

Mathematical and Scriptural Analysis of Yagya Mandap Construction: Dvar, Toran, Dhvaja, and Pataka

Ekta Chandel^{1*}
¹Research Scholar, Sams Global University, Bhopal, India

Abstract. According to Indian scriptures, the sacred process of Yagya is conducted within a Mandap, defined as a platform constructed with specific proportions. Among its eight components, *Dvar*, *Toran*, *Dhvaja*, and *Pataka* are associated with specific deities and serve as energy conduits for the fulfillment of the Yagya. The *Toran*, placed one *hast* away from the *Dvar*, varies by direction and tree species, each symbolizing a guardian deity. These are adorned with symbolic emblems like *Shankh*, *Chakra*, *Gada*, and *Padma* in Vishnu Yagya, or *Trishul* in Shiva Yagya, with mountain symbols enhancing their protective function. *Dhvaja* and *Pataka* are installed in precise locations, bearing deity-specific colors and emblems aligned with directions, as prescribed in texts like *Kundpradeep* and *Smart-Kund Samiksha*. The selection of sacred woods such as *Palash*, *Pipal*, *Udumbar*, and *Bilva* for constructing these elements reflects the spiritual and architectural precision embedded in Vedic ritual practice. While the spiritual role of deities and color energies is beyond the current scope, this structured account underscores the mathematical harmony and symbolic intent in the traditional design of the Yagya Mandap.

Keywords. Yagya Mandap, Toran, Dhvaja, Pataka, Ritual Architecture, Sacred Geometry, Vedic Construction Texts

*CORRESPONDENCE

Ekta Chandel, Research Scholar, Sams Global University, Bhopal, India

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Introduction

Yagya is a crucial part of Indian culture and civilization. All the rituals in Indian culture incorporate Yagya as an essential component. The scriptures describe detailed procedures for Yagya, which were followed in ancient times and are still practiced in India and some parts of the world. According to Indian scriptures, the sacred process of Yagya is conducted inside a Mandap, which is defined as a podium or platform constructed with precise proportions.

The Mandap constructed for Yagya consists of eight parts: Mandap base, *Sthambh* (pillar), *Valliya* (वलि़िया), *Dvar* (द्वार) (door), *Toran* (तोरण), *Vedi* (वेदी), *Dhvaja* (ध्वजा), and *Pataka* (पताका) [1].

Each part plays a significant role in the procedure of Yagya and the functioning of the Mandap. In a previous publication [1], the dimensions of the Mandap and its classification, pillars, *Valliya*, and *Shikhar* were discussed with references from Indian scriptures [1]. The present paper focuses on *Dvar*, *Toran*, *Dhvaja*, and *Pataka*.

Each of these parts of the Mandap represents a particular deity and serves as a conduit for the flow of energy (Shakti), which is essential for achieving the desired outcome of the Yagya and fulfilling its purpose. The spiritual significance of the deities represented, the mechanism of channeling energy through each specific part, the role of colors, and the materials used in constructing the Yagya Mandap are beyond the scope of the present paper [1–22].

Dvar

The Mandap contains four doors (*Dvar* — द्वार) (Figure 1), one in each cardinal direction. Each *Dvar* includes a *Toran*, which is unique to its direction based on the deity it represents [1]. The *Toran* acts as a kind of outer gate and is placed at a distance of 1 *hast* (24 *angul* or 45.6 cm) from the *Dvar* [2].

Dimensions of Dvar and Its Construction

The height of the *Dvar* is the same as that of the exo-pillars and follows the same placement

rules on the Mandap base as those pillars [3]. The final shape of the door is completed by placing the *Valliya* over the exo-pillars, secured using nails for proper fixation [1].

According to *Smarth Kund Samiksha* by Madhusudan Ojha, the construction of *Dvars* requires eight *Kasht* (straight wooden beams). These are classified based on size—small (*Avam*), medium (*Madhyam*), and large (*Uttam*). As per scripture:

Height of 5 *hast* (228 cm) is *Avam* (small), 6 *hast* (273.6 cm) is *Madhyam* (medium), 8 *hast* (384 cm) is *Uttam* (large).

Within these, the *Chuda* (crown piece) also varies: 2 *hast* for *Avam*, 6 *angul* for *Madhyam*, 12 *angul* for *Uttam*.

The *Valliya* placed above the *Dvar* is typically made from *Daruphala* (pistachio) wood. Nails used for its fixation are also classified into: 4 *angul* for *Avam*, 4.25 *angul* for *Madhyam*, 5 *angul* for *Uttam* categories [21, 23].

