

Building a Sukkah

SELECTING A SITE

To build your own Sukkah, first select a site that has nothing hanging above it -- i.e. a roof or a tree. The Sukkah floor space must be at least 30 inches by 30 inches -- the minimum space for most of a person to sit with a small table. If you don't have a yard, then an apartment balcony will do just fine (provided it has no roof!).

THE WALLS

For a "kosher" Sukkah, you'll need at least two complete walls and a small part of a third wall. The walls can be of any material, as long as they are sturdy enough to withstand a normal wind. The walls should be at least 40 inches high, but not higher than 30 feet. You don't have to build walls especially for the Sukkah; you can use the side of a building. And if you can find an area that is already enclosed by 2 or 3 walls, then your job will be that much easier!

THE ROOF

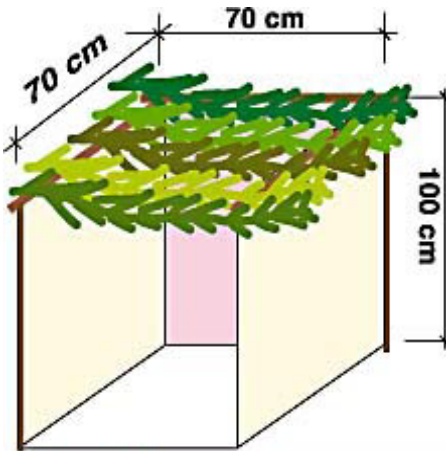
This is the tricky part. First of all, the roof of a kosher Sukkah must be made from material that grows from the ground - i.e. branches or leaves (but not metal, or any food). If you're using unfinished boards, they cannot be wider than 15 inches. The Talmudic term for this roof material is S'chach (same root as the word Sukkah).

Also, the material must be presently detached from the ground (i.e. don't just bend a tree over the top of your Sukkah!).

The roof material can only be added after the requisite number of walls are in place.

The roof must be sufficiently covered so that it gives more shade than sun during the daytime. Yet it should be sufficiently open so that the stars are visible through the roof at night.

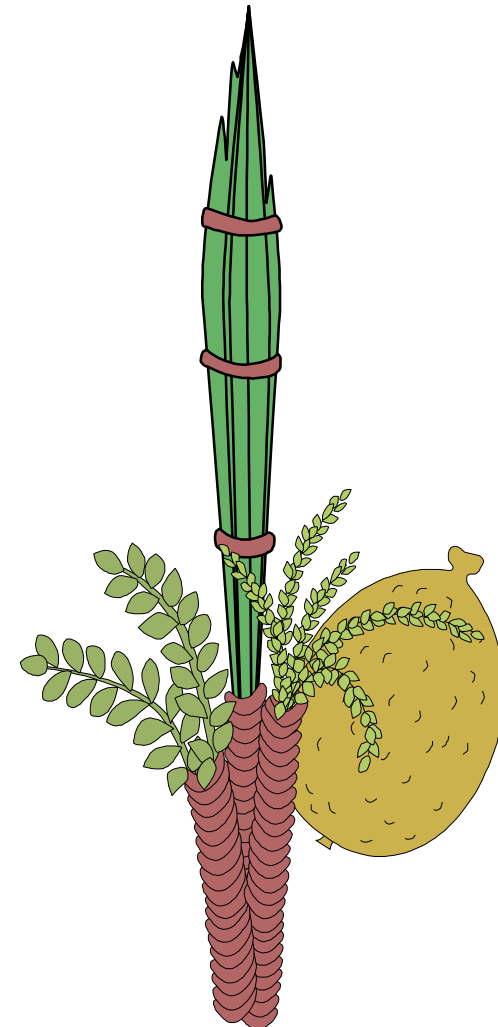
Since the Sukkah is designated as your "home" for the next 7 days, it is customary to decorate it nicely. Many people hang fruits and flowers from the ceiling, and tape posters of Jerusalem and other Jewish themes on the walls.



The minimum size of a Sukkah

Congregation Yeshuat Yisrael

Sukkot The Feast of Tabernacles





Dwelling in the Sukkah

Whenever we sit in the Sukkah we say the following blessing:

"Baruch ata Adonoy, Elo-heinu Melech ha'olam, asher kid'shanu bi'mitzvo-sav, vi'tzivanu lay-shave ba-sukkah."

"Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who sanctified us with His mitzvahs, and instructed us to sit in the Sukkah."

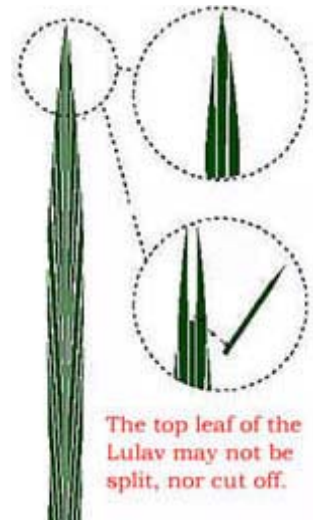
סוכות

THE FOUR SPECIES— LULAV AND ETROG

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
בְּלִילֵינוּ וְקִיְמָנוּ לְיָמֵינוּ

Baruch ata Adonai, Elo-heinu Melech ha'olam, asher kid'shanu bi'mitzvo-tav, vi'tzivanu al ni-tilat lulav.

Blessed are You, Lord our God,
King of the Universe,
Who sanctified us with His mitzvahs,
and instructed us to raise up the Lulav.



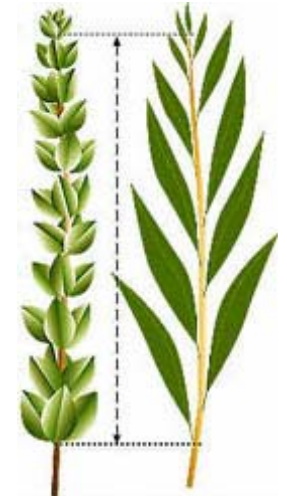
The top leaf of the Lulav may not be split, nor cut off.



