

Halachos of the Seder

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Pre Seder

- Start the seder as soon as possible
- The simanim of the Seder should be said before each siman. Ex. "Kadesh" before kadesh, urchatz before urchatz etc.

Kadesh קדש

- If possible, someone should pour the wine for the leader of the seder
- Before kiddush everyone should be reminded that there are three mitzvos being done during kiddush.
 1. Kiddush (sanctifying the day)
 2. Saying over the story of mitzrayim
 3. The Mitzva derabanan of drinking the first cup.
- Also remind everyone that at least a cheekful of wine should be drunk
- Measurements for the four cups:
 - Best is 5.2 oz.
 - Good is 3.3 oz.
 - If necessary 2.9 oz.
- Preferred order of drinking:
 - Entire cup, no matter the size
 - Most of the cup, no matter the size
 - A riviis (measurements above)
 - Most of a riviis (a cheekful)
- Better to have a smaller cup with the proper shiur and drink the entire cup than to have a larger cup and not drink the entire cup
- Preferred to drink the above amounts at one time. Otherwise within 2 minutes. Within 9 minutes is acceptable
- Wine with minimum 4% alcohol is preferred but grape juice is perfectly fine
- Red non mevushal wine is preferred but not required
- Leaning is required for men - If it wasn't done, it's acceptable
- Women don't have to lean
- The leaning has to be on something. Just leaning the body into the air is meaningless
- It's a mitzva to give out nuts (candy) to the children
- If there's water on the table or if you had in mind to drink water after making kiddush then it can be drunk in between the cups of wine

Urchatz רחץ

- We wash the hands before dipping the karpas because that's the Halacha even though the minhag is not to do it during the year
- No bracha of al nitilas yadaim is made

Karpas כרפס

- Less than a kezayis of vegetable should be eaten
- When making borei pri hoadama have in mind the maror
- Leaning is not required but is allowed

Yachatz יחץ

- Break the middle matzah and put the larger piece away for later
- Make sure that there's at least a kezayis in each piece of matza
- The larger piece should be wrapped up or placed in a bag for the Afikomen

Magid מגיד

- One should have in mind that we're doing the mitzva deoyraysa of saying over the story of mitzrayim
- The seder plate should be lifted up when saying "Ha Lachma Anya"
- The new cup should be poured even though we won't be drinking it until much later
- The cups don't need to be washed out from the first drinking. If there's leftover wine in the cup it can be used for this cup
- Once the cup is poured, it's preferable that there shouldn't be any drinking of water etc.
- The matzoh should be uncovered during the seder
- Many say that no other matza should be on the table until Motzi Matza
- The matzoh should be covered whenever we lift up the cup of wine
- Younger children should say "Ma Nishtana" before older children
- Although boys and girls are equal in the mitzva of the hagada, boys should say "Ma Nishtana" before girls
- The Hagada should be said and/or translated so that everyone could understand what's being said. This includes women and children
- The Hagada is not said while leaning. It should be said with fear and awe
- When saying "Vehi Sheamda" the cup should be lifted but make sure to uncover the matzoh afterwards
- One who's disgusted by putting the finger into the wine when saying the ten makkos can spill out the wine instead
- When say "Matza" and "Maror" the middle matza and maror should be lifted up.
- When saying Pesach, the shankbone should NOT be lifted up. It should just be looked at
- From "Lefichoch" until the Bracha of borei pri hagafen, the cup should be lifted up and the matzoh covered

Rachtza רחצה

- Even if the hands are clean from the earlier washing, they still need to be washed now and with a Bracha
- If one knows that the hands are definitely clean then it's best to touch shoes in order to definitely require a Bracha

Motzei Matzah מוציא מצה

- Have in mind that we're doing the Mitzvah Deoraysa of eating matza
- All three matzoh should be held during the Bracha of hamotzi and then the bottom matza should be put down for the Bracha of achilas matza

