**Halachos of Rosh Hashanah**

**1. Erev Rosh Hashanah**

**1.1)** On *Erev Rosh Hashanah* the *minhag* is to increase the amount of *Selichos* we say. *Tachanun* is said at the end of *Selichos* (even if one finishes *Selichos* after *Alos Hashachar,* and even though it is not said at *Shacharis).*

**1.1)** The *shofar* is not blown after *Shacharis* on *Erev Rosh Hashanah*.

**1.2)** The *minhag* was to fast on *Erev Rosh Hashanah*. Nowadays many have the *minhag* to fast until *chatzos.*[[1]](#footnote-1)

**1.3)** Many have the *minhag* to *daven* at *kivrei tzadikim* on *Erev Rosh Hashanah*. Care should be taken to *daven* to *Hashem* in the *zechus* of the *tzadikim* (and not to *daven* to the *tzadik* himself).[[2]](#footnote-2)

**1.4)** The *minhag* is to go to the *mikvah* on *Erev Rosh Hashanah*. This should preferably be done from one hour before midday and on.[[3]](#footnote-3)

**1.5)** It is appropriate to shave and get a haircut in honor of *Yom Tov* in order to show that we are confident that we will receive a positive judgment.[[4]](#footnote-4)

**2. Hataras Nedarim**

**2.1)** The *minhag* is to do התרת נדרים before *Rosh Hashanah*. It is imperative that one understands what he is saying during the actual התרת נדרים process.

**2.2)** The current *minhag* is to do התרת נדרים on *Erev Rosh Hashanah*. However, it may be done the night before, if needed.[[5]](#footnote-5)

**2.3)** Relatives may be part of the same *Beis Din* for התרת נדרים.[[6]](#footnote-6)

**2.4)** The *minhag* is for the *Beis Din* to sit and the one saying התרת נדרים to stand. This is not מעכב.[[7]](#footnote-7)

**2.5)** Most women do not recite התרת נדרים. Some men include their wives in their התרת נדרים.

**2.6)** One who remembers a specific *neder* that he made during the past year and would like to be *matir* that *neder* should not rely on the התרת נדרים said on *Erev Rosh Hashanah*. Rather, he should make a specific *hatarah* on that *neder* (consult a *Rav* for details).

**3. Minhagim of Rosh Hashanah**

**3.1)** When lighting the *Yom Tov* candles, the *brachah* of *shehechiyanu* is recited (on both nights).

**3.2)** After *davening* on the first night of *Rosh Hashanah*, people should greet each other with a *brachah* for a good year —לשנה טובה תכתב ותחתם (refer to a *machzor* for the exact text of the *brachah* for a male, female, or for many people).[[8]](#footnote-8)

**3.3)** One is obligated to have two *seudos* on each day of *Rosh Hashanah.*[[9]](#footnote-9)

**3.4)** The *minhag* is to dip every person’s piece of bread that they will be receiving from the *lechem mishnah* into honey.[[10]](#footnote-10) Most dip the *challah* into honey instead of salt. Some dip the *challah* into both honey and salt,[[11]](#footnote-11) while others at least have salt on the table.

**3.5)** The *minhag* is not to eat any bitter or sour foods on *Rosh Hashanah.*[[12]](#footnote-12)

**3.6)** Foods that have bitter or sour ingredients may be eaten on *Rosh Hashanah* as long as the overall taste of the dish is not bitter.

**3.7)** One should refrain from eating אגוזים on Rosh Hashanah.[[13]](#footnote-13) Even though אגוז only refers to walnuts/filberts, many have the *minhag* to refrain from eating all nuts on *Rosh Hashanah*. Some do not even eat peanuts (which are legumes).

**3.8)** Many permit using nuts as an ingredient as long as the dish does not have a strong nutty taste.

**3.9)** *Ya’aleh V’yavo* is added in *bentching*. One who forgot *Ya’aleh V’yavo* does not need to repeat *bentching.*[[14]](#footnote-14)

**3.10)** It is proper to learn a *perek* of *mishnayos* from *Meseches Rosh Hashanah* at each of the four *seudos.*[[15]](#footnote-15)

**3.11)** One should try not to sleep on the first day of Rosh Hashanah. One who is tired may rest after *chatzos*. On the second day of *Rosh Hashanah* one may rest if necessary.[[16]](#footnote-16)

**4. Simanim**

**4.1)** The *minhag* is to eat different *simanim* (foods whose names connote *brachah*) on the first night of *Rosh Hashanah.*[[17]](#footnote-17)The purpose of this *minhag* is to help us *daven* for a שנה טובה. Many eat *simanim* on the second night as well.[[18]](#footnote-18)

**4.2)** There are different *minhagim* regarding which *siman* should be eaten first. Some hold that the *brachah* of העץ should be made on the date[[19]](#footnote-19) since it is one of the שבעת המינים. Others hold that the *brachah* should be made on the apple since it is *chaviv.*[[20]](#footnote-20) Everyone should follow their own *minhag*. (The more common *minhag* is to eat the apple first.)

**4.3)** Take a fruit first (either apple or date), recite the *brachah* of העץ and take a bite. Afterwards say the יהי רצון and then eat some more.[[21]](#footnote-21) For all subsequent *simanim,* say the יהי רצון first and then eat the *siman* (the rest of the *simanim* may be eaten in any order).

