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| **THE TRIMURTI (Hindu Trinity):** | **SHAKTIS (female aspects):** |
| Hindu god BrahmaClick photo to enlarge | **Brahma****The Creator**Vehicle: swanHas 4 heads, 4 arms, and a reddish complexionNot commonly worshippedNot to be confused with Brahman (the ground of all being) or the Brahmin (priestly caste) | **Saraswati****Goddess of knowledge, music, and the arts**Vehicle: swanWife of BrahmaSits on a white lotus playing a veena | Hindu goddess SaraswatiClick photo to enlarge |
| Hindu god VishnuClick photo to enlarge | **Vishnu****The Preserver**Vehicle: garuda (bird)Has 4 arms, a blueish complexion, and rests on a snakeWas incarnated (born as an animal or human) nine times with one more still to comeIs the main god of **Vaishnavism** | **Lakshmi****Goddess of wealth and prosperity**Vehicle: owlWife of VishnuUsually shown bestowing coins and flanked by elephants | Hindu goddess LakshmiClick photo to enlarge |
| Hindu god ShivaClick photo to enlarge | **Shiva****The Destroyer / Transformer**Vehicle: bullHas matted hair, a third eye, a blue throat and a trident in his handOften worshipped in the featureless lingam formIs the main god of **Saivism** | **Parvati****The Divine Mother**Vehicle: lionThe reincarnation of Shiva's first wifeHas many forms, such as the popular Durga and Kali (see below); often shown together with Saraswati and Lakshmi as the **tridevi** ('triple goddess') | Hindu goddess ParvatiClick photo to enlarge |

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| **OTHER POPULAR HINDU GODS** |
| Hindu god GaneshClick photo to enlarge | **Ganesh****God of the intellect and the remover of obstacles**Vehicle: mouseSon of Shiva & ParvatiHas an elephant's head | **Murugan****God of war**Vehicle: peacockSon of Shiva & ParvatiPopular in Tamil areasAlso known as Skanda | Hindu god MuruganClick photo to enlarge |
| Hindu goddess DurgaClick photo to enlarge | **Durga**A fiercer form of ParvatiVehicle: tigerHas ten arms holding many weapons | **Kali****Goddess of time and death**Vehicle: donkeyUsually portrayed as dark and violent | Hindu goddess KaliClick photo to enlarge |
| Hindu god RamaClick photo to enlarge | **Rama****The 7th avatar (incarnation) of Vishnu**The central figure in the epic story*Ramayana* | **Krishna****The 8th avatar (incarnation) of Vishnu**Asually portrayed as a child and a prankster; often shown playing the flute | Hindu god KrishnaClick photo to enlarge |
| Hindu god HanumanClick photo to enlarge | **Hanuman**An ape-like god known for assisting Rama | **Surya****God of the Sun**Pulled on a chariot by horses | Hindu god HanumanClick photo to enlarge |