



Candle Rituals



The use of candles in ritual stretches back throughout the history of humankind and crosses the boundaries of religion, practice and culture.

Although there is no known date on which candles were first used evidence has been found to show their use in both Egypt (14th century BC) in King Tutankhamen's tomb in the Valley of the Kings and in ancient Cretan ruins from 1600 BC. Ancient Egyptians were known to have used lamps and candles in a ritual called 'Dreaming True' which involved going into a dark cave and staring at a flame until you saw a god or goddess who would help you find the answers you sought.

Candle rituals have since been used by a diverse range of ceremonies, rituals and celebrations which include Pagan ritual and magickal use; Catholic consecrated holy candles; the Jewish custom of lighting candles for the dead and dying; the Christian use of a candle to symbolise the light of God or Christ; the Jewish use of Shabbat candles to usher in the Jewish Sabbath ... to name but a few.

Here are a couple of candle rituals you may find useful:

A Daily Spiritual Ritual

To light a candle is one of the simplest ways of incorporating a daily spiritual ritual into your life. The light from the candle can be used as a symbol to increase the light/positive energies in your life.

1. Choose a candle that feels special to you.
2. It is most common to light the candle as an evening ritual, possibly because of the connection to the historical use of candles as lighting and use in 'driving away the dark'. However you can also use candles in the morning as a symbol of welcoming light into your day.
3. When you have lit your candle take a moment to focus on the flame.
4. You can use this moment to focus a positive thought for the day, welcome light into your life, count your blessings from the day, or send a daily prayer or wish.
5. You can take as long as you have or need but there is no need to take more than a minute or two unless you want to.
6. When you have finished blow the candle out and visualise the positive energies/light/prayers being released into the world with the smoke.

Candle Magic

Magic can be viewed as a focusing of intent. Candle magic is one of the simplest rituals as it does not involve either elaborate artifacts or complicated memorisations. However the apparent simplicity of this ritual should not be confused with a lack of power. Simple is often best!

If using a candle spell for healing for an individual or for a spell on behalf of an individual it is important that you have their permission to do so. Don't use this spell to ill wish anyone – the repercussions aren't worth it especially for a beginner. If you have a difficult situation you want ended do the spell instead for a positive result for the recipient or seek further advice from an experienced Shaman/Shamanic Practitioner.

This ritual was taught to me by my Guide during the early days of my Shamanic training. I was later to discover that a candle ritual forms a part of Romany Gypsy Shamanism.

You will need

- A candle in a candle holder
- A light
- Paper
- Pen/pencil
- A container such as an alter bowl or abalone shell. Any container you like will do as long as it won't burn!

Ritual

1. Light your candle.
1. Write your spell on a strip of the paper.
 - * Keep it simple as you don't want the paper to be too large e.g. 'That Sally's operation is successful'
 - * After this I use a triple 3 times e.g.
Healing, comfort, strength
Comfort, strength, healing
Strength, healing, comfort
 - * You might also like to include a message to your God or Goddess if you have one e.g. I ask/respectfully request ***** that Sally's operation be successful. Use whatever phrase feels right for you and your personal beliefs.
3. Fold your paper.
 - * Fold your paper lengthways so you don't burn your fingers! I tend to fold mine either 3 or 4 times. Fold yours as it feels right to you at the time. This may vary depending on the focus of the spell.
 - * You may also like to include a ritual chant. I simply chant my triple e.g. healing, comfort, strength but you can also use the chant to call on the 4 directions, the Great Spirit or your own deity.
4. Light the end of your paper using the candle.
5. Place the paper in the container.
 - * Watch how it burns as this may have a message for you. Does it burn straight and fast or slow and steady? Is there anything that comes into mind when you are watching how it burns: for example, a quick recovery or advising your client to take it easy for a while?*
6. When you have finished extinguish your candle.

Notes and General Advice

- In my opinion it doesn't matter what colour the candle is unless it matters to you. If you want to pick a colour for a specific purpose according to guidance feel free. Equally if you feel attracted to using a specific candle trust your own instincts and use that one.
- I have read elsewhere that you should always use a match to light the candle but I can't see why. I have always used a lighter. The only thing I would recommend is being as ecologically sound as possible so for me a refillable lighter is better than matches unless the matches come from ethically sourced wood.
- Equally there is a difference of opinion on how you should extinguish a candle. This depends on how you view a particular method. If, for example, blowing a candle out for you represents the extinguishing of life you may prefer to use a candle snuffer. I blow my candle out to end this ritual as for me it represents sending the healing on its way with the smoke.
- Use things that mean something to you. You can also add additional artifacts but keep it simple. For example, when I first started I used to put my candle holder in the centre of my amulet. However you don't need to use anything additional at all. The spell works perfectly fine with just the items listed above.