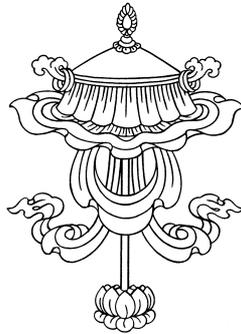


Filling and Blessing Statues



*Simple Instructions for Taking Care
of Your New Holy Object*

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Brief Instructions for

Filling Statues and Stupas

Introduction

It is not good to leave statues or stupas completely empty. To leave a statue empty is like offering nothing to the buddhas and can create obstacles. Therefore, it is important to put something inside of the statue, even as little as a few mantras and some incense. This is also true when offering statues to your teachers; there should always be something placed inside of them for auspiciousness. If you need to wait awhile until your statue/stupa can be properly filled and consecrated, then roll up a copy of the four dharmakaya relic mantras or the five powerful mantras and place them inside the statue with some incense for the time being.

Below are instructions for properly filling and consecrating your statue or stupa. You will roll the mantras that go inside the statue, gather the various substances that are also placed inside, bless these substances, clean the statue, fill it, and then perform a final blessing ceremony. Following this chapter is the root text of *Shälkar Melong*, with commentary by Lama Zopa Rinpoche, which provides more detailed instructions.

Small Statues and Stupas

The instructions that follow are intended for larger statues and stupas. If you have a smaller statue, the instructions are much more simple.

Small statues should mainly contain the four dharmakaya relic mantras. If possible, one may also include the mantra of the deity of the statue, but that is not completely necessary. The main mantras to put inside the statue are the four dharmakaya relic mantras. For small stupas, only the four dharmakaya relic mantras are needed.

Gather the mantras and roll them according to the instructions below. Also obtain powdered incense or medicinal herbs in enough quantity to fill the throne of the statue. Yellow cloth is also needed to seal the statue after it is filled.

After you have assembled the mantras and incense, clean the inside of the statue. Carefully wrap the statue's face in cotton wool to protect it. Then wash the inside of the statue with nice-smelling soap and water. Finally, rinse it with saffron water (if you have it) and allow it to dry.

The mantras should be placed right side up into the torso of the statue. The throne may be filled with powdered incense, medicinal herbs, and jewels. No empty spaces should be left inside the statue.

When the statue is filled, you may bless it using the abbreviated Rab Nā ritual found on p. 20. Later, if you have the opportunity, you may ask a qualified lama or geshe to bless your statue as well.

What follows are instructions for filling larger statues and stupas.

Step One: Gather the Ingredients

Gather all the things that need to go inside: the life tree (*sog shing*) for larger statues (all stupas should have them), mantras (already rolled), relics (if you have them), small statues and tsa-tsas (for big statues or stupas), loose incense (there are up to twenty-five different ingredients that can be used in incense, so collect together

as many different kinds of incense as you can, such as medicinal incense, etc.), precious jewels, etc. For large statues, you can also place one or more wealth vases inside. Articles should be pure and properly blessed. Hair, fingernails, and so on of lamas may not be suitable. Check with the lama who is blessing the statue.

As no space should be left empty, it is necessary to have a large amount of clean powdered incense or medicinal herbs that can be packed tightly amongst the mantras, filling every space.

Smaller statues and tsa-tsas of buddhas, Lama Tsongkhapa, Guru Rinpoche, etc. to be placed inside a larger statue or stupa can be placed adjacent to their corresponding mantras. In a Guru Shakyamuni statue, Guru Shakyamuni tsa-tsas can be placed everywhere. Tsa-tsas of stupas should only be placed in the lotus. Only good quality tsa-tsas should be used; never those that are damaged or imperfect.

Precious objects – gems, gold, money, sandalwood, perfumes, holy pills, and so on are placed in the lotus.

“Five Metal Powder.” At the time of filling the statue, scatter everywhere, especially in the lotus, a powder made from ground gold, silver, copper, iron, as well as a powder made from diamond, sapphire, ruby, and pearl.