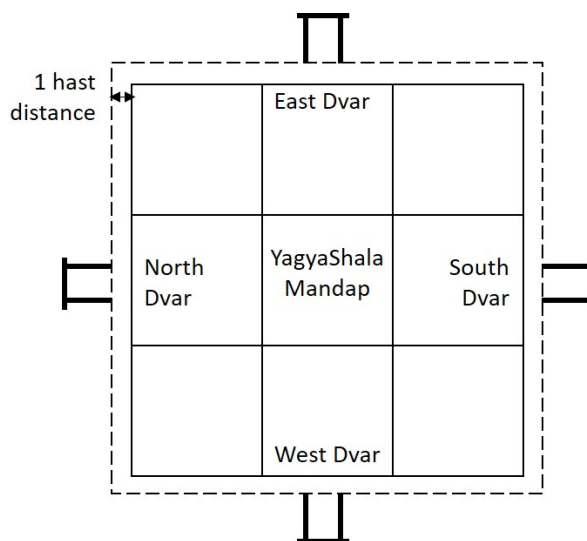


Figure 1: Schematic of Yagyashala indicating Dvar and Toran directions

Toran

It is mandatory to prepare *Toran* for each door in all four directions—east, west, north, and south (Figure 1, Table 1). The *Toran* is placed at a distance of 1 *hast* (24 *angul* or 45.6 cm) from the *Dvar*. The *Toran* is a kind of external gate and is made from specific plants depending on

the direction [24].

The east *Toran* is made from *Vaat* (banyan tree) (*Ficus benghalensis*) or *Pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*). For the south direction, *Umar* (cluster fig) (*Ficus racemosa*) is used; for the west, *Pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*) or *Pakar* (*Ficus virens*); and for the north, *Plaksh* (*Butea monosperma*) or *Vaat* (*Ficus benghalensis*). If a specific plant is not available, all *Toran* can be made using one plant from the mentioned list [4–24].

Each *Toran* is different because it symbolizes a deity standing outside the Yagya Mandap, believed to protect the Yagya from all kinds of obstacles. The wood used for the construction of *Toran* should be straight.

Classification of the Toran

The *Toran* are named and classified based on their direction and the type of wood used for their construction [25]. They are as follows:

- *Mahavirya* or *Srudan Toran* – made of *Pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*) in the east.
- *Subhadra* or *Vikat Toran* – made of *Gular* (*Ficus racemosa*) in the south.
- *Sukarm* or *Bheem Toran* – made of *Pakar* (*Ficus virens*) in the west; also called *Subheem Toran*.
- *Suhotra* or *Shashiprabh Toran* – made of *Vatkruksh* (*Ficus benghalensis*) in the north; also known as *Suprabha Toran*.

Dimension and Construction of Toran

In an *Adham* (small) category Mandap, the *Toran* should be 5 *hast* (228 cm) in height and 2 *hast* (91.2 cm) in width. In a *Madhyam* (medium) category Mandap, the height should be 6 *hast* (273.6 cm) and width 2 *hast* 6 *angul* (102.6 cm). In an *Uttam* (large) category Mandap, the height should be 7 *hast* (319.2 cm) and width 2 *hast* 12 *angul* (114 cm).

Each *Toran* has 3 *Kasht* (wooden beams), consisting of 2 *Sthambh* (pillars) and 1 *Vallika*. The thickness of the *Kasht* used in *Toran* is 10 *angul* (19 cm). One-fifth of the total height of the *Toran* must be buried in the ground [10, 12].

Construction of the Mandap Toran Symbol

The *Toran* of the Yagya Mandap includes a symbolic representation of the deity for whom the Yagya is being performed. According to Indian scriptures, in Vishnu Yagya, the *Toran* symbols relate to Lord Narayan and are displayed on the *Pataka* (flag) of the *Toran*: *Shankh* (conch) in the east, *Chakra* (discus) in the south, *Gada* (mace) in the west, and *Padma* (lotus) (*Nelumbo nucifera*) in the north [21, 24].

The dimensions of these symbols are:

- In *Alpa* (small) category: 10 *angul* (19 cm) height and 2.5 *angul* (4.75 cm) width.
- In *Madhyam* (medium): 12 *angul* (22.8 cm) height and 3 *angul* (5.7 cm) width.
- In *Uttam* (large): 14 *angul* (26.6 cm) height and 3 *angul* (5.7 cm) width.

