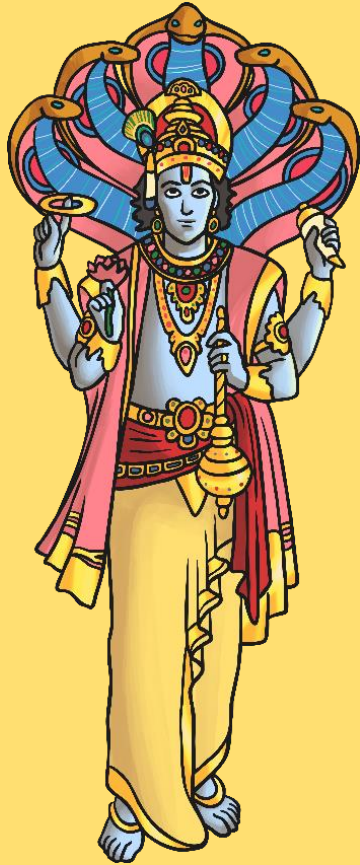
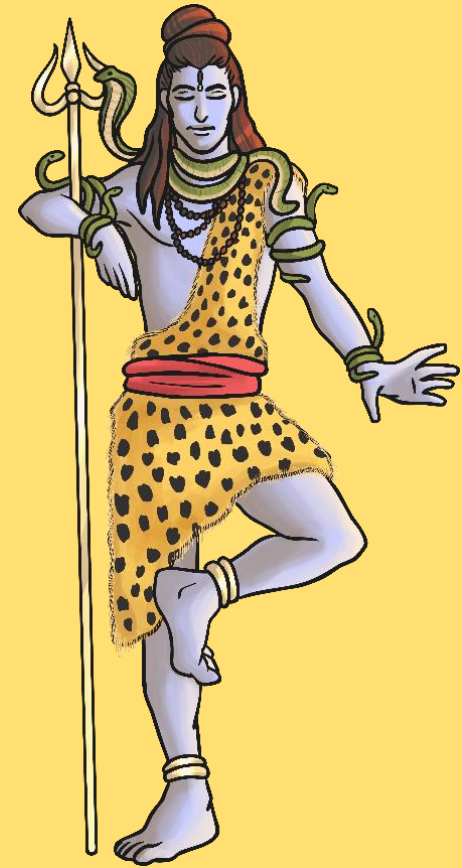


Hindu Gods and Goddesses



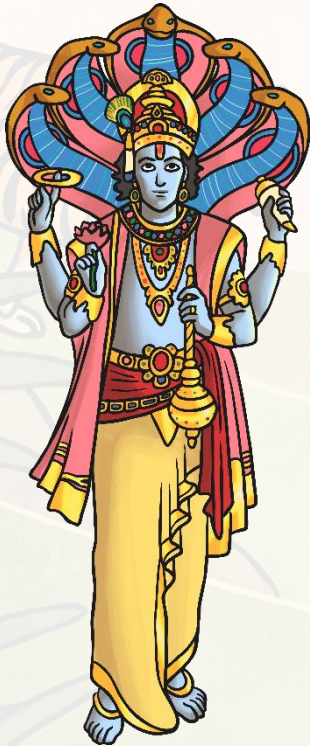
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Great Gods

Hindus believe that there are three great gods (Māhadevas). These are considered the **Trimurti** – the three aspects of the universal supreme God.

