

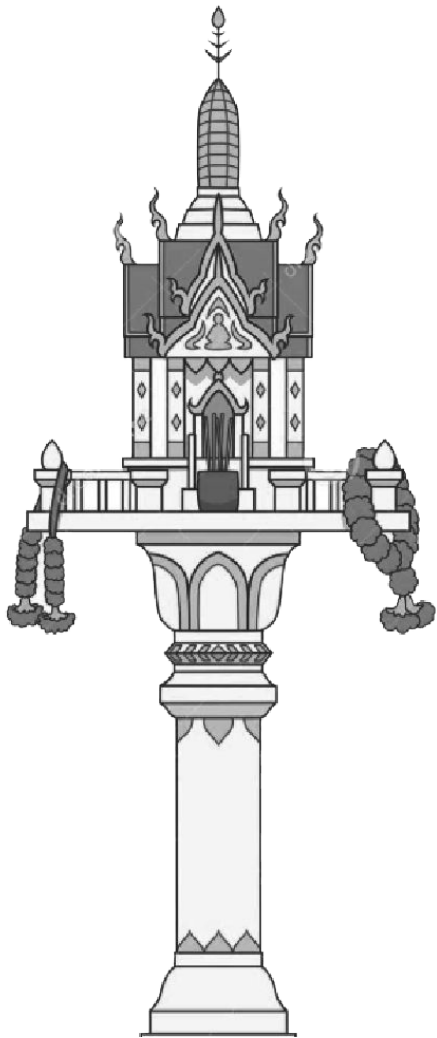
ศาลพระภูมิ Spirit Houses

Thai spirit houses, known as *San Phra Phum* ศาลพระภูมิ serve as dwellings for protective spirits.

These structures safeguard homes and businesses by honoring the spirits of the land.



Proportions & Structure



Main Pillar Dimensions:

- **Height:**
 - **Metric:** Approximately 1.5 to 2 meters
 - **Imperial:** Approximately 4.92 to 6.56 feet
 - **Thai วา:** 0.75 to 1 *wa* (1 *wa* = 2 meters)

Diameter:

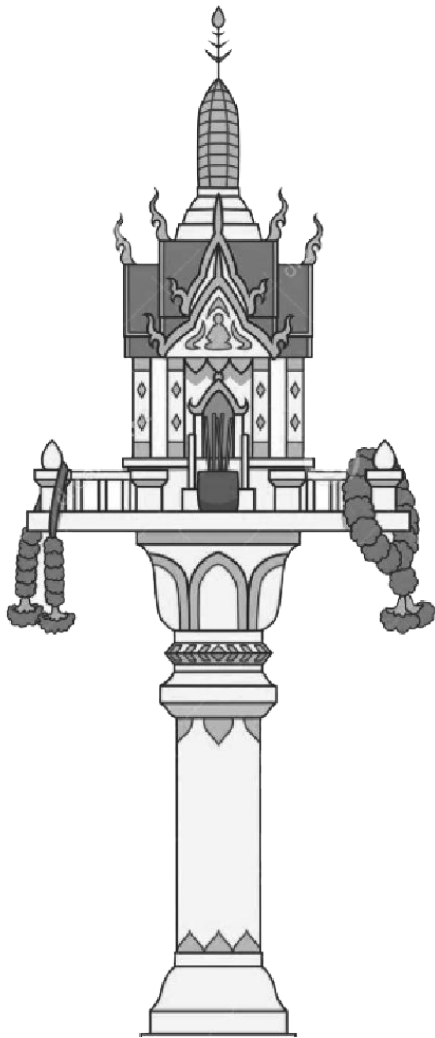
- **Metric:** Around 15 to 20 centimeters
- **Imperial:** Approximately 5.91 to 7.87 inches
- **Thai คืบ:** 0.3 to 0.4 คืบ *khuep* (1 คืบ *khuep* = 0.5 meters)

Dimensions can vary based on stability and proportionality to the surroundings.

