

**JEWISH TREATS**

# Passover Seder Cheat Sheet

6 Steps to Planning the Perfect Seder



# WELCOME TO JEWISH TREATS

## *Passover Seder Cheat Sheet*

### *6 Steps to Planning the Perfect Seder*

Welcome to *Jewish Treats Passover Seder Cheat Sheet: 6 Steps to Planning the Perfect Seder*.

Whether you are planning to run your own seder, attend a seder with friends or family, or haven't yet decided, the *Jewish Treats Passover Seder Cheat Sheet* contains insights and information to enhance your entire Passover experience.

Starting with basic questions such as "What is a seder?" and ending with "What should we eat?" it is the essential pre-Passover "how-to" guide.

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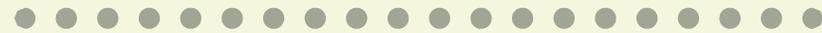
Sing your way into the  
Seder! Enjoy Jewish Treats  
"Best Seder In The USA."

From everyone at NJOP and  
Jewish Treats, we wish you a  
happy and kosher Passover!

*The Passover Seder Cheat Sheet* was  
previously produced under the title  
*Guide to Preparing a Passover Seder*.

# Seder Basics

## The What and When



### What Is A Seder?

The Exodus from Egypt (1313 B.C.E. - Hebrew year 2448) marks the birth of the nation of Israel and their transformation from a group of related tribes, into our unified people. The Torah instructs us that this great event be perpetually commemorated as a "Feast Day." This feast day is then to be followed by a week-long holiday. The main stipulations for the feast are: 1) that matzah, "the bread of affliction," be eaten, 2) that the story of the Exodus be retold, 3) that one commemorate the bitterness of slavery with maror (bitter herbs), and 4) that a lamb be brought to the Temple for a Pascal sacrifice. All of these obligations are fulfilled at the Seder (at least symbolically). This special Passover meal is called a "Seder," which, in Hebrew, means "order," because the meal follows a specific order as outlined in the haggadah (see below).

### When Is The Seder?

The Seder is celebrated (outside the land of Israel) on the nights of the 15th and 16th of the Hebrew month of Nisan,\* in commemoration of the actual Exodus from Egypt that took place on the 15th of Nisan. All Hebrew days are calculated from sunset to sunset. In order to ensure that it is fully the 15th of Nisan (or, for the second Seder, the 16th of Nisan), the Seder should not begin until nightfall (defined as the time when one can see three stars in the sky). Although it may seem odd to have such an important, and sometimes lengthy, ritual at night, it should be recalled that it was on the night of the 15th of Nisan that the Israelites marked their doorways with the blood of a lamb so that they would not be killed during the plague of the death of the firstborn. The next morning, the Israelites left Egypt.



\*In Israel the Seder is celebrated only on the 15th of Nisan.

# Have A Haggadah

## Telling the Passover Tale

### What Is The Haggadah?

On Passover night we are commanded “v’hee’ga’deta” (and you shall tell). Haggadah means to tell a story, and it is through the haggadah that Jews fulfill the mitzvah of remembering the Exodus from Egypt. The haggadah should be read aloud in a language that is understood by the Seder participants.

Before the destruction of the Holy Temple, the story of the Exodus was told after the eating of the Pascal lamb. Those early Seders also incorporated the other basic mitzvot (commandments) of the Seder as set down in the Talmud: the eating of matzah, the eating of maror (bitter herbs) and the drinking of four cups of wine. After the destruction, a more formal order of questions and discussion (*Mah Nishtana* - the Four Questions) was established. This order is recorded in the haggadah. While there have been changes, modifications and additions over time (as people have added prayers of devotion and songs of praise), the basic structure of the haggadah has not changed.

### Which Haggadah?

If the order and text of the haggadah was set thousands of years ago, why are there so many Haggadot to choose from? While some haggadot are just different versions of the same texts, many of the haggadot that are available include commentaries on the actual text. For those less familiar with the Seder, an explanatory haggadah is helpful.

Jewish Treats’ parent organization, NJOP, has an excellent explanatory haggadah. For more information, email [info@njop.org](mailto:info@njop.org).



# The Order of the Seder

## What Is The Order Of The Seder?

- (1) *Kaddaish*: Sanctify the day over wine
- (2) *Ur'chatz*: Wash hands before eating the vegetable (no blessing)
- (3) *Karpas*: Eat the vegetable dipped in salt water
- (4) *Yachatz*: Break the matzah
- (5) *Maggid*: Narrate the Passover story
- (6) *Rachtzah*: Wash hands with a blessing
- (7) *Motzee*: Bless the bread
- (8) *Matzah*: Eat the matzah
- (9) *Maror*: Eat the bitter herbs
- (10) *Koraich*: Make a sandwich of matzah and maror
- (11) *Shulchan Oraich*: Table Set (Eat the meal)
- (12) *Tzafoon*: Take out the hidden matzah
- (13) *Baraich*: Bless--say the Grace After Meal
- (14) *Hallel*: Sing praise to the Almighty
- (15) *Nirtzah*: Conclude the Seder with songs of salvation



