

# Making an Ofrenda

An ofrenda is an altar with multiple tier levels and it is meant to honor our loved ones who have passed away. It also serves as a welcome to them as they cross over into our world during Día de los Muertos.



Maxwell Museum ofrenda

Often times, water will be put on the ofrenda as both a symbol of life and to greet the spirits after a long journey. On the ofrenda is also Pan de Muerto, a sweet bread which has its origin dating back to the Aztecs. The bread makes a warm welcome for the visiting spirits.

But Pan de Muerto, isn't the only thing sweet on the ofrenda; sugar skulls decorated in colorful paste designs representing death and the sweetness of life are placed all around the altar.



[Ofrenda](#)

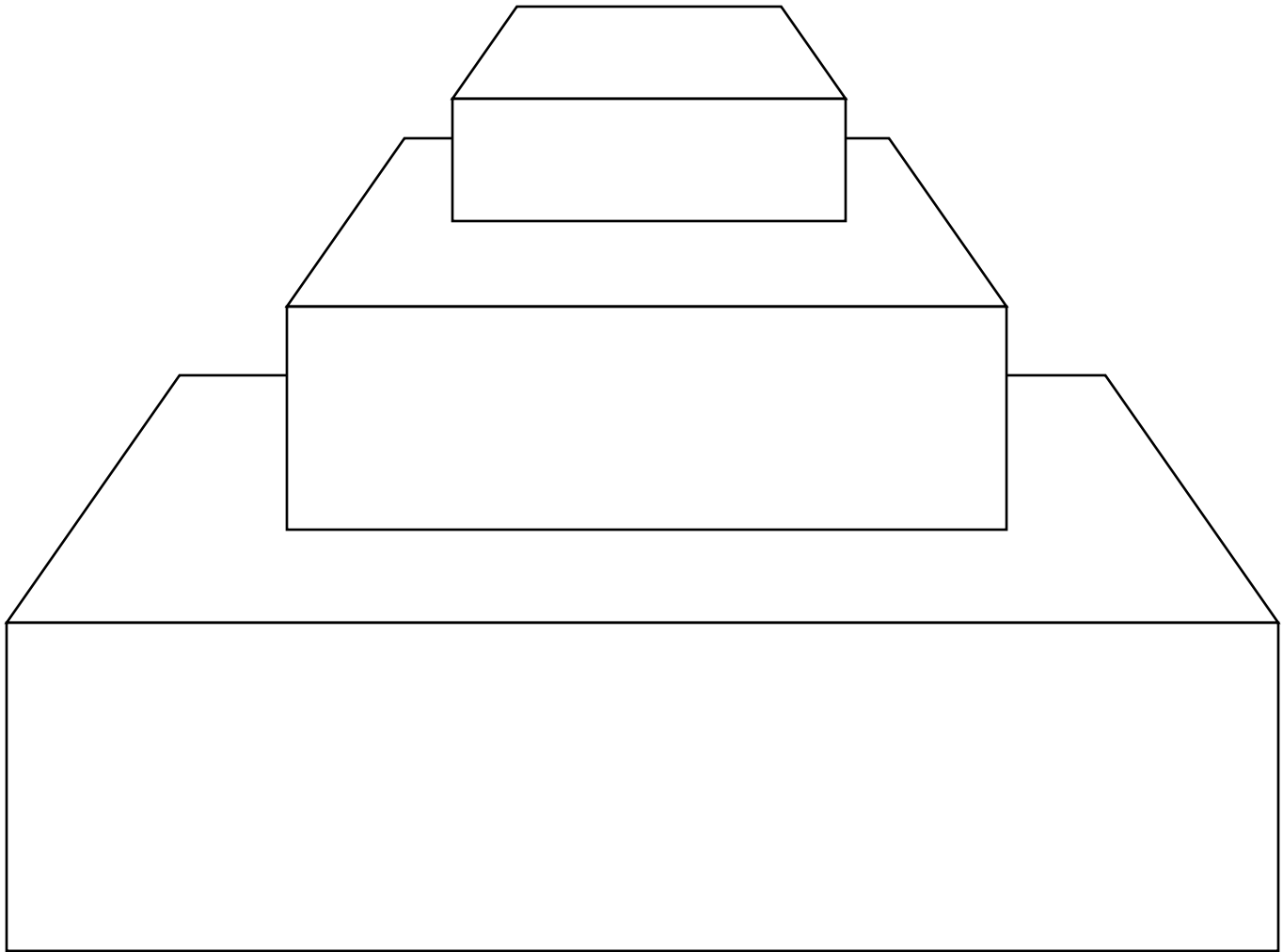
Copal incense is quite frequently placed upon the ofrenda as well, to help the spirits find their way to the ofrenda and draws them close, while candles help light the way.

Ofrendas often have photos of the deceased as well and things which represent them, like their favorite books, or other items.

To add color, and elements of life, the ofrenda is decorated with papel picado and cempasúchil (marigolds).



[Ofrenda](#)



## Plan Out Your Ofrenda!

What would you would put on an ofrenda? Think about a loved one who has passed away that you would like to honor. What kinds of things would they like on their ofrenda? Remember to add decorative elements too, like flowers or papel picado.

Once you have your ofrenda planned out, you can use the previous Día de los Muertos postings at [maxwellmuseum.unm.edu/education/k-12/educational-resources](http://maxwellmuseum.unm.edu/education/k-12/educational-resources) to help you make your decorations!



**Even the dog can have a place at the table!**