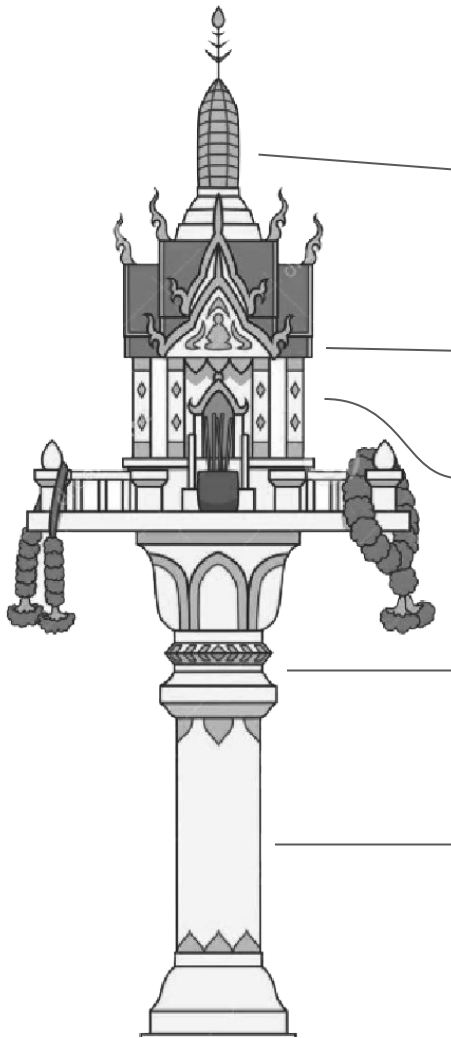
Proportions & Structure

Overall Size Including Spirit House:

- **Height:**
 - **Metric:** 1.5 to 2.5 meters
 - **Imperial:** Approximately 4.92 to 8.20 feet
 - **Thai วา :** 0.75 to 1.25 วา *wa*
- **Width and Depth:**
 - **Metric:** 0.75 to 1 meter
 - **Imperial:** Approximately 2.46 to 3.28 feet
 - **Thai วา :** 0.375 to 0.5 วา *wa*



Symbolism of Structural Components



Pinnacle: Representing Enlightenment, functioning as cosmic antenna between worlds. copper or conductive metal.

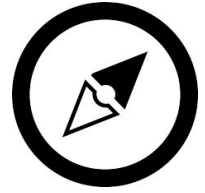
Roof: Adorned with intricate designs, representing protection from negative energies.

Statue of Buddha or Phra Chai Mongkon: to embody prosperity and protection.

Offerings Area: Designated space for offerings, signifying respect for resident spirits.

Main Pillar: Symbolizes stability and serves as a conduit between the physical and spiritual realms.

Alignment Considerations



Orientation: Typically faces east or northeast to capture auspicious morning sun energy.

Placement: Located in visible areas like entrances or gardens, avoiding proximity to toilets or roads to prevent negative energies.

Ritual Practices

Daily Offerings: Offer a little bit of whatever is needed to provide sensorial shelter for spirits: Fresh water, Incense, flowers (e.g., marigolds), incense sticks, and favorite auspicious beverages, symbolizing abundance.