## Singing at the Seder

### Beyond The Words

The rituals of the Seder are wonderfully diverse. In certain Sephardi communities, Seder participants walk around the room with the matzah wrapped in a cloth and carried on their shoulder to recreate the feeling of leaving Egypt. Many Ashkenazi families hide the afikomen in order to inspire children to stay awake and involved in the Seder. Just as every community has its own customs, so too every community has brought their own tunes into their Seder traditions. In fact, the concluding section of the haggadah, *Nirtzah*, consists entirely of songs, the most famous of which are *Echad Mee Yodeyah?* (Who Knows One?) and *Chad Gadya* (One Little Goat). As each community has its own traditional tunes, *Jewish Treats* presents links to some Passover melodies you may not have heard before:

Chad Gadya (Ladino)

Who Knows One (Hebrew)

Chad Gadya (Aramaic)

Who Knows One (Arabic)

# What Every Seder Table Needs

Just as there is an established order to the Seder, there are certain requirements for the Seder table. It is best to prepare these items before the Seder:

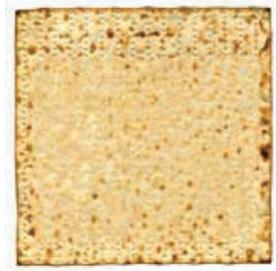
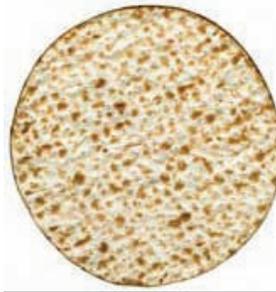
1) Three Whole (unbroken) Matzot--which should be covered by a cloth. One should try to use *shmura* (specially guarded) matzah for the Seder, and one should make certain that the matzah is marked Kosher for Passover.

2) Wine (or grape juice) and Wine Glasses--All participants should be given a glass or cup (minimum size-3.3 ounces) from which to drink the required Four Cups of Wine (wine is preferable, grape juice may be used if necessary). Of course, only Kosher for Passover wine or grape juice should be used.

3) Salt Water--in which to dip the vegetable (see *karpas*, next page). Salt water reminds us of the tears of the Jewish slaves. Usually, the salt water is not placed on the Seder Plate, but near it.

4) Elijah's Cup--Toward the end of the Seder, this cup is filled with wine, the door is opened, and Elijah the prophet, the harbinger of the Messianic age, is invited to come to the Seder, and hopefully, begin our final redemption.

5) A Pillow for Leaning--As a sign of freedom (only free people reclined while eating in ancient times), the Sages instructed that one must lean to the left while drinking the wine and eating the matzah. To accommodate and enhance this action, many people lean on fancy pillows. In fact, decorating Passover pillowcases is a great way to get children more involved in the holiday.



## CHOOSING YOUR MATZAH

Believe it or not, not all matzah is created equal. In fact, some matzah isn't even Kosher for Passover! Matzah for Passover is defined as unleavened bread or dough that hasn't been allowed to rise. Here's what you need to know:

**MATZAH BAKING**--To guarantee that matzah is Kosher for Passover, from the moment the water and flour come in contact, through the kneading and rolling, until it is removed from the oven, no more than 18 minutes may have elapsed. When purchasing matzah, make sure the box is marked "Kosher For Passover."

**SHMURA MATZAH**--Literally "guarded matzah" ("And you shall guard the matzot..." Exodus 12:17), *shmura* matzah is specially supervised from the time the wheat is harvested so that it does not come in contact with water and become *chametz* (leaven). It is preferable that *shmura* matzah be used for the Seder.

**EGG MATZAH**--Egg Matzah is "rich matzah." Since it is more extravagant, it detracts from the idea of "lechem oh'nee," bread of affliction (poverty). According to Jewish law, egg matzah may only be eaten on Passover by those who are physically infirm, or very old, and have difficulty digesting regular matzah.

**OTHER FLAVORS**--The markets have been infiltrated by many fancy matzot--garlic and onion, grape and even chocolate-covered matzah. These matzot may or may not be Kosher for Passover. Please check the box for proper Kosher for Passover supervision. In all instances, such flavored matzot should not be used during the Seder.

# What Every Seder Table Needs

## The Seder Plate

6) The Seder Plate - It is traditional to place the following items on a special Seder Plate as a way of "beautifying" the mitzvot of the Seder.

*Bay'tza*/Roasted (hard-boiled) Egg--The egg is included as a symbol of the cycle of life because of its round shape. (Hard-boil the egg normally, then roast it in the oven or on-top of a gas burner.) Additionally, the egg is a reminder of the *chagiga*, holiday sacrifice, that was also offered at the Temple on Passover.

