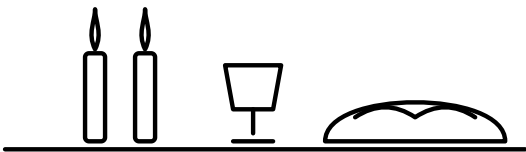


Your First Shabbat at Home

Everything you need for a Friday night with candles, Kiddush and challah. No experience, no Hebrew, and no judgment. Just you, the people you love, and a nicer-than-usual dinner.



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Every blessing comes three ways: Hebrew, transliteration (the Hebrew sounds in English letters) and English. Read whichever feels right. Nobody does all of it the first week, and nobody needs to.

Shabbat in 10 minutes

Shabbat (the Jewish day of rest) starts on Friday at sunset and ends on Saturday night after dark. The heart of it is the Friday night meal. Here's all you need for your first one.

Get this before Friday

- ☐ 2 candles that burn for a few hours, and candlesticks or a safe tray
- ☐ Matches
- ☐ Grape juice or wine (grape juice is perfect for kids)
- ☐ A cup. Any nice cup works.
- ☐ 2 challot (braided Shabbat breads). Store-bought is great.
- ☐ A napkin or cloth to cover the challah
- ☐ A little salt
- ☐ Dinner, cooked ahead. Pizza on a nice tablecloth counts.

Do this on Friday

- ☐ Look up your local candle-lighting time (hebc.com/shabbat)
- ☐ Set the table a little nicer than usual
- ☐ Put the challah on the table, covered, and the cup ready
- ☐ Phones in a basket by the door
- ☐ Light the candles before sunset (page 3)
- ☐ Say Kiddush over the cup (page 4)
- ☐ Say Hamotzi and share the challah (page 5)
- ☐ Eat slowly, talk, and play (pages 7 and 8)

The one-minute version: fill a cup, say Kiddush, and share the challah. That's a real Shabbat meal.

Lighting the candles

Lighting candles is the moment Shabbat begins in your home. Many families light two candles, for the two ways the Ten Commandments say it: "remember" Shabbat and "keep" Shabbat. Some add one for each child.

Check your local time first. Candles are lit before sunset, not after. Traditionally that's about 18 minutes before sunset (in Jerusalem many light 40 minutes before). Find this week's time for your city at hebc.com/shabbat or chabad.org/candles.

1. Set the candles where they can burn safely until they go out on their own. Kids help set up; a grown-up strikes the match.
2. Light the candles. In many homes (Ashkenazi custom) you light first, cover your eyes, say the blessing, then uncover your eyes and look at the light. In many Sephardi homes the blessing comes first, then the lighting. Both are beautiful.
3. Take a quiet moment for a wish or prayer for the people you love. Then hug and say "Shabbat shalom" (a peaceful Shabbat).

The blessing

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר
שֶׁל שַׁבָּת.

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu lehadlik ner shel Shabbat.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who made us holy with His commandments and commanded us to light the Shabbat candle.

Some families end with "ner shel Shabbat kodesh" (the holy Shabbat candle).

Kiddush, the blessing over the cup

Kiddush means "making holy." Fill the cup. One person says it for everyone (stand or sit, both are traditional), and everyone answers "Amen" after each blessing. Then take a sip and share the cup. Reading from this page, or playing a recording and following along, is completely normal.

Part 1: the story of the seventh day

יום הששי. ויכלו השמים והארץ וכל צבאם. ויכל אלהים ביום השביעי מלאכתו אשר עשה, וישבת ביום השביעי מכל מלאכתו אשר עשה. ויברך אלהים את יום השביעי ויקדש אותו, כי בו שבת מכל מלאכתו אשר ברא אלהים לעשות.

Yom hashishi. Vayechulu hashamayim vеха'aretz vechol tzeva'am. Vayechal Elohim bayom hashvi'i melachto asher asah, vayishbot bayom hashvi'i mikol melachto asher asah. Vayevarech Elohim et yom hashvi'i vaykadesh oto, ki vo shavat mikol melachto asher bara Elohim la'asot.

The sixth day. The heavens and the earth and everything in them were finished. On the seventh day God finished the work He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all the work He had done. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it He rested from all the work of creation.

Part 2: over the wine or grape juice

סברי מרננו. ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי הגפן.

Savri maranan. Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, borei pri hagafen.

("With your permission, friends.") Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Everyone answers: Amen.

Part 3: the blessing for Shabbat

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצותיו ורצה בנו, וישבת קדשו באהבה וברצון הנחילנו, זכרון למעשה בראשית. כי הוא יום תחלה למקראי קדש, זכר ליציאת מצרים. כי בנו בחרת ואותנו קדשת מכל העמים, וישבת קדשך באהבה וברצון הנחלתנו. ברוך אתה יי, מקדש השבת.

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu bemitzvotav veratzah vanu, veShabbat kodsho be'ahavah uvratzon hinchilanu, zikaron lema'aseh vereishit. Ki hu yom techilah lemikra'ei kodesh, zecher litziat Mitzrayim. Ki vanu vacharta ve'otanu kidashta mikol ha'amim, veShabbat kodshecha be'ahavah uvratzon hinchaltanu. Baruch atah Adonai, mekadesh haShabbat.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who made us holy with His commandments and cherished us, and lovingly gave us His holy Shabbat as a gift, a reminder of the creation of the world. It is the first of the holy days, a reminder of the Exodus from Egypt. You chose us and made us holy, and lovingly gave us Your holy Shabbat as a gift. Blessed are You, Lord, who makes Shabbat holy.