Five seeds (small quantities): Barley, black sesame, yellow mustard, peas, wheat (*ne, dro, tel, lung kar, drema*). These can be placed in glass jars to avoid attracting insects.

Holy water and soil from Mt. Kailash, Benares, Bodhgaya, etc., holy wood and leaves from the Bodhi tree, and so on.

Several layers of yellow cotton cloth or silk. After each section of the statue/stupa is filled, you will put a piece of this cloth inside as an internal barrier to keep what has been put into the statue/stupa in place. The cloth gets tucked in around the edges, keeping the contents securely in place.

If the statue is big enough, you should also include a small picture of the mandala wheel of Dzambhala (male) and another one of Nörgyünma (female) among the items to put inside. You will also need a picture of the mandala wheel of Ganapati, a picture

of the eight auspicious signs, and a picture of a double dorje.

Once the consecration (step six) has taken place, you will need a mixture of honey, butter, and sugar together with the powder or precious stones (if available) and perfume to stick the male and female mandala wheel pictures together. See below for instructions.

Step Two: Mantras

Make extensive copies of the various mantras to go inside the stupa or statue. Master copies of mantras are available from the FPMT Foundation Store. Roll up a sufficient number of them until you think you have enough (*see pp. 9-10 for the estimated number of sheets of each mantra needed to fill an 80 cm (32-inch) statue*).

Mantras should be printed on yellow paper. If they are printed on white paper, color the paper yellow with saffron water. The mantra text should be cut so that there is minimal margin on the four sides.

Rolling the Mantras

Mantras are usually rolled around sticks of incense and wrapped with saffron-colored cloth. For small statues, you should still roll your mantras around incense; however, wrapping them with a cloth is optional if it will make it too difficult to put the mantras inside the statue.

Break off a piece of incense the width of the text. Roll the first sheet with the incense inside, beginning at the “head” (start) of the text, which faces inwards. Additional sheets are then added, in groups of one or more, depending upon your dexterity, with an overlap of about 2 cm. The sheets should all have the same orientation. The rolls should be as tight as possible. This can be achieved by rolling them on a firm surface with an oblong block of wood. Finish the roll with a single sheet, gluing firmly the final 2 cm. When rolling mantras be sure to mark which way is “up” so

that the mantras are not put into the statue/stupa upside down. Also, mark the number reference of the mantra on the outside to be sure which mantras are which so they can be put in the appropriate places of the statue. According to the text, Shälkar Melong, roll mantras from “head to tail,” i.e., left to right. (Please note there is also an equally valid tradition of rolling mantras from tail to head.)

Then wrap the outside of mantra roll with yellow/gold cloth or ribbon the exact width of the roll. Glue the ribbon all around and over the junction of its ends. The rolls can be any size, according to the size of the statue.

When it comes time to fill your holy object, the rolls are placed in the following sequence. Variations in numeric sequence and type of mantra exist for statues of different deities. The numbers shown are the approximate number of mantra sheets (5 x 40 cm) needed for an 80 cm (32-inch) Guru Shakyamuni statue with a double lotus base.

1	dbu zung	Head mantra	300
2	mgrin zung	Throat mantra	200
3	thug zung	Heart mantra	300
4	bla med	Highest yoga tantra	400
5	khong sa	H.H. the Dalai Lama’s name mantra	600
6	yong dzin	Two tutors’ name mantras	600
7	thub mtshan	Guru Shakyamuni mantra	1500
8	jei mtshan	Lama Tsongkhapa mantra	600
9		Padmasambhava mantra	600
10	ma ni	Chenrezig mantra	600
11	nal jor	Yoga and charya tantra mantras	600
12	ja gyud	Kriya tantra mantras	700
13	<i>drol ma</i>	Tara mantra	700
14	<i>tsho lha</i>	Three long life deities	700
15	<i>sde lnga</i>	Five collections of great mantras	800

