

Aoshima Shrine: Purification

When entering a Shinto shrine, visitors purify themselves ritually before proceeding toward the main sanctuary. This is done to cleanse oneself of both physical and spiritual impurities before approaching the deities. The purification site, known as a *temizuya*, consists of a basin where ladles are provided so that you can wash your hands, which symbolize the body, and cleanse your mouth, which represents the soul.

How to conduct the purification ritual

1. Bow slightly before approaching the basin.
2. Fill a ladle with water from the basin and pour some of the water over your left hand.
3. Switch the ladle to your left hand and pour some more of the water over your right hand.
4. Switch hands again, cup your left hand, and pour some water into it to cleanse your mouth.
6. Rinse your left hand again.
7. Raise the ladle vertically so that the remaining water pours down the handle to clean it for the next person, and return it to the basin.
8. Bow slightly before leaving the *temizuya*.