For Shiva Yagya, the symbol of *Trishul* is used in every direction. Its dimensions are:

- In *Alpa*: 9 *angul* (17.1 cm) height and 2.25 *angul* (4.27 cm) width.
- In *Madhyam*: 11 *angul* (20.9 cm) height and 2.45 *angul* (4.6 cm) width.
- In *Uttam*: 13 *angul* (24.7 cm) height and 3.25 *angul* (6.17 cm) width [21].

Other Arrangements in Toran

In addition to these symbols, drawings of mountains are also included in the *Toran*. Each direction has a specific mountain depicted in a distinct color:

- East: *Mahendra Parvat* in सिंदूर (vermillion) color.
- South: *Vindhyachal Parvat* in grey color.
- West: *Gandhmadan Parvat* in golden color.
- North: *Himavan Parvat* in white color.

These mountain figures should be made using colored cloth or cotton. In the case of *Gandhmadan*, artificial or real flowers are also used [21, 25].

Direction of Toran	Name of Toran	Name in other references	Kasht used	Colour and Mountain	Symbols in Vishnu Yagya	Symbols in Shaiv and Shakti Yagya
East	Sudran Toran	Mahavirya and Suvirya	Ashthatva (Ficus religiosa)	सिंदूरवर्णी , Mahendra Mountain (red)	Shankh (Conch)	Trishul
South	Vikat Toran	Subhadra	Udumbar (Ficus racemosa)	Grey colour, Vindhyachal Mountain	Chakra (Discus)	Trishul
West	Subhim Toran	Sukarma, Bheem	Plaksh (Ficus virens)	Golden colour, Gandhmadan Mountain (with flowers)	Gada (Mace)	Trishul
North	Suprabha Toran	Suhotra and Shashiprabha	Nyagrodh (Ficus benghalensis)	White colour, Himavan Mountain	Padma (Lotus)	Trishul

Table 1: Systematic Representation of Classification, Placement, Wood Used, Symbols, and Colours in Preparation of Toran

Dhvaja & Pataka

Dhvaja represents a particular deity of the Yagya and is placed in a specific direction of the Yagya Mandap. *Dhvaja* is installed alongside the *Pataka*. Both are specific to the type of Yagya being performed and hold great spiritual significance. According to ancient literature, *Dhvaja* and *Pataka* help in channeling the spiritual energy of the Yagya. This section focuses only on the dimensions, types, and construction of *Dhvaja* for the Yagya Mandap (Figure 2, Table 2-3).

According to the ancient text *Kundpradeep*, in each direction a specific deity is represented, and the color of the *Dhvaja* varies accordingly: East: Lord Indra — yellow, South-East (*Agneya*): Agni Devta — red, South: Yamraj (son of Surya Dev) — black, South-West (*Nairritya*): Nirrti — blue, West: Varun Dev — white, North-West: Vayu Dev — grey, North: Kubera — green, North-East (*Ishan*): White-colored, *Meen Dhvaja* (fish-shaped), Between *Nairritya* and West: Anant Devta — grey (Figure 2).

The shape of the *Dhvaja* and *Pataka* is described differently by scholars—some suggest it should be square, while others describe it as triangular. These forms are considered inter-

changeable (Figure 2).

Wood Used for Dhvaja and Pataka Sthambh (Pillar)

Ancient texts recommend specific types of wood for the *Pataka Danda* (flagpole). As per *Smart Kund Samiksha II*:

पताकादण्ड अपि वंशजा दश हस्तोच्छ्रिताः स्युः
| ध्वजादी दण्डानां पञ्चाशमानेन भुवि निक्षेपः
स्तंभवत कार्यः |

(Patakadanda api vanshaja dash hastochchritah syu, dhvajadi dandanam panchashmanena bhuvi nikshepah sthambhavat karyah.)

This means the pole of the *Pataka* should be made from bamboo and should be 10 *hast* (456 cm) in height. One-fifth of its height should be buried in the ground, just like a *Sthambh* [24, 26].

Color of Dhvaja

The same literature prescribes specific colors for the *Dhvaja* based on direction. Clockwise from the east, the colors are described as: Yellow, White, Grey, Dust-colored blue, Green, Yellow, White. Another sequence includes: Yellow, Red, Black, Blue, White, White, White, Orange, Grey [26].

