Chakra or center of your forehead and only in your mind recite the mantra once.
- 8 You have now completed 1 mala.
- 9 Continue around the mala 8 more times in this manner until you complete a total of 9 malas for the day if you are doing the 9x12 Basic Charge.

In the [Mahajrya Buddhist Tradition](#), each finger of your hand represents each of the **5 Spiritual Elements of Creation**.

**THUMB:** Represent the element Earth therefore this is a grounding finger and we use this finger to ground the energy of the mantra in the beads.

**INDEX FINGER:** Represents the element Fire. Fire changes, transmutes and purifies. IF you use the index finger while reciting the mantra, the energy of the mantra will not be able to stay in the bead. It will be transmuted and transfer into a higher plane of existence rather than stay in ours.

**MIDDLE FINGER:** Represents the element Heaven/Sky. It represent the lightest of the 5 elements. It also represents consciousness.

**RING FINGER:** Represents the element Water. Water represents your emotions.

**PINKY FINGER:** Represents the element Air. Air represents communication.





Pinky  
Air

Ring  
Water

Middle  
Heaven  
or  
Sky

Index  
Fire

Thumb  
Earth

# Mantra of Peace

As a matter of tradition, the first mantra we teach a beginner is the mantra of peace.



We can all use a little more peace. The whole world could use a little more peace.

But the main reason we teach the mantra of peace first is because down the road you will encounter long and complex mantras, more powerful mantras and therefore more intense mantras and cultivating peace at the beginning will come in handy later on.

You will be able to handle other mantras with a more peaceful attitude.

You will be able to handle more power with a more peaceful attitude.



# *Mantra of Peace*



## **Om Shanti Shanti Shanti**

**OM** - *Syllable representing the sound of the everything, everywhere which is always at peace, existing peacefully in its fundamental nature.*

Everything is interrelated and interconnected with everything else peacefully in the conscious mind of the highest conscious self (God, the IS, Source, etc.).

When reciting the Om your attitude is a peaceful union with the everything, everywhere including within yourself with yourself.

**Shanti** - *Peace, repeated 3 times - once for the body, once for the mind and once for the spirit (soul).*

Peace doesn't mean that nothing happens. Peace means everything happens just the way it happens and you are at peace with it.

Peacefulness is an internal change that happens gradually for most people so be patient in it's cultivation and realization.

In it's most basic definition PEACE means the absence of WAR or CONFLICT. So, the practice of the mantra of peace will begin to relax your natural propensity to live life within the context (reality) of conflict, internal and external, and therefore within some kind of war with yourself and others, physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.



Peace doesn't mean you become apathetic. If this happens to you in your cultivation of the mantra of peace, snap yourself out of apathy, it's just an ego trap to keep you from growing.

Peace doesn't mean to accept blindly everything without getting involved in life. It simply means you feel less conflict inside but you are still guided by your consciousness and wisdom to manage situations the best you can.

Sometimes your consciousness and wisdom will guide you to do everything you can to improve the course of things. Other times you will be guided to do less. Still at other times you will be guided to simply wait patiently or to ultimately do nothing.

This is where your discernment comes in. You will have to discern to what degree to get involved in situations. However, all the while you will feel less conflicted and more peaceful regardless of outcomes.

Of course you will feel more peaceful to the degree that you practice the mantra of peace and to the degree that you begin to master peace within yourself.

This takes a different amount of practice and different length of time from person to person.

Never compare to anybody else in terms of competitiveness. It's a waste of time and energy to compete with others in spiritual practice.

Simply work on yourself constantly and you will begin to see good results.

You will recite "**Om Shanti Shanti Shanti**" once for each bead in your mala. Do it in quick recitations.

You can do it very quickly if you wish, but make sure to enunciate each word in the mantra.

Don't do it so fast that you begin to slur your words. That doesn't count and will void your charge.

So there you have it!

You are ready to begin charging the mantra of peace today.

Persevere, and you will grow quickly and will empower yourself without limit.

Good luck !

-Maha Raja