

Rules and Regulations for Lay Practitioners Staying Overnight at Wat Marp Jan, Thailand

Wat Marp Jan has developed a set of regulations in order to allow sincere male and female lay practitioners to practice fruitfully while staying at the monastery on the eight precepts. In order to maintain peace, happiness, and safety, as well as to support the intention of sincere practitioners, the monastery will accept only those persons who agree to abide by these rules without exception. Therefore, all persons with a sincere intention to stay at the monastery for the purpose of Dhamma practice on eight precepts must read these rules, understand them, and agree to abide by them.

Please read the rules and regulations thoroughly to ensure that you understand them before arriving at the monastery.

1. Notice to All Dhamma Practitioners Staying Overnight at Wat Marp Jan

In the event that a lay practitioner staying at the monastery experiences any form of injury or accident, including those leading to disability, loss of sanity, or loss of life, the monastery will not accept responsibility for that practitioner under any circumstances whatsoever.

2. Length of Stay at the Monastery

2.1. One's first stay in the monastery shall not exceed 7 days and 6 nights.

2.2. All guests must keep the 8 precepts strictly. The only exception here is those elderly guests or guests with illnesses whose symptoms would be relieved by eating after midday; they may relax the sixth precept while still maintaining the other 7.

- Persons with a chronic medical condition should give notice of their condition upon registering online to stay at the monastery. During their

stay at the monastery, such persons should have all their necessary medication ready.

2.3. Entering and Leaving the Monastery

- Entering and leaving the monastery is prohibited from 6.30 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. The monastery will not open the gate for personal reasons, but only in the event of an emergency and with the permission of the abbot.
- The monastery requires that lay practitioners remain in the monastery for the duration of their stay. In the event that you would like to offer food or other items to the Sangha, please prepare dry goods sufficient to cover your entire stay in advance. Do not cook food or rice in your dwelling. Also, please obtain any necessary toiletries or personal items prior to your arrival at the monastery. Persons who leave the monastery grounds without permission and without taking leave, except in an urgent situation or emergency, will be refused further stay. If you have a good reason to leave, you will need to obtain permission from the abbot or a kitchen official first.

On the day of your departure you must leave before 5:00 p.m.

3. Qualifications of the Applicant

3.1. Necessary Qualifications of the Applicant

- Persons staying overnight to practice at Wat Marp Jan should be of normal physical and mental health. They should not impose a burden on the monastery or disturb their fellow practitioners.
- Do not cause a problem for the monastery by, for instance, starting an argument or deliberately injuring yourself or others. The monastery reserves the right to expel any lay practitioner from the monastery immediately.
- Elderly persons who require assistance must have someone to accompany them during their stay at the monastery. Persons with severe mental illness, persons with infectious disease, and severely disabled persons will not be permitted to stay at the monastery.

- No permission will be given to those addicted to cigarettes, alcohol or drugs.

3.2. Dress Standards

Both laymen and laywomen who stay at the monastery, should follow the regulations given below:

Laymen's Dress Code

- Full-length, white or black (however, white is preferable) trousers and sleeved white shirts or T-shirts should be worn. No clothing should be made from stretching material or be tight-fitting but should extend down to the hips and be made from thick cloth. If the cloth is thin another layer should be worn over it. Sleeves should be either long or up to the elbows. The following are not allowed: shorts and vests/singlets.
- Jewellery of any kind is not allowed with the exception of wrist watches and necklaces with Buddhist amulets/ figures.

Laywomen's Dress Code

- Clothes worn should be neat and tidy. Full-length trousers or a sarong-like skirt of either white or black colour are appropriate. Shirts or T-shirts should be white and have a rounded neck that is neither low nor wide. No clothing should be made from stretching material or be tight-fitting but should extend down to the hips and be made from thick cloth. If the cloth is relatively thin another layer should be worn over it. Sleeves should be either long or up to the elbows. Short-sleeved shirts and singlets are not allowed.
- Hair should be arranged or tied up neatly.
- No cosmetics should be used on one's face. Any polish or colouring on one's fingernails and toenails should be cleaned off.
- Jewellery of all kinds are not allowed, with the exception of wrist watches and necklaces with Buddhist amulets/figures.
- Do not wear high-heeled or platform shoes. Instead, ordinary, undecorated shoes should be worn

- For both men and women, the monastery officials have the right and duty to point out where one's attire is not up to standard.
- Items for personal use should be brought along with one. No valuable items should be brought into the monastery. In the event of something going missing, the monastery takes no responsibility but rather each individual needs to take responsibility for their own possessions.
- Guests should bring the following: passport with visa, white clothing, toiletries, mosquito repellent (though there is no malaria in the area), towel, torch, flip flop sandals.