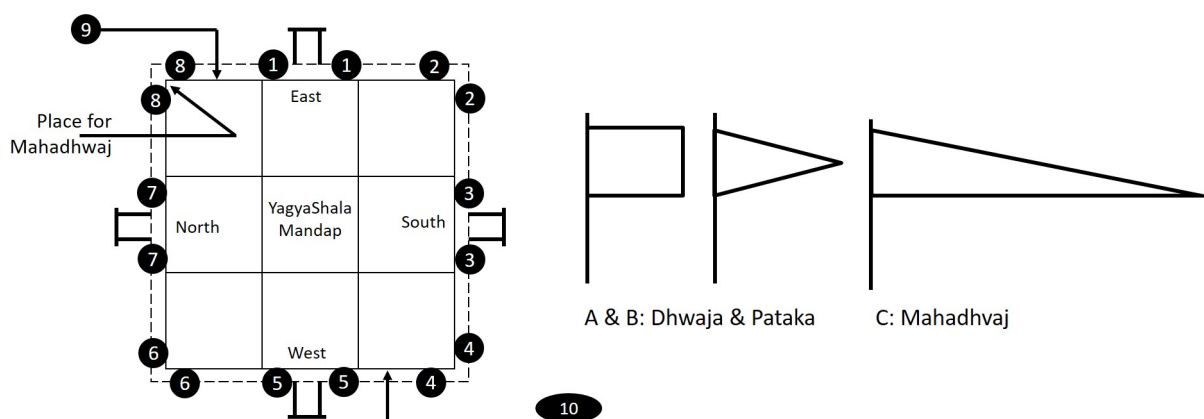


Figure 2: Directions & Placement of *Dhvaja*, *Pataka* (A–B) & *MahaDhvaja* (C). 1. East: Lord Indra — yellow, 2. South-East *Agneya*: Agni Devta — red, 3. South: Yamraj (son of Surya Dev) — black, 4. South-West *Nairritya*: Nirrti — blue, 5. West: Varun Dev — white, 6. North-West: Vayu Dev — grey, 7. North: Kuber — green, 8. North-East *Ishan*: white-colored *Meen Dhvaja* (fish-shaped), 9. Between *Ishan* and East: Brahma, 10. Between *Nairritya* and West: Anant Devta — grey. For each number, a duplicate position is assigned—one for the *Dhvaja* and the other for the *Pataka*.

Sr. No.	Direction	Deity	Colour	Symbol on Dhvaja	on	Symbol on Pataka and Its Position
1	East	Indra	Yellow	Airavat (Elephant)	(Elephant)	Vajra on southern Kasht
2	South-East (<i>Agneya</i>)	Agni Dev	Red	Goat		Shakti Pataka towards south
3	South (Dakshin)	Yamraj	Black	Mahish (Buffalo)		Dand Pataka on west Kasht
4	South-West (<i>Nairritya</i>)	Nirriti	Blue	Lion		Khad Pataka facing north
5	West	Varun	White	Fish/Crocodile		Pash Pataka or Meen Dhvaja on north Kasht
6	North-West (<i>Vayavya</i>)	Vayu Dev	Grey	Mriga (Deer)		Ankush Pataka towards north
7	North	Soma/Kuber	White Green	/ Horse (Ashva)		Gada Pataka on east Kasht
8	North-East (<i>Ishan</i>)	Shiva	White	Bull (Vrishabh)		Trishul Pataka in the east
9	Between East and Northeast	Brahma	White	Swan (Hans)		Kamandalu Pataka in the south
10	Between West and Southwest	Anant/Vishnu	White	Garuda		Chakra Pataka towards north

Table 2: Systematic Representation of Direction, Deity, Colour, Symbol of Pataka and Dhvaja

MahaDhvaja

In addition to the directional *Dhvaja*, there is one *MahaDhvaja* (Figure 2C), representing the main deity for whom the Yagya is being performed. The height of this *MahaDhvaja* is ideally 32 *hast* (1459.2 cm). If such a long *Kasht* (wood) is not available, the scriptures permit al-

ternatives: 10 *hast* (456 cm), 16 *hast* (729.6 cm), or 21 *hast* (957.6 cm).

The *MahaDhvaja* is multicolored, comprising five colors, and bears the image of the presiding deity. It should be decorated with *Kinkini* (bells) and *Chamar* (yak-tail whisk) [24, 26, 27].