16	mdo zung	Sutra mantras	800
17	rten nying	Essence, dependent arising mantras	800
18	so jong	Guru Shakyamuni & previous buddhas' sojong	800
19	dod gso	Kyabje Ling Rinpoche's requesting prayer	800
20	mig tse	Praise to Lama Tsongkhapa prayer	800
21	shis brdod	Verses of auspiciousness – prayers	800
22	ta shi	Verses of auspiciousness – verses	800
23	nor lha	Wealth deities' mantras	800
24	cho kyong	Dharma protectors' mantras	800
25	thug sel	Purifying mistakes mantras	800
26	yig rgya	100-syllable Vajrasattva mantra	1000
27	pad zung	Lotus mantra	4000

Step Three: Preparing for the Rítual to Bless the Ingredients

You will need to bless the statues, mantras, other ingredients, wealth deity mandalas, etc. There is a text for this blessing practice called *Sung Drub*.

Step Four: Clean your Holy Object

Carefully wrap the statue's face in cotton wool to protect the painting.

Thoroughly clean the inside of the statue/stupa with nice smelling soap and water. The inside of statues often has a fair amount of resin residue from casting. You may need to clean out some of the resin from inside the statue. Pick it off with a screwdriver or similar tool. Often with small statues, the neck is blocked, or the hole is not smooth so it is difficult to insert the mantras to fill them. Also there can be small metal protrusions that need to

be broken off or filed down so that there are fewer obstructions to putting the mantras inside. Then rinse the inside of the statue well with saffron water and allow it to dry.

For large statues, paint the inside with a red color. While the paint is still wet, inside the statue sprinkle some ground up pachug pill (cow pill) as well as medicinal and other incenses. Alternatively, you may paint the inside with a thick “leather-like” coat of paint made from the following various substances:

- six great medicines powder (*zang drub*), obtained from Tibetan Medical Centre, McLeod Ganj, Dharmasala, India.
- medicinal powder (*man che*).
- saffron (a very large amount).
- five cow substances pills (*bajug rilbu*). These are obtained by keeping a red or a pink cow separate from other cows for one month, feeding it on grass and water from a high, clean pasture – a special grass that grows in Tibet. During this month the cow must be looked after by a gelong with pure vows, not a getsul. The gelong then collects the milk, butter, curd, urine, and manure produced by the cow, mixes them, and makes pills out of the drying mixture. This same mixture is used to coat the base of the board used for drawing sand mandalas, for stupas, and for statues; it can be obtained from Namgyäl Monastery.
- camphor (quite a large amount, to repel insects).
- glue (not mentioned in the text, but useful to make the paste stick to the inside of the statue).

All of these ingredients are heated and mixed together into a thick paste, several coats of which are applied to the inside of the statue.

The wet paint helps the substances to stick inside. The paint may also help to preserve the metal (if your statue is made of metal).

Allow the paint to dry before filling the statue.

Seal all holes that may allow insects to get inside.

Step Five: Fill the Statue or Stupa

Fill the statues inserting the appropriate mantras and substances in the correct order and in the correct places (note that there are many traditions for how to do this and one should seek the advice of a qualified lama or geshe). Instructions on the attitude one should have while filling the statue as well as what rituals to perform while filling, etc., are available in *Benefits and Practices Related to Statues and Stupas, Part 3*.

Use a mixture of honey, butter, and sugar together with the powder or precious stones (if available) and perfume to stick the male (Dzambhala) and female (Norgyunma) mandala wheel pictures together – as if they were embracing – with Dzambhala on top facing downwards. After they are stuck together, make sure to mark on the outside of the pictures to be able identify both Dzambhala and the placement of the heads of the deities. When the wheels are placed inside the statue, Dzambhala will be on top and the heads of the deities will be directed towards the back of the statue (so if they “stood up,” they would be facing the same direction as the statue). Then, beneath the picture of Nörgyünma, add the mandala wheel of Ganapati, followed by the picture of the eight auspicious signs (both facing up), and finally the double dorje. The double dorje faces down toward the base of the statue like Dzambhala. These can all be stuck together with the sweet paste offering. It is also recommended to offer a nice cloth by wrapping it around all of them together.