4. Regulations During One's Stay

4.1. Eating

- Do not eat any kind of food, cook rice or prepare any food in the vicinity of the sleeping quarters. This is to prevent rats, cockroaches and ants from entering the sleeping quarters.
- During the large annual holy days or other Thai holidays, or during the times that the monastery organizes events, an eating area will be set out especially for those who have registered to stay in the monastery. Please eat only in this area, in a peaceful and orderly manner, without talking or creating loud noises. The meal should be finished within 45 minutes.
- When the meal has been finished, everyone should help out cleaning the tables and chairs and washing the various dishes and other vessels, both those you have used yourself and communal ones as well. Please do this as soon as you finish eating.
- Food brought along to be offered to the monastic community should be handed over to one of the kitchen staff on the day of arrival and not taken to the sleeping quarters. Food brought to be put into the monks' bowls while on alms round should likewise be given to the kitchen staff and they can look after it. Again, no food of any sort should be brought to the sleeping quarters.

4.2. Use of the Various Locations in the Monastery

- All restricted areas and areas reserved for monks only must not be entered into by laity at any time. These areas are well signposted, but generally only in Thai, so please ask if you are unsure.
- The monastery arranges separate lodgings for upāsakas (lay men) and upāsikās (lay women) respectively. Lay men are prohibited from entering the women's lodging area. Lay women are likewise prohibited from entering the men's lodging area.
- After using the restrooms, please make sure that the lights are switched off and the water is turned off.
- Doors should be opened and closed gently and softly.

4.3. Refrain from talking and all other activities, turn off your phone and observe noble silence in the lodging area between 10:00 p.m. – 4:00 a.m.

- The use of any form of audio player with speakers, which would make a loud noise, is not permitted even for Dhamma-related audio. The use of headphones, however, is allowed since it will not disturb other people.
- You may practice sitting meditation in the lodging area. Refrain from walking meditation in the lodgings between 10:00 p.m. – 4:00 a.m., except for when you are confident that it will not cause disturbance for the other lay guests.
- Turn off the lights in the lodging area between 10:00 p.m. – 4:00 a.m. For those who wish to read books (only Dhamma related books), then bring your own reading lamp, and make sure that no other lay guests are disturbed by it.

4.4. Practice restraint in body, speech and mind. Do not speak loudly, or act in coarse, unmannerly ways. Do not quarrel or fight in any way whatsoever. It is better not to get together into groups and talk.

4.5. Do not miss morning and evening chanting. It is not permitted to hold morning and evening chanting in the lodgings.

4.6. One should be sincere in helping out with the monastery chores. Be earnest and diligent. One must also help out with washing the communal dishes.

5. In Case of Emergency

5.1. In the case that an emergency situation occurs inside the lodgings such as some form of danger, accident, or injury, you can inform a monastery official for help if one is around, if not, press the emergency button that has been installed in the lodgings. (They are marked with a sign.)

5.2. In the case of minor illnesses that are not too serious, you may inform the monastery staff. Everyone should bring their own store of medicine to the monastery, based on their individual needs.

General Lay Guest Schedule

04.00 Morning Wake Up.

05.00 Morning Meeting: Meditation and Chanting.

05.30 Monks go out to surrounding villages on alms-round. Lay guests help at the front of the monastery, sweep the monastery and help in the kitchen till meal time.

08.00 Blessing and then meal. Lay guests will help clean the kitchen after the meal. Sometimes after this there are work projects such as maintenance work, gardening and helping the monks with other various duties.

15.00 Chores such as sweeping the monastery paths and cleaning the monastery toilets.

17.00 Afternoon Drink.

19.15 Evening Chanting and meditation.