- The top matza and the broken matza should be broken at the same time and a kezayis should be eaten from each one.
- Measurements for matza:
 - Best: a little more than a 1/3 of a hand or 2/3 of a machine matza
 - Good: 1/4 of a hand or 1/3 of machine matza
 - If necessary: size of the average palm of a hand
- Whatever measurements you choose for kezayis for matza, included in the measurements is two kezasim. Therefore the above measurements don't have to be doubled
- Matza should preferably be eaten within 2 minutes but up to 9 minutes is allowed
- Most don't dip the matza into salt on the seder night
- Since there isn't usually enough matza in the seder leaders matza for everyone, each person should get the required amount of matza before washing the hands and then each person should get a small piece from each matza of the leader of the seder
- The matza should be eaten without talking (even if it's related to the meal)
- There should be no talking until after Korech unless it's related to the meal
- Reclining is required. If not then it's better to eat another kezayis while leaning

Maror מרור

- Have in mind that we're doing the Mitzvah Drabonon of maror
- Maror should be dipped into charoses and then it should be shaken off
- Measurements for maror: (horseradish or lettuce)
 - Best: enough to fill a 1.69 oz. cup
 - Good: enough to fill a 1.1 oz. cup
 - If necessary: enough to fill a .7 of an oz.
- It should preferably be eaten within 2 minutes but up to 9 minutes is allowed
- When saying the Bracha of "Al Achilas Maror" have in mind the maror that will be eaten for Korech
- No leaning while eating maror
- The maror has to be chewed and not just swallowed

Korach כורח

- The bottom matza should be used
- Whether or not the maror is dipped into charoses depends on minhag
- Measurements for Korach, matza:
 - A little more than 1/4 of a hand or 1/3 of a machine matza
 - If necessary: size of an average palm of a hand
- Measurements for Korach, maror:
 - Best: enough to fill a 1.1 oz. cup
 - Good: enough to fill a .7 of an oz.
- Korech should preferably be eaten within 2 minutes but up to 9 minutes is allowed

- Korech should be eaten while leaning. If you didn't lean then it doesn't have to be repeated
- The words "Zecher Lemikdash Kehillel" should be said before eating. However some say it after

Shulchan Orech שולחן עורח

- It's preferable to eat the meal while leaning
- Many have the custom not to have dips on the seder night
- No excessive eating so that there will be some hunger for Afikoman
- Many have a minhag to eat a hardboiled egg
- No roasted meat or chicken should be eaten

Tzafon צפון

- Have in mind that according to some opinions, this is the main mitzva of matza
- Should be eaten while leaning
- If it gets lost or damaged, other matza should be substituted
- It should be eaten before chatzos
- It should be eaten while sitting in one place without changing places
- Measurements for afikoman matza:
 - Best: a little more than a 1/3 of a hand or 2/3 of a machine matza
 - Good: 1/4 of a hand or 1/3 of machine matza
 - If necessary: size of an average palm of a hand
- No eating or drinking after the afikoman. If you did then you must eat the afikoman again
- Water and seltzer etc. are allowed. Other drinks depend on the necessity
- On the second night all drinks are allowed

Barech ברך

- If the cups are dirty then they should be washed out
- If there's three men, the head of the household should lead birchas hamazon
- A special cup for Eliyahu hanavi is filled up
- The front door is opened
- All say "Shfoch Chamoscha"

Hallel הלל

- Pour the fourth cup
- This is the only hallel of the year that we sit down
- No bracha is said on hallel
- If there's three adults (including women) or even children who understand, then the Seder leader should say "Hodu LHashem" & "Ana Hashem" out loud and the others repeat after him. Like in Shul
- It's preferable that a full Reviis of wine should be drunk so that you can say the Bracha Achrona of Al Hagafen

Nirtza נרצה

- One is required to spend the night talking about Yetzias Mitzrayim until being overcome by sleep
- The entire Krias Shema al Hamita is not said. Just the first parsha and the Bracha of Hamapil

These are the basic Halachos. Some customs may vary