Paste the following syllables inside the statue: behind the eyes KSHIM KSHIM, the ears DZIM DZIM, the nose KHAM, the tongue RAM, the forehead KAM, the navel SAM, the crown OM, the throat AH, and the heart HUM. All syllables should be written in Tibetan.

Within the ushnisha, place a relic pill of the Buddha or, if that is not available, a single pearl. Then place the central wooden stick (*sog shing*) with the eastern side facing towards the front, holding it in with the mantra rolls placed in horizontal layers in the sequence mentioned earlier. Pack each level of mantras with a piece of yellow cloth (where possible – it is too difficult to do this with small statues).

Tsa-tsas are placed at the level of their corresponding mantras. Tsa-tsas and small statues placed inside a large statue should be wrapped in yellow cloth.

In a Guru Shakyamuni Buddha statue, his mantras are placed not only at their appropriate level, but also everywhere within the statue.

Similarly, for a Lama Tsongkhapa statue, his mantra can be placed anywhere, and so on.

The “purifying mistakes mantra” (#25 of the twenty seven mantras) is placed everywhere, to overcome errors that may have been made in the preparation.

When filling small statues wherein all the listed mantras will not fit; the “five groups of great mantras” (*de nga* #15), the five great mantras, and the four dharmakaya relic mantras can be used throughout. Lama Zopa Rinpoche recommends using the four dharmakaya relic mantras as much as possible. The five great mantras compiled by Lama Zopa Rinpoche are called also called *de nga*, but should not be confused with the traditional *de nga* (#15 of the twenty-seven mantras). Rinpoche recommends to use these five great mantras in preference to the traditional ones.

Relics of high lamas, their robes, and so on are placed at the level of the heart and above. Lama's robes may be used to wrap the mantras.

Fill the lotus with mantras 21–27. In the center place the auspicious mantras (#s 21 & 22), to the Buddha's right place the protector mantras (#24), to his left the wealth deity mantras (#23), and the others in all the remaining spaces. Other substances mentioned above are also placed in the lotus.

Finally, place the five wheels horizontally so that the male will be on top when the statue is righted, and the heads of the deities are towards the back of the statue or stupa. Cover everything with a yellow cloth and then close and seal the base of the statue so that no insects can gain access.

Step Six: Perform the Final Consecration (Rab Nä)

The specific text and prayers required to perform the final consecration is referred to as Rab Nä (the Rab Nä rituals are included in this book). There are three versions of Rab Nä – abbreviated, middle, and extensive. See p.20 for the abbreviated version.

For More Information

For complete instructions on filling statues and stupas, see the *Benefits and Practices Related to Statues and Stupas, Part 3* by FPMT Education Publications.

Heart Advice from Lama Zopa Rinpoche

When you see a Buddha statue recite this prayer:

PÄL DÄN LA MA KHYE KU CHI DRA DANG

In whatever way you appear, glorious Guru,

KHOR DANG KU TSHEI TSHÄ DANG ZHING KHAM SOG

With whatever retinue, lifespan, and pure land,

KHYÖ KYI TSHÄN CHHOG ZANG PO CHI DRA WAR

Whatever noble and holy name you take,

DE DRA KHO NAR DAG SOG GYUR WAR SHOG

May I and others attain only these.

You may like to print this out and put it near your statues.

Instructions from Lama Zopa Rinpoche

The most important thing is to put the four Dharmakaya Relic Mantras inside. Usually, the four Dharmakaya Relic Mantras are written in gold on the life tree inside the stupa or statue, but here I am suggesting for you to put as many as possible of the four powerful mantras inside the stupa or statue.