Everyone answers: Amen. Siddurim (prayer books) from different communities word a few lines a little differently; use whichever your family has.

Hamotzi, the blessing over challah

We put two challot on the table to remember the manna, the food that fell from the sky in the desert. On Fridays a double portion fell, so nobody had to gather on Shabbat.

1. Uncover the challah and hold both loaves.
2. Say Hamotzi. Everyone answers "Amen."
3. Sprinkle a little salt, tear or cut the challah, and pass pieces around so everyone gets one.

Hamotzi

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who brings bread out of the earth.

Ready for one more step? Washing hands first

Many families wash before the challah: fill a cup at the sink, pour water over the right hand twice, then the left hand twice (some pour three times), and say this blessing while drying. Many stay quiet from washing until they taste the challah. Kids love the silent walk back to the table (humming is allowed).

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם.

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu bemitzvotav vetzivanu al netilat yadayim.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who made us holy with His commandments and commanded us about washing the hands.

The run of show

Stick this on the fridge. Do the bold ones; the rest are lovely extras for whenever you're ready.

Friday afternoon	Set the table. Tablecloth, challah under its cover, cup and juice ready, candles in place. Phones into the basket.
Before sunset (your local time)	Light the candles and say the blessing (page 3). "Shabbat shalom!"
Gather	Extra: sing <i>Shalom Aleichem</i> , a welcome song for Shabbat (any tune; words at parsha-table.vercel.app/shabbat). Extra: bless your children, with hands on their heads or a big hug (below).
At the table	Kiddush over the cup (page 4). Everyone says "Amen" and has a sip.
Next	Extra: wash hands. Then Hamotzi over the challah, a little salt, and pass it around (page 5).
Dinner	Eat together, slowly. Use the table talk cards (page 7) and play the game (page 8). Say "L'chaim!" (to life!).
After dinner	Dessert, songs, stories. Extra: Birkat Hamazon, the blessing after the meal (free on Sefaria).
Saturday night	Extra: when three stars are out, say goodbye to Shabbat with Havdalah, a 5-minute ceremony with a cup, spices and a braided candle (parsha-table.vercel.app/shabbat).

Blessing for a girl

יְשִׁימֶךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּשָׂרָה רִבְקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה.

Yesimech Elohim keSarah, Rivkah, Rachel veLe'ah.

May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.

Blessing for a boy

יְשִׁימֶךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּאַפְרַיִם וְכִמְנַשֶּׁה.

Yesimcha Elohim ke'Efrayim vechiMenasheh.

May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe.

Table talk cards

Cut these out before Shabbat and put one under each plate, or pass them around after Kiddush. Grown-ups answer too.

CARD 1 • THE BEST PART

What was the best part of your week? What's one thing you're happy to leave behind now that Shabbat is here?

Grown-up turn: share your own best moment of the week.

CARD 2 • THE GUEST

If you could invite anyone in the whole world to our Shabbat table, who would it be? What would you ask them, and what would you serve?

Fun fact: Avraham, the first Jew, kept his tent open on all four sides so guests could find the door.

CARD 3 • A WHOLE DAY OFF

Shabbat is a break from rushing. If our family had a whole slow day together, what would you want to do with it?

Fun fact: the Torah says God made the world in six days and rested on the seventh. Shabbat is that seventh day.

Journey to the Kiddush Cup

In the Torah, Avram (later called Abraham) heard God say "Lech lecha," go on a journey, and he walked to a new land. Tonight your kids make a journey too: from a busy week to the Shabbat table.

1. Before Shabbat, a grown-up hides the Kiddush things around the house: the cup on a shelf, the juice in the fridge, the challah cover in a drawer, the challah on the counter.
2. At the table, call out: "Lech lecha! Go, travelers!" Give clues one at a time: "Something that holds the wine." "Something that comes from grapes." "Something that keeps the challah cozy." "Two braided breads." Little ones can travel with a big sibling.
3. When everything is on the table, everyone says together: "We made it to the land!" Now it's time for Kiddush.
4. Listening game: give each kid a word to listen for during Kiddush: "Shabbat," "Baruch" (blessed) or "Amen." Tap the table softly each time you hear it. (Answer: "Shabbat" and "Baruch" each come 3 times, and everyone says "Amen" after each blessing.)

NEXT WEEK, TRY THIS

Invite a guest to your Shabbat meal

You don't need to know everything to host. Your guest just needs to feel welcome. A new packet like this arrives free every Thursday: the week's Torah story in plain words, one small Shabbat step, a family game, and four songs for the different kids at your table.



Get it every Thursday
parshatable.beehiiv.com



This week's packet
parsha-table.vercel.app

A friendly starting point, not a guide to Jewish law. Communities do some things a little differently, and that's part of the beauty. For questions, ask a rabbi or teacher you trust. God's name is printed here as !. Because this kit holds blessings, many families keep it with their Shabbat things instead of throwing it away.