SHEHECHEYANU

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁהֶחַיְנוּ וְקִיְמָנוּ וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְיָמֵינוּ הַזֶּה:

- 1.The Esrog (Citron) represents the heart, the seat of our emotions.
- 2.The Hadas (myrtle) has leaves shaped like an eye.
- 3.The Lulav (date palm) represents the spine, from where our actions emanate.
- 4.The Aravah (willow) represents the lips, our speech.



Each branch of the Myrtle and Willow should be at least 30 cm (11 inches) long.

RETURNING THE TORAH TO THE ARK

All

It is a tree of life to those who take hold of it,
and those who support it are praiseworthy.
Its ways are ways of pleasantness,
and all its paths are peace.
Bring us back to You, Lord, and we shall come.
Renew our days as of old.

עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לַמַּחְזִיקִים בָּהּ
וְתַמְכֶיהָ מֵאֲשֶׁר: דְּרָכֶיהָ דְרָכֵי נֵעַם
וְכָל נְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ שְׁלוֹם:
הַשִּׁיבֵנו יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנָשׁוּבָה
חַדֵּשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם:

Eytz cha-yim hi la-ma-cha-zi-kim ba, v'tom-che-ha m'u-shar.
D'ra-che-ha dar-chey no-ahm, v'chal n'ti-vo-te-ha shalom.
Ha-shi-vey-nu Adonai, ey-le-cha v'na-shu-vah.
Cha-deysh, cha-deysh ya-mey-nu, cha-deysh ya-mey-nu
k'-ke-dem.

ZECHARIAH 14:16-19

And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.



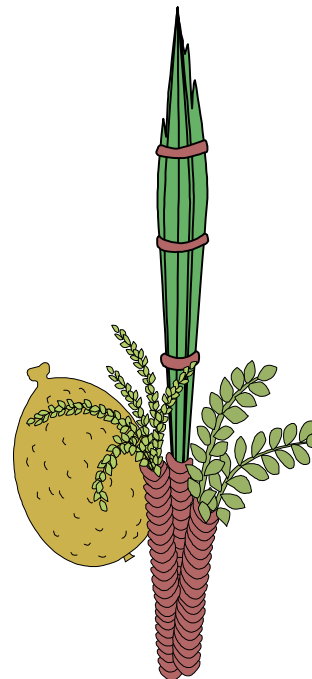
THE TORAH PROCESSIONAL

Congregation Rises

When the Ark would travel, Moses would say,
"Arise O Lord, and let Your enemies be scattered,
and let them that hate You flee from You."
For from Zion will go forth the Torah,
and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
Blessed be He,
Who in His holiness,
gave the Torah to His people Israel.

רְמַאֲיָהּ רַעַח; [שְׁבִי יְהִי]׃
וְיָבֵיִתָּהּ וְאֶפְרַיִם וְיָחִיד וְחִמְלָה וְקוֹחַ וְחַמְסִים
וְעֵינֵי רְמִי וְיָאֵרְצֵם וְשִׁנְתָּם
כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה
וְדִבְרֵי יְיָ מִירוּשָׁלַם.
בְּרוּךְ שְׁנַתֵּן תוֹרָה
לְעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקֶדְשָׁתוֹ:

Va'-y'hi bin-so-ah ha-a-ron va-yo-mehr Mo-sheh.
Kuma Adonai v'ya-fu-tzu oy-veh-cha,
v'ya-nu-su m'san-eh-cha mi-pa-neh-cha.
Ki mi-tzi-yon tey-tzey Torah,
Ki mi-tzi-yon tey-tzey To-rah,
ud-var Adonai mi-ru-sha-la-yim.
Ba-ruch sheh-na-tan Torah Torah,
Ba-ruch sheh-na-tan Torah Torah,
l'a-mo Yisrael bik-du-sha-to.



THE TORAH READING

Congregation Seated

Hebrew and English Reading

LEVITICUS 23:33-43

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD. 'On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it. 'For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it. 'These are the feasts of the LORD which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire to the LORD, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a sacrifice and drink offerings, everything on its day— 'besides the Sabbaths of the LORD, besides your gifts, besides all your vows, and besides all your freewill offerings which you give to the LORD.

'Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the LORD for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest. 'And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of beautiful trees, branches of palm trees, the boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook; and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days. 'You shall keep it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a statute forever in your generations. You shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 'You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All who are native Israelites shall dwell in booths, that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God. "



BLESSING AFTER THE TORAH READING:

All

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת
וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָשַׁע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ:
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה: אָמֵן:

Ba-ruch Atah Adonai, E-lo-hey-nu Me-lech ha-o-lahm,
A-sheer na-tan la-nu Torat e-met,
v'cha-yey o-lahm na-tah b'to-che-nu.
Ba-ruch Atah Adonai, no-teyn ha-Torah. A-meyn.

Blessed are You, O Lord our G-d, King of the Universe,
Who has given us a Torah of Truth,
and has planted eternal life in our midst.
Blessed are You O Lord, Giver of the Torah. Amen.

CLOSING THE TORAH

Congregation Rises

All

זוֹאת הַתּוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר שָׂם מֹשֶׁה לְפָנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
עַל פִּי יְיָ בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה:

The Pitom--



V'zot ha-Torah ah-sheer sahm Mo-she lif-ney b'ney
Yisrael al pi Adonai b'yad Mo-she.

And this is the Torah
that Moses placed before the children of Israel,
at the command of the Lord,
through Moses' hand.