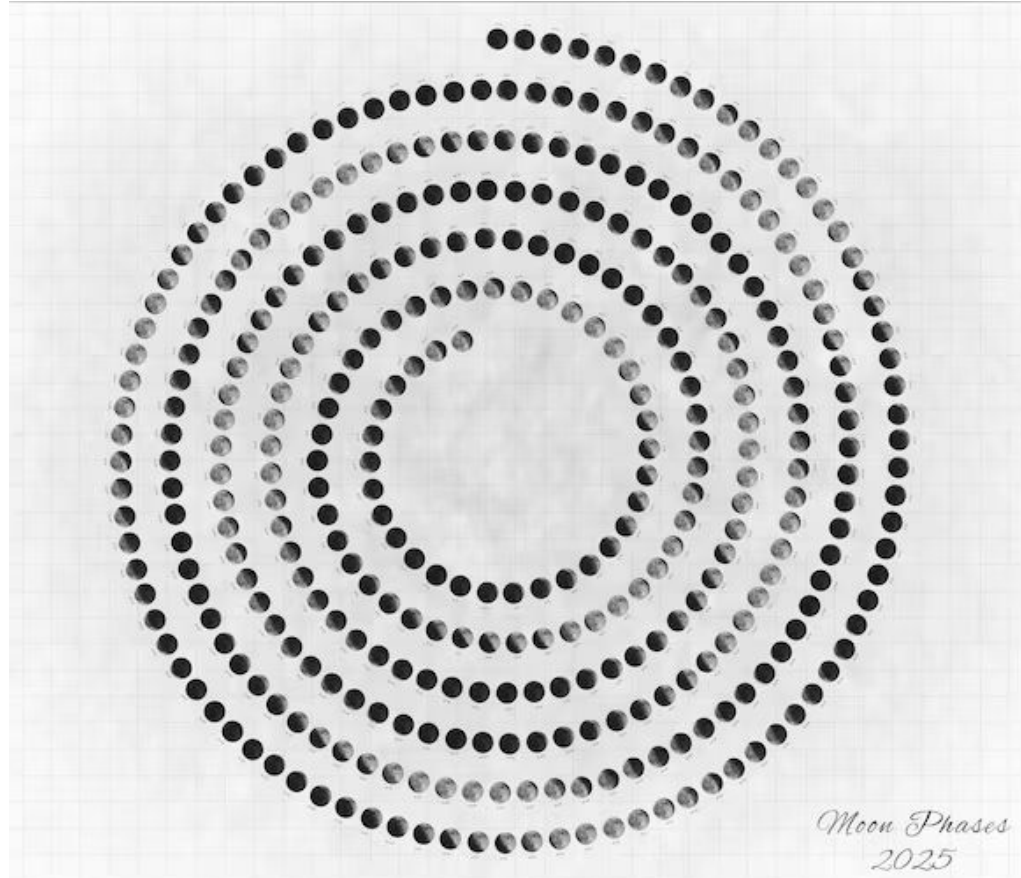
Maintenance: Regular cleaning and refreshing of offerings to honor and appease the spirits and the land.

Ceremonial Practices: Involvement of Brahman priests or Buddhist monks during installation and significant events to perform rituals and chants, involvement of neighbours sharing offerings from ceremony.

Auspicious Days for Ceremonies: The selection of an appropriate day for the spirit house installation is crucial.

General Geomancy

- Use a Lunar Calendar.
- Identify auspicious phase
- Astrological Assessment
- Select Auspicious site



General Geomancy

- **Days of the Week:** Wednesday or Thursday are considered particularly auspicious for offerings and ceremonial practices.
- **Lunar Phases:** The 2nd, 4th, 5th, 9th, or 11th day of the waxing or waning moon are preferred.
- **Astrological Assessment:** Evaluating the lunar calendar to select an auspicious date, ensuring it does not coincide with inauspicious periods.
- **Site Selection:** Determining the optimal location for the spirit house, traditionally to the north of the main building, ensuring that the shadow of the main structure does not fall upon it, as this is considered unlucky.

Ground Preparation Ritual

Ground Preparation:

- A hole is dug at the chosen site, into which nine stakes made from 8 auspicious woods are driven. Each type of wood is selected for its unique protective qualities.

Placement of Sacred Items:

- Items such as jewelry (gold, silver, copper) and a plate bearing the *Yantra* symbol are placed in the hole to attract prosperity and protection.

Auspicious Woods

The specific types of wood used can vary based on regional traditions and availability. However, common choices include:

1. **Teak (*Tectona grandis*):**
 - *Significance:* Renowned for its durability and strength, teak symbolizes resilience and long-lasting protection.
2. **Sandalwood (*Santalum album*):**
 - *Significance:* Valued for its fragrant aroma, sandalwood is believed to purify the environment and attract benevolent spirits.
3. **Bodhi Tree (*Ficus religiosa*):**
 - *Significance:* As the tree under which the Buddha attained enlightenment, it represents spiritual awakening and protection.
4. **Bamboo (*Bambusoideae*):**
 - *Significance:* Symbolizing flexibility and strength, bamboo is thought to ward off negative energies.
5. **Jackfruit Tree (*Artocarpus heterophyllus*):**
 - *Significance:* Associated with abundance and prosperity due to its large, nourishing fruits.
6. **Mango Tree (*Mangifera indica*):**
 - *Significance:* Considered auspicious, mango wood is believed to bring wealth and happiness.
7. **Banana Plant (*Musa spp.*):**
 - *Significance:* Symbolizing fertility and prosperity, banana plants are often used in various Thai rituals.
8. **Coconut Tree (*Cocos nucifera*):**
 - *Significance:* Represents versatility and sustenance, offering protection and blessings.
9. **Pine Tree (*Pinus spp.*):**
 - *Significance:* Known for longevity and endurance, pine wood is believed to provide steadfast protection.