In Tibetan these four mantras are:

- Sang wa ringsel
- Tsug tor drime
- Ozer drime
- Jangchhub gyänbum

In English they are:

- The Most Precious Mantra of the Secret Relic;
- The Most Precious Mantra of the Stainless Pinnacle;
- The Most Precious Root and Heart Mantras of the Stainless Beam Deity;
- The Most Precious Mantra: Ornament of Enlightenment.

If you put these four powerful mantras inside, it creates the same merit as having built 100,000 stupas and the same merit as having made offerings to all the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha.

Having these mantras inside the stupa/statue creates the cause for so many sentient beings to be purified by seeing, touching or making offerings to the stupa, including all the insects that come in contact with it.

General advice regarding filling stupas (holy objects) with the Four Dharmakaya Relic Mantras

Print the mantras on yellow paper, or offer saffron to the paper. If you can, all the mantras can be written in gold. The mantras on the life tree need to be written in gold (for large statues or stupas).

Put many thousands of mantras, rolled up, around the life tree that is inside the stupa/statue. Put as many as possible of each of the four Dharmakaya Relic mantras. It is extremely important that the mantras are all facing the right way up and none are upside down.

Regarding types of relics

In tantra there are four types of relics:

1. Relic of dharmakaya (this refers to profound mantras such as these four powerful mantras, etc.)
2. Relic of holy 'kundun' body of a buddha, bodhisattva, or great yogi after they have passed away.
3. Relic of "gu päI" (Rinpoche is not sure how to translate this word) it means the hair and nails of a buddha or bodhisattva.
4. Relic, which is what is commonly seen, that is the size of a mustard seed.

In the texts, these four powerful mantras are written in gold on the life tree and put inside stupas and statues. The four Dharmakaya Relic Mantras are what make holy objects most powerful and

beneficial, and make it easiest for sentient beings to purify negative karma and collect extensive merit – freeing them from all the samsaric sufferings and achieve enlightenment.

The relic of dharmakaya could also be referring to the five powerful mantras: (1) Wish-Granting Wheel mantra, (2) Mitrugpa mantra, (3) Kunrig mantra, (4) Stainless Pinnacle mantra, (5) Namgyälma mantra. These are five deities specifically for purification.

Also it seems that the Prajnaparamita teachings are also considered to be dharmakaya relics, as well as the Sutra of Golden Light and the Sanghatasutra. The Prajnaparamita contains all the 84,000 teachings of Buddha as well as all the teachings of the buddhas of the three times [past, present, and future], and all the bodhisattvas and arhats. The Prajnaparamita liberates all sentient beings from oceans of samsaric sufferings and all the causes (delusion and karma).

If one builds a stupa or statue that is for purification, then as well as the four Dharmakaya Relic mantras (and life tree), you can fill up the stupa or statues mostly with these five purification mantras. Also you can have Vajrasattva mantra and other mantras. If one is making stupas or statues for long life, then as well as these four powerful mantras (and life tree), then also fill the statue or stupa up mainly with long life mantras.

Even when you are making stupa tsa tsas you should always put these four powerful mantras inside. In our tsa tsa shop in Aptos, we put incense and the four Dharmakaya Relic mantras rolled outside a stick of incense – not just one copy of these four powerful mantras, but as many as possible – and then put that inside each stupa tsa tsa.

I have given just the essential benefits of these four Dharmakaya Relic Mantras (see *Benefits and Practices Related to Statues and Stupas*) but there are many more unbelievable inspirational benefits that I will eventually translate.

Importance of filling a statue or stupa with the Four Dharmakaya Relic Mantras

Rinpoche says that the most important mantras ever to go inside stupas are the four Dharmakaya Relic Mantras. These four powerful mantras are the ones that are to be written in gold on the life tree stick inside. However, what Rinpoche does is fill the stupa to the brim with the four Dharmakaya Relic Mantras – all of them – millions of times.