*Z'roa*/Shank Bone--The offering brought to the Temple on Passover was a lamb or kid. Because we do not have the Temple today, we place the roasted shank bone of a lamb or the roasted bone of another kosher animal or fowl on the Seder Plate, to symbolize that offering.

*Maror*/Bitter Herbs--Bitter herbs are included in the Seder to remind participants of the bitterness and pain of slavery. Traditional bitter herbs are: Romaine lettuce, escarole, horseradish (prepared--without beets--or cut from the root).

*Karpas*/Vegetable--A vegetable, usually a piece of celery, parsley or potato, which is dipped in salt water as required for the Seder ritual.

*Charoset*--A tasty mixture of nuts, fruit and wine that represents the mortar that the Jewish slaves used when building Pharaoh's cities (recipes may vary by community, for instance chopped walnuts, wine, cinnamon and apples or crushed dates, almonds and wine).

*Chazeret*/Bitter Vegetable--*Chazeret* is a bitter vegetable, like romaine lettuce, which is sometimes placed on the Seder Plate, recalling the bitter lives of the Israelite slaves.



# More Than A Meal

## Enjoy The Whole Haggadah

### Must The Entire Haggadah Be Recited?

Each of the 15 steps of the haggadah is important in and of itself. The seder incorporates all of the Mitzvot of Passover: drinking four cups of wine/grape juice, eating matzah, eating maror and telling the story of the Exodus. If one misses parts of Maggid, the longest section of the haggadah, it need not be repeated. However, one should make certain to be at the table when the sections of Pesach, Matzah and Maror are recited toward the end of the Maggid section (begin with "Rabbi Gamliel used to say: Anyone who has not discussed the meanings of these three things on Passover has not fulfilled his duty, namely: Pesach, the Passover Offering; Matzah, the Unleavened Bread; Maror, the Bitter Herbs.")

### What Should We Eat?

While matzah balls are a famous Passover dish, the foods served for the main meal vary depending on custom and heritage. Ashkenazim do not eat rice or legumes on Passover, while many Sephardim do. Certain Ashkenazi communities refrain from eating *gebrachts*, food that combines matzah (or matzah meal) with any form of liquid. Keep in mind that the Seder meal is often late, the participants have already eaten karpas, matzah, maror and charoset during the Seder and that dessert, the last morsel of the Seder meal, should be the matzah of the Afikoman.

## Susie Fishbein's Stuffed Matzah Balls

These matzah balls are unbeatable-light and perfectly fluffy. Use a big wide pot, they really expand! The baking powder is the key ingredient and is now available for Passover. Don't double the recipe, two batches will not fit in the pot at one time. Sometimes, for a nice twist, I make them "stuffed." Using a vegetable peeler, I scrape off some carrot and celery shavings. When each matzah ball is formed, I poke a small hole, stuff in the shavings, then roll the batter over the shavings. I cook and serve them as the recipe states below. When you bite into the matzah ball you see the color and texture of the vegetables peeking out.



1. Place the 4 egg whites and salt in a mixing bowl. Let them come to room temperature as you bring the water, chicken soup, and salt to a boil in a large wide pot.

2. With mixer at medium speed beat the eggs until fluffy white peaks form. Add in the yolks, baking powder, and pepper. Beat on low. Sprinkle in the matzah meal and continue beating. Let the batter sit for 3 minutes to firm up. Wet your hands very well with cold water. Scoop up batter and roll between your wet hands until it forms a golf ball sized ball. Gently place the matzah balls into the soup. Re-wet your hands between each matzah ball. Reduce heat to a simmer, cover and cook for 25 minutes.

3. If making the "stuffed" option, while rolling each matzah ball, stuff in a few of the shavings and roll the batter back over it. Gently drop into the soup. The matzah balls will double in size, if you would like smaller balls or to get more out of the recipe, roll the balls smaller but cook the same amount of time.

Susie Fishbein's Stuffed Matzah Balls Susie Fishbein's best-selling Kosher by Design series has revolutionized kosher cuisine. Her creative and delicious recipes are always crowd-pleasers for tastes of all ages. Susie's latest cookbook, Kosher by Design: Teens and 20-Somethings, has something to offer everyone.

#### INGREDIENTS

For the cooking liquid

- 5 cups water
- 5 cups chicken soup, broth, or bouillon
- 1 teaspoons kosher salt

#### Matzah Balls

- 3 large eggs separated plus 1 extra egg white
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1 cup matzah meal

thin carrot shavings (opt.)  
thin celery shavings (opt.)  
fresh parsley, roughly chopped (opt.)



Passover Across America is an incredible opportunity for participants to attend a beautiful Seder where they will learn the basic meaning, explanations and customs of the Seder. Participants leave the Seder inspired by having relived the Exodus of the Jewish people through uplifting songs and fascinating Jewish rituals associated with the Seder.



*Want to Know*

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