Preparation of 9 Stakes

The preparation of these stakes is a ritualistic process:

1. **Selection:**
 - Choose mature, healthy trees to ensure the wood's integrity and spiritual potency.
2. **Harvesting:**
 - Conduct the cutting of wood on auspicious days, to align with favorable energies.
3. **Shaping:**
 - Carve the wood into stakes approximately 12 inches in length, tapering one end for easy insertion into the ground.
4. **Inscription:**
 - Engrave each stake with mantras, sacred symbols or Lanna script in order to share blessings in other dimensions
5. **Blessing:**
 - Before installation, perform a blessing ceremony, chanting mantras to infuse the stakes with spiritual energy.



Installation Ritual

Erection of the Spirit House:

- The main pillar is installed, and the spirit house is erected atop it.

Invocation of Spirits:

- The ceremony director chants incantations to invite the *Phra Phum* (guardian spirit) to inhabit the house.

Offerings:

- Garlands, incense, and food are presented to welcome and honor the spirit.

Activation Ritual

Installation of Statues and devices in Spirit House:

- During the ceremony, local community, priests or monks recite traditional chants like Itipiso to invite spiritual energy into the statue, can be a Buddha or a Phra Chai Mongkon statue, sanctifying it.

Invocation of Spirits:

- The ceremony director chants incantations to invite the *Phra Phum* (guardian spirits) to inhabit the house.

Offerings:

- Garlands, natural herbs incense, water, liquor, tobacco.

Practices at Initiation

Practitioners often recite general protective chants or Buddhist prayers during rituals.

These may include:

- **Kata Bucha:** General chants used to honor and invoke the presence of deities and spirits.
- **Protective Verses:** Recitations from Buddhist scriptures intended to safeguard against negative influences.

For instance, the "**Kata Bucha Phra Chai Mongkol**" is used to honor Phra Chai Mongkon.

Also **นมะพะทะ นโมพุทธายะ นมะพระธะ Kata Bucha Phra Ngang** can be performed.

Devotees may also recite the **อิติปิโส ITIPIISO** chant, which venerates the qualities of the Buddha, as part of their practice.

อิติปิโส

ITIPISO

The **Itipiso** chant, known in Thai as "**อิติปิโส**", is a revered Pāli recitation that honors the Buddha by enumerating his nine supreme qualities. This chant is integral to daily practices in Theravāda Buddhism, especially in Thailand.

Chanting this while inviting Enlightened beings blessing is very auspicious as collective meditation at Spirit House Initiation.

อิติปิ โส ภควา อรหํ สมมาสมพุทโธ
วิชชาจรณสมปนฺโน สุกโต โลกวิทู
อนุตฺตโร ปุริสทมมสารถิ สตถา เทวมนุสฺसानํ
พุทโธ ภควาติ

Iti pi so Bhagavā Arahaṃ Sammā-sambuddho
Vijjā-carāṇa-sampanno Sugato Lokavidū
Anuttaro Purisa-damma-sārathi Satthā Deva-manussānaṃ

He is indeed the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Rightly Self-awakened One, Consummate in knowledge and conduct, one who has gone the good way, knower of the cosmos, Unexcelled trainer of those who can be taught, teacher of devas and human beings, Awakened, blessed.

Recap : Installation & Initiation

Installation Process:

During the spirit house installation:

- A hole is dug at the designated site.
- The nine prepared stakes are driven into the ground in a specific arrangement, often corresponding to geomantic principles.
- Additional sacred items, such as nine lucky leaves, flowers, and gemstones representing astrological planets, are placed alongside the stakes to create a matrix of positive energy.