For stupa tsa tsas all you need is the four Dharmakaya Relic Mantras – all four – rolled up and stuck inside. At centers, for big stupas, then you need to have the other appropriate and correct mantras, the life tree, various substances, etc. and then on top of that Rinpoche says to put as many of these four powerful mantras as possible inside.

For instance, in Aptos [at Rinpoche's house] the 6 ft. stupa is only filled with: tsa tsas, the life tree with the four Dharmakaya Relic Mantras written in gold, and the rest of the entire stupa is filled only with about 20 billion times these four powerful mantras – this was done under Rinpoche's direction.

Colophon:

Scribe Holly A, Kachoe Dechen Ling Nov 2002 and July 2003. Section on the benefits is from the Kangyur, which is the essence of all the Buddha's teachings. Compiled and lightly edited by Kendall Magnussen, FPMT Education Services, July 2003.

Rab Nä

(Rabtu Näpa, Great Abiding)

A Very Brief Consecration Rítual

NOTE: This ceremony should be preceded by a guru yoga practice such as Lama Tsongkhapa Guru Yoga, complete with refuge and bodhichitta, the four immeasurable thoughts, mandala offering, and recitation of the migtsema mantra.

All buddhas and bodhisattavas living in the ten directions, please pay attention to me. Please remain stable, without going beyond sorrow, until all sentient beings equalling end of space reach the state of non-abiding, gone beyond sorrow.

In particular, for as long as these objects of body, speech, and mind are not destroyed due to harm from earth, water, fire, and wind please remain stable and fulfill the countless purposes of sentient beings.

OM SUPRATISHTA VAJRA YE SVAHA (3x)

For as long as there is no destruction
From the eons of fire, water, or wind,
For the welfare of sentient beings,
Please, Bhagavan, may you remain.

Protector, by manifesting various forms
According to the fortune of sentient beings,
Please fulfill the purposes of sentient beings,
In worlds of the ten directions. (3x)

OM YE DHARMA HETU PRABHAVA HETUN TESHAN TATHAGATO
HYAVADAT TESHAN CHAYO NIRODHA EVAM VADI MAHA
SHRAMANA YE SVAHA (3-7x)

Then:

Like a mountain of heaps of very beautiful pure gold,
Decorated by an abundant collection of precious jewels,
One never tires of looking at the supreme form body.
I request you to remain stable until the end of samsara.

Verses of Auspiciousness

Possessing a collection of marvelous qualities like a mountain of
gold,
Protector of the three worlds who has abandoned the three stains,
Buddha, possessing eyes like the petals extending from a lotus –
This is the first auspicious virtue of the world.

Supreme, great, and immovable reliance,
Object of offering for humans and gods, well renowned in the
three worlds,
The holy Dharma that makes all sentient beings peaceful –
This is the second auspicious virtue of the world.

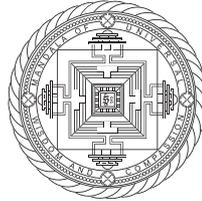
The holy Sangha possessing Dharma and enriched by auspicious-
ness of knowledge,
Object of offering of humans, gods, and demi-gods;
Basis of all glories; the supreme and great assembly having shame –
This is the third auspicious virtue of the world.

Now recite various dedication prayers.

Colophon:

Extracted from *Different Rituals Compiled from Tibet*, compiled by Nag Tsang Jampa Ngawang. Published by the People's Printing Press, Tibet, 1998. Translated from the Tibetan by Geshe Thubten Sherab, September 2003. Scribed and lightly edited by Kendall Magnussen, FPMT Education Services.

Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition



The Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition (FPMT) is a dynamic worldwide organization devoted to education and public service. Established by Lama Thubten Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche, FPMT touches the lives of beings all over the world. In the early 1970s, young Westerners inspired by the intelligence and practicality of the Buddhist approach made contact with these lamas in Nepal and the organization was born. Now encompassing over 150 Dharma centers, projects, social services and publishing houses in thirty-three countries, we continue to bring the enlightened message of compassion, wisdom, and peace to the world.

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