

- Ādarsh gīt*: idealistic song
Advaita: nondualism
Agni-parikshā: trial by fire
Ajgar sāp: huge snake
Akharā: an affiliation with the distinctive teachings or “school” of an expert teacher or guru; also, wrestling arena
Anuloma: hypergamy, a socially accepted union wherein the wife-givers (the family of the bride) are typically inferior to the wife-takers (the family of the groom).
Arhar: a popular variety of yellow lentil or pulse, toor dal
Ashlīl: obscene
Bajār: a permanent market where one can buy general merchandise
Barāt: the bridegroom’s party or marriage procession
Bhadralok: Bengalis with wealth, status, and a genteel aspirational lifestyle under colonial rule
Bhadramahilā: upper-caste or upper-class woman in Bengal
Bhaiyā: brother
Bhajan: spiritual song
Bhābhī or *Bhaujī*: wife of an elder brother
Bindī: forehead decoration or dot symbolizing auspiciousness, matrimony
Birahā: separation, longing; a genre of folksong highlighting the agony of separation
Biyāh: marriage
Burī: bad, vulgar
Cait: March–April

- Carvāha*: cattle herder
Chakkī: stone grinding mill
Charkhā: spinning-wheel
Chillum: a conical pipe for smoking tobacco and intoxicants like hashish
Cumāvan: a ritual blessing for the bride or groom involving the kissing of joints and limbs
Cunarī: a wrap or stole draped on the upper body of a woman
Cungī: a small token as additional free gift or favor from a vendor upon a purchase
Devar: the younger brother of one's husband
Dhamār: melodic style with distinct beat
Dhobī: caste of washermen
Dhol: barrel-shaped cylindrical drum with skin stretched on both sides
Dīdī: sister
Drsti: gaze, evil eye
Dub: a type of grass sprouted especially for ritual use
Duirāngī: two-timer or tease
Dusshera: an autumn festival symbolizing the victory of good over evil, associated with the victory of Ramayana over the demon Ravana
Ek-patnīvrāt: pledged to a single wife
Gāthā: ballad
Gāli or *gārī*: abuse; insulting wedding songs
Ganj: a wholesale market for bulk goods
Ghāts: river banks; stone steps for bathing at rivers
Gopīs: female cowherders
Gurubhāī: one who shares the same guru or teacher
Haldī: turmeric
Janeu: a sacred thread worn across the body by “twice-born” caste males signifying high status and post-puberty initiation rites
Jarīb: a long wooden measuring scale used in agriculture
Jāta: a grinding stone, or two circular stones placed atop each other, operated by circular movements to grind the grain and spices placed therebetween
Jati sabhā: caste council
Jatsār: a genre of song sung at the grinding stone
Jeth: the elder brother of one's husband
Jobanā: breasts
Jogīra: tuneful mimicry and clowning at Holi festival
Kacnār: flowering tree
Kabrauā: a song genre associated with the caste of Kahars or water carriers
Kajlī: a song genre associated with the rainy season in north India
Kaliyuga: an era of degeneration and moral decline within the four cyclical ages; also, the era associated with the present

- Kanyadān*: an upper-caste marriage practice involving the ritual gifting of a virgin daughter by her father to the bridegroom
- Kathākatās*: performers or reciters of religious tales and stories
- Karevā*: a widow's remarriage to her deceased husband's younger brother
- Keluwa*: a ritual gift from a woman's natal home brought to her by her brother
- Kharīf*: the autumn harvest of crops sown at the start of the monsoon in July
- Kodon*: an inferior grain
- Koel*: cuckoo
- Kos*: an ancient measure of distance; two miles, the distance across which a shout can be heard
- Krishna Lila*: a performance depicting the glorious deeds of Lord Krishna
- Lakh*: one hundred thousand
- Lāthi*: a staff or stave
- Launda-nāch*: a company of itinerant male performers that performs for rural audiences, the actors who perform both men's and women's roles
- Lava parachanā* or *lava*: the scattering of parched rice, a key ritual in weddings
- Lehanā*: the practice of allowing a laborer to take home from the field the amount of harvested grain they can carry with both hands
- Lila*: the accounts of glorious deeds based on the hagiographies of deities
- Maharāj*: the head of a household, a king or lord
- Mahuā*: a variety of flowering tree whose flowers are distilled for liquor
- Majirās*: hand-held cymbals
- Mātā*: chickenpox; also the goddess of chickenpox
- Meherin*: woman householder
- Melā*: fair
- Mofussil*: provincial town
- Musarvā*: pestle
- Nautankī*: a form of folk drama
- Neem*: a species of tree whose leaves and bark have medicinal and curative properties
- Nirgun*: the formless divine
- Oel*: a fruit used for pickles
- Pakhawaj*: a form of drum; the north Indian version of mridang, a drum the musician holds in front of himself
- Pān*: a fragrant postmeal digestive and mouth freshener; a key ingredient in ritual and ceremonial offerings, the leaf symbolizing fertility and auspiciousness
- Pancāyat*: an administrative, judicial, and decision-making body at the local level
- Pāpī*: sinner
- Patīvratā*: an ideal wife
- Paramparā*: tradition

- Pativrataḍharma*: the actions, duties, and attitudes expected from the ideal wife that in turn ensure the well-being and prosperity of the husband and his household
- Pehalvān*: a champion wrestler
- Phāgun*: early spring, denoting the months of February and March
- Phuḅhar*: sloppy or vulgar
- Pīr*: Sufi mystic, saint
- Pīyārī*: a ritual and auspicious yellow sari
- Pradhān*: a leader or administrative head at the local level
- Rabī*: a winter crop or spring harvest
- Rang dālo*: to smear color
- Rasik*: the feminizing of the human soul in relation to the divine; the ritual adoption of female attire by men seeking to transform their masculinity, associated with certain Krishna temples
- Rasiya*: a song based on the motif of yearning between Radha and Krishna, also associated with the dance form Rās, which is popular near Krishna's birthplace
- Sādhu*: a Hindu religious ascetic and seeker
- Saḡun*: the divine embodied
- Samskāras*: rituals of the life cycle
- Sar, sālā, sarau*: the brother of one's wife
- Sarpat*: the long grass found on riverbanks, used in rope and basket weaving
- Sasurāl*: a woman's marital household
- Sar*: superhuman feminine strength derived from the quality of wifely chastity
- Satī*: a formidably chaste woman who sacrifices herself upon the death of husband; the practice of women immolating themselves on the funeral pyre of their husbands
- Satitvā*: the state of being imbued with sat
- Satyāgraha*: nonviolent protest
- Savā lākh*: one hundred and twenty-five thousand
- Shringār*: love; forms of adornment
- Sindur*: an auspicious vermilion powder applied in the part of married women's hair, symbolizing matrimony
- Strīdhan*: property and wealth comprising cash, goods, and jewelry that women receive as gifts both from natal and conjugal homes upon marriage
- Strī-shakti*: women's superior strength
- Svayamvar*: the exercise of a woman's choice of marriage partner
- Tapas*: heat generated from asceticism and yogic austerities
- Tehsil*: an administrative subdivision comprising a number of villages; block
- Tēj*: an inner fire associated with spiritual strength
- U.P. Bhūmi Sudhār aur Shyam Adhikāri Abhiyān Samitī*: Movement for Land Reforms and Labor Rights in Uttar Pradesh

Uraharī: an eloping woman or one who has been enticed away

Urs: the anniversary marking the day of a Sufi saint's departure from the mundane world and reunion with the Creator, also celebrated as the saint's wedding

Virah (also *birah*): yearning and pain of separation

Vivāha: marriage