Colour	Element (Tatva)	Deity (Adhidevta)	Protection From (Badhashanti)	Other Obstacles
Yellow	Prithvi (Earth)	Vishnu	From Neelvarna disturbances	Vaenayiki Badha
White	Jal (Water)	Rudra	From Grahapada	–
Red	Agni (Fire)	Brahma	From violence of Krur Gana	Paishachik-Rakshasi badha
Grey	Vayu (Air)	Nāg	From Hara-varna, Rakshana, Pishach disturbances	–
Black	Akash (Sky)	Achyuta	From enthusiasm of Survasura	

Table 3: Characteristics of Colour and Their Significance in Dhvaja and Pataka

Plants for Construction of Mandap (यज्ञ वृक्ष)

In the construction of the Yagya Mandap, the selection of appropriate plant wood is of utmost spiritual importance. These plants symbolize specific deities and play an essential role in the success of the Yagya. Hence, the plants used for constructing the Yagya Mandap are sacred and must be selected with great precision.

According to ancient Indian scriptures, as stated in the following shloka:

पलाश फल्गुन्यग्रोधाः प्लक्षा श्रुत्वविकडक्ताः ।
उदुम्बरा स्तथा बिल्वो चन्दनो यज्ञियश्च ये ॥

(Palāśa phalgunyagrodhāḥ plaksās chatthavikadaktāḥ | Udumbarāḥ tathā bilvo candano yajñiyaś ca ye.)

This implies that the following are considered *Yagya Vriksha* (sacred trees for Yagya): 1. *Palash* (*Butea monosperma*), 2. *textitPhalgunya* (*Ficus carica* – Anjeer), 3. *Agrodha/Vaat* (*Ficus benghalensis* – Banyan), 4. *Plaksha* (*Ficus virens* – Pakar), 5. *Chhattha* (commonly identified with *Pipal*, *Ficus religiosa*), 6. *Vikadkata* (*Flacourtia indica*), 7. *Udumbar* (*Ficus racemosa*), 8. *Bilva* (*Aegle marmelos*), 9. *Chandan* (*Santalum album*)

These trees are also referenced in other authoritative texts related to Mandap construction [25, 30–38].

Scriptures also specify which plants should not be used for constructing the Yagya Mandap. According to *Kriyasaar*, the following are unsuitable: Plants grown domestically (i.e., home-grown); Plants that have naturally broken or

fallen; Dried or decaying plants; Plants that are misaligned or irregular; Plants grown in impure (*Apavitra*) or contaminated areas.

Such woods are considered spiritually inappropriate for constructing the Mandap *Sthambh* (pillars) [25, 28].

Roofing Materials for Mandap

Plants used for covering the roof of the Yagya Mandap include: *Baas* (*Vanshlochan*, family: *Bambusoideae*), *Kat* (*Kadvi*, *Colchicum autumnale*), *Sarpata* (*Triplidium bengalense*), *Kush* (*Desmostachya bipinnata*).

Scriptures advise not to cover the walls of the Mandap, in order to allow proper ventilation within the Yagyashala.

Decorative Elements

For decoration, the following plant-based items can be used: 1. Coconut leaves (*Cocos nucifera*), 2. Banana stem (*Kadali*, *Musa paradisiaca*), 3. *Panchpalva* (five-leaf combination), which includes: *Amra* (*Mangifera indica* – Mango), *Jambu* (*Syzygium cumini* – Jamun), *Kapittha* (*Feronia limonia* – Wood apple), *Bi-japura* (*Citrus medica* – Citron), *Bilva* (*Aegle marmelos* – Bael)

These are traditionally accepted for adorning the Mandap in a sacred and aesthetically pleasing manner [38].

Conclusion

This paper addresses the mathematical and architectural dimensions of the Yagya Mandap, focusing particularly on the elements of *Dvar*,

Toran, *Dhvaja*, and *Pataka*—components essential to both the structural integrity and symbolic completeness of the Mandap. Rooted in Vedic and classical Indian scriptures, each component not only carries functional significance but also channels divine energies through its form, placement, material, and color.

The study highlights that the Yagya Mandap is not a mere physical structure but a manifestation of sacred geometry, where spiritual, symbolic, and ritual elements are harmoniously integrated. The proportional standards—defined in *hast* and *angul*—demonstrate the precise mathematical understanding embedded within the spiritual traditions of India.

While this paper focuses on the structural framework, it acknowledges that the meta-physical aspects—such as deity-specific invocations, energy channels, and color vibrations—are equally important but beyond its current scope.

By documenting and analyzing these traditional prescriptions, this work contributes to the interdisciplinary understanding of Vedic ritual architecture and offers a foundation for further research on integrating sacred science with modern architectural practices.

Compliance with ethical standards Not required.

Conflict of interest The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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