

Regard Sutras with Reverence

We, as Buddhist students, should have some common knowledge on how to place sutras. We should regard every sutra from the Tripitaka and Twelve Divisions as more important than our lives and any treasures.

The Vajra Sutra said, “In any place the Sutra text is found, there is the Buddha.” In other words, sutra is where the Dharma body of the Buddha dwells. To assist printing of sutras, to read sutras, and to pay reverence to sutras can open up limitless wisdom. In contrast, you could fall into undesirable realms if you do not revere sutras.

Cautions in sutras’ placement are listed as following:

1. We should revere and treasure sutras, as they are the Dharma Jewel and the compassionate vessel to cross living beings over the sea of suffering. Minor damage should be mended. Sutras should not be burned or tossed away. There are protecting dragons and deities around where sutras are placed. It is an immense offense if sutras are left damaged and unattended.
2. Buddhist sutras should be placed on top of other books. A general rule is original sutra texts such as the Sutras, the Vinaya, and the Shastras should be on the very top, followed by commentaries, general Buddhist texts, talks from sages or worthies, instructional books, and at the very bottom, worldly books.
3. Do not scribble on the sutras. Do not talk about worldly affairs or shoot the breeze in front of sutras, or even eat food while reading sutras.
4. Sutras should be placed on a pure location. Do not place them on impure places like the bed or the chair.
5. Do not carry sutras under the armpit. Do not carry sutras below the waist, either holding them with the hands or placing them in the pocket.
6. Do not put miscellaneous objects on the sutra table. Do not read sutras while lying down. Do not touch sutras with a dirty hand.
7. Do not try to blow the dust off sutras. Wipe it off with a clean cloth instead.
8. Cover sutras with a clean cloth when you go to bed if you use bedroom as your study. (It is limited to a single person living a pure life.) In addition, sutras should be placed on the head side.
9. Any filthy act is not allowed wherever sutras are placed.
10. Do not fold the sutra while reading it. Earmark the section at which you finish with a paper strip, but do not fold the corner of the page.
11. Read the sutra with full concentration. Close the sutra text when idle thoughts well up. You can go back to reading when idle thoughts are gone.
12. Circulate books if you do not read them.

恭敬經典

我們研究佛法的人，對於安放經書的常識應該知道。譬如三藏十二部一切經典，無論是哪一部，我們應該看著這一切經典比我們的生命更重要，看著這一切經典比任何珍寶更重要。

《金剛經》上說：「若是經典所在之處，即為有佛。」所以經典是佛的法身所在處。助印經典、閱讀經書、恭敬經書皆可啟發無限的智慧；但若對經典不恭敬，也能令人墮落不如意處。

安置經書所應注意事項，略說如下：

- 一、經是法寶，為眾生離苦的慈航，自應尊重恭敬，小有破損，應即速修補，不可燒毀或丟棄。經典所在之處皆有龍天護佑，若任其損壞廢置，罪過無量。
- 二、佛經要放在其它書籍的上面。舉凡經、律、論其放置層次，由上而下依次為原文經典、經典註解、一般佛學書、聖賢的言論、教化性書籍、一般書籍。
- 三、經上不可塗寫。不得對經典談說世事語言，論說雜話或邊吃東西邊看經書。
- 四、經書應放置在清靜的地方，不可安置在床上、坐椅上...等不淨處。
- 五、不可挾腋下，如手捧或裝於口袋攜持時，不得低於腰部。
- 六、不可在經案上，擺置雜物；不可躺著看經書；不可以污手觸經。
- 七、不得口吹經上灰塵，應以專用淨布拭去。
- 八、若您的書房和睡房是同一間（限單身淨房），睡覺時應用乾淨的布將經書蓋上，且要安置在頭的那一邊。
- 九、不可在經典所在的地方，做種種污穢的行為。
- 十、看經書時不可以折書本，也不可折頁。經書若看一段落不想看，應以夾紙條作記號，不可折角。
- 十一、閱經應專心，若有雜念，應先閤上經典，待念去再閱讀。。
- 十二、若自己不閱讀，應廣加流傳。。