

Your Ultimate Passover Checklist

Every year, Passover begins on the 15th of Nisan – always on the full moon. This year, Passover begins at sunset on Monday, April 22, and ends on Tuesday, April 30, at nightfall. Depending on your custom, you might end Passover at nightfall on Monday, April 29.

ESSENTIALS:

- Enough wine or grape juice for four cups per person during the Seder. A fifth cup is set out for Elijah the prophet. While many folks stick with the same beverage for the whole Seder, you might think about how your drink progresses with the meal to demarcate freedom (or just to pair with the food!).
- Matzah, unleavened bread, symbolizes what the Israelites brought with them when they fled Egypt. Learn how to make your own on Friday, April 19!
- Haggadah (the telling) guides you through the Seder pieces and the story. Make your own at [Haggadot.com](https://www.haggadot.com).



ON THE SEDER PLATE:

- *Karpas*: parsley represents spring.
- *Baytza*: an egg represents fertility and renewal.
- *Maror*: bitter herbs (most popularly horseradish) symbolize the bitterness of slavery.
- *Z'roa*: a roasted shank bone or a beet, symbolizing the sacrifice made in Ancient Israel.
- *Charoset*: a mixture of fruits and nuts, representing mortar the Hebrew slaves placed between bricks.
- *Hazeret*: another form of bitter herbs (most commonly romaine lettuce).

SYMBOLIC SEDER PLATE ADDITIONS:

- An orange symbolizes LGBTQIA+ equality.
- A banana symbolizes support for refugees.
- An acorn acknowledges indigenous land.
- Cocoa or coffee beans acknowledge forced labor that still happens around the world.
- An olive symbolizes hope for peace between Israel and Palestine.

OTHER SYMBOLIC TABLE ADDITIONS:

- Hopefully, we won't need: an empty chair and place setting for hostages still in captivity in Gaza.
- Miriam's Cup is a cup of water to honor women.





Ma Nishtanah 5784

4 QUESTIONS FOR PASSOVER THIS YEAR

On Passover, we ask four questions to understand what makes Passover and the nights of the Seder unique from the rest of the year. Traditionally, the youngest person in attendance is given the honor of asking the questions. Consider asking your table who is the “youngest” at different things - like who has lived in your city for the shortest amount of time. Here are four reframed question topics for your table this year:

1

We eat matzah as a symbol to remember both affliction and freedom. This flat, cracker-like bread is all the Jews were able to prepare before they could flee Egypt. How does it feel at this moment in Jewish history to recall another precarious story from Jewish history? What sustains you in the way that matzah sustained the Jews of the Exodus? When you eat matzah and participate in a Seder, does it make you feel part of a greater narrative or story?

2

It may feel out of place entering this metaphorical journey of freedom when many of us have our eyes, minds, and hearts centered on Israel and Gaza rather than Egypt. We eat bitter herbs to remind us of the bitter life the Jewish people experienced as slaves. What might it mean to have these bitter herbs represent the hostages and the Palestinians? Does it make the Passover story feel more or less resonant to you?

3

When we dip parsley into saltwater, the parsley symbolizes spring and new life, while the saltwater reminds us of the tears of our Jewish ancestors. When we dip, we remember the pain of the past and the hope of a new future simultaneously. Are you able to feel hopeful during this Passover season? What rituals help ground you and keep a positive outlook towards the future?

4

On all nights, we eat sitting upright or reclining, and on this night, we are prompted to recline throughout the meal. This reclining is designed to make us more receptive to the lessons and stories of the Seder. How might you bring this ritual receptivity into the rest of the year? What lessons and inspiration can you draw from the Seder and bring into Shabbat?