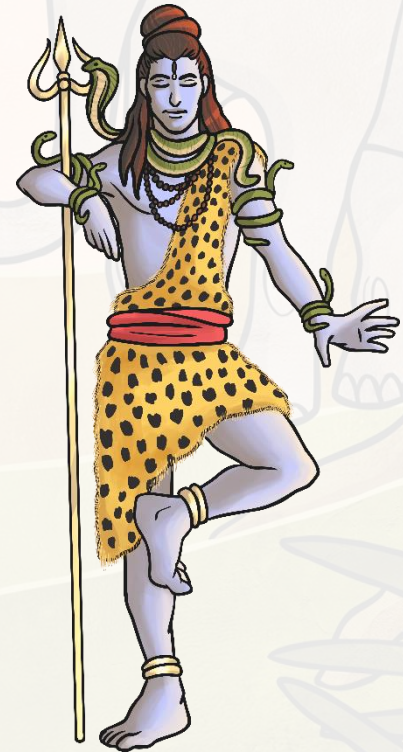
Vishnu



Brahma



Shiva



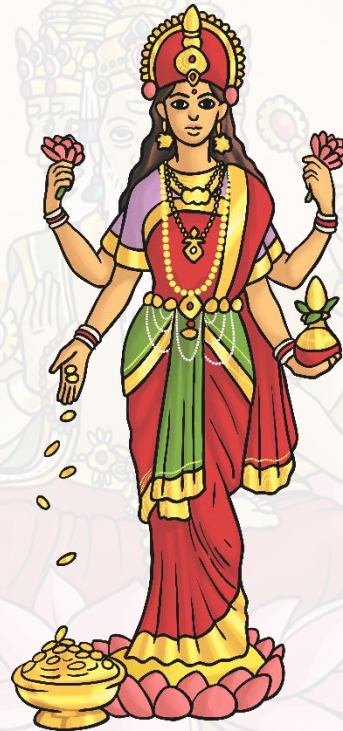
Great Gods

The **Tridevi** are Goddesses who are equally important.

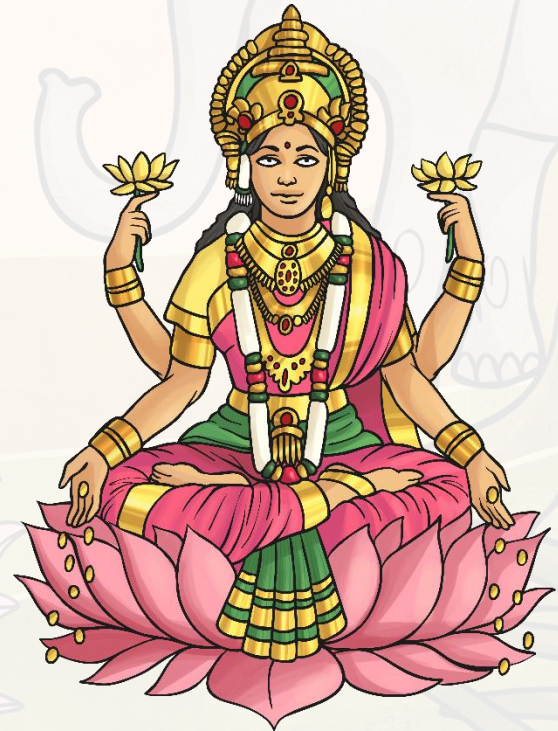
Saraswati



Lakshmi



Shakti



Brahma

Brahma is the god (deva) of creation.



He has four arms and four faces, looking in the four directions.

Each of his four heads is believed to be responsible for one of the four Vedas (sacred Hindu texts).

Brahma is not worshipped as much as the other gods, as it is believed his role as creator is over.

His wife is Saraswati – the goddess of Knowledge.

Vishnu

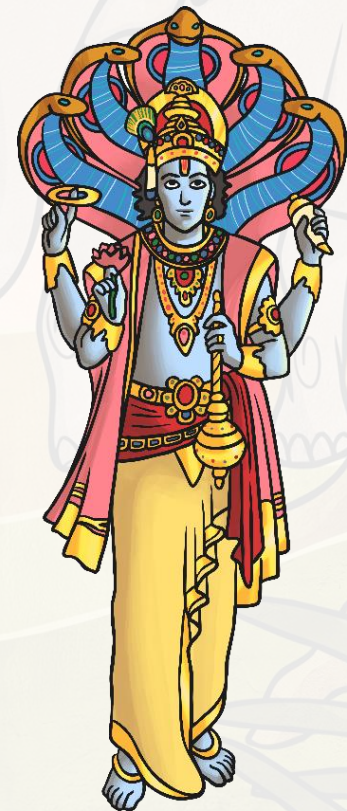
Vishnu is the god responsible for preserving and protecting the universe.

His role is to return to Earth during troubled times to restore the balance between good and evil.

His incarnations (human forms of Vishnu) include **Rama** and **Krishna**.

His last incarnation is said to be Siddhartha Gautama – otherwise known as 'Buddha' (the founder of Buddhism).

His wife is Lakshmi.



Shiva

Shiva is the god of destruction. His role is to destroy the universe in order to re-create it.

He is seen as the source of both good and evil.

His wife, Shakti, is said to enable him to gain balance.

He is often depicted with:

- a third eye (represents wisdom and insight)
- a cobra necklace (representing destruction and recreation – snakes represent this in the way they shed their old skin for new skin)
- vibhuti (three lines drawn across the face to represent his power)
- a trident (which represents the three functions of the Trimurti)