**4.4)** A *brachah* is not said on the *simanim* that are vegetables.[[22]](#footnote-22)

**4.5)** There is a difference of *minhagim* in regards to saying the Name of Hashem in the יהי רצון. The common *minhag* is to say the שם ה'.[[23]](#footnote-23)

**4.6)** One who needs to make a *shehechiyanu* on any of the *simanim* on the first night (for example on a pomegranate), should make the actual *brachah* and not rely on the *shehechiyanu* of *Kiddush.*[[24]](#footnote-24)

**4.7)** The actual eating of the *siman* does not cause good *mazel* nor does it have any positive effect. Therefore, יהי רצון may be said even without actually eating the food, as long as the *siman* is visible.[[25]](#footnote-25)

**5. Tekias Shofar**

**5.1)** Men are obligated to hear the *shofar* on *Rosh Hashanah*. מדארייתא one must hear nine blasts of the *shofar* (תשר"ת תש"ת תר"ת). מדינא דגמרא one must hear thirty *shofar* blasts.[[26]](#footnote-26) The *minhag* from the time of the *Rishonim* is to hear 100 קולות.[[27]](#footnote-27)

**5.2)** From the time the *brachos* are said until the end of all the *tekios* one should not speak any words of *batalah.*[[28]](#footnote-28) One who finished *shemoneh esray* and wants to learn or say *tehillim* is allowed to. *Asher Yatzar* may also be said then[[29]](#footnote-29).

**5.3)** One who talked between the *brachos* and the *tekios* must make the *brachos* again. One who talked throughout the *tekios* does not need to make the *brachos* again.[[30]](#footnote-30)

**5.4)** The *brachah* of *shehechiyanu* is said on *tekias shofar* on both days of ראש השנה.

**5.5)** One should listen carefully to the *brachos* and have *kavanah* to be *yotzei* the *mitzvah* of *tekias shofar* (ברוך הוא וברוך שמו is not said by the *brachos*). The proper *kavanah* to have is to think — I am about to fulfill the will of *Hashem* and this is what He wants me to do.[[31]](#footnote-31)

**5.6)** One must make sure to hear the entire *tekiah* from beginning to end (even if the *tekiah* is longer than the *shuir*).[[32]](#footnote-32)

**5.7)** One should stand during the *brachos* and for all the *tekios.*[[33]](#footnote-33)

**5.8)** *Tekias Shofar* is a מצות עשה שהזמן גרמא (a *mitzvah* bound by time), therefore women are not obligated in it. However, women have taken upon themselves to hear thirty תקיעות.

**5.9)** There is a discussion whether eating before the *tekios* is permitted.[[34]](#footnote-34) One who feels that he needs to eat in order to have proper *kavanah* by *tekias* *shofar* and *musaf* may make *Kiddush* and eat.[[35]](#footnote-35) Women are allowed to eat before hearing *shofar*.

**6. Tashlich**

**6.1)** After *Minchah* on the first day of *Rosh Hashanah* the *minhag* is to walk to a river (or any body of water) and say *Tashlich*. It is best to say *Tashlich* by a river that has fish.[[36]](#footnote-36)

**6.2)** Women should also say *Tashlich*.[[37]](#footnote-37)

**6.3)** *Tashlich* may be said before *Minchah* as well (it may even be said after *shkiah*).[[38]](#footnote-38)

**6.4)** One should not throw bread or any food to the fish on *Rosh Hashanah.[[39]](#footnote-39)*

**6.5)** One is allowed to bring his *machzor* back from *Tashlich* even if he knows that he will not use it for the rest of the day.

**6.6)** *Tashlich* may be said throughout the entire עשרת ימי תשובה (even until הושענא רבה)*.*

**6.7)** *Tashlich* is not said on *Shabbos.*[[40]](#footnote-40)

**7. The Second Night of Rosh Hashanah**

**7.1)** The *brachah* of *shehechiyanu* is said at *hadlakas neiros* on the second night. It is best if a woman can wear new clothing or have a new fruit by the candles so that the *brachah* of *shehechiyanu* can go on it as well.[[41]](#footnote-41)

**7.2)** At *Kiddush,* the *brachah* of *shehechiyanu* is said. The *minhag* is to wear a new piece of clothing or to have a new fruit on the table while one is saying the *brachah* of *shehechiyanu*.[[42]](#footnote-42)

**7.3)** There is a difference of *minhagim* when to eat the *shehechiyanu* fruit. Some eat it right after *Kiddush* (even before *hamotzi*) while others wait until after *hamotzi*. (The more common *minhag* is to wait until after *hamotzi*.)

1. ע"פ דברי המדרש מובא בטור סי' תקפ"א. וע' בשו"ת שאילת יעב"ץ ח"ב סי' קמ"ז. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. משנ"ב סי' תקפ"א ס"ק כ"ז ומט"א שם סע' נ. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. משנ"ב שם ס"ק כ"ו. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. והוא ע"פ מדרש אחרת המובא בטור שם. ובמשנ"ב שם ס"ק כ"ה הדגיש שמ"מ מצד יראת הדין אין ללבוש בגדים חשובים ביותר. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. שו"ע יו"ד סי' רכ"ח סע' ג. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. שם. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. ש"ך יו"ד סי' רכ"ח סק"ט. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. רמ"א סי' תקפ"ב סע' ט'. וע' במשנ"ב ס"ק כה שהביא ב' דעות אם יש לומר 'ותחתם'. וע' מט"א סע' כו. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. ע' משנ"ב סי' תקצ"ז ס"ק א' שכתב דראש השנה היא בכלל חג. וע' בסי' תקכ"ט סע' א' ובמשנ"ב שם ס"ק י"ג שיש לאכול ב' סעודות ביו"ט. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. משנ"ב סי' תקפ"ג ס"ק ג'. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. כף החיים סי' תקפ"ג ס"ק ד'. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. משנ"ב סי' תקפ"ג ס"ק ה' ומט"א סק"ג. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. רמ"א סי' תקפ"ג סע' ב'. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. ע' משנ"ב סי' קפ"ח ס"ק י"א שהביא ב' דעות בזה. וע' מט"א סי' תקפ"ג ס"ק ד'. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. מט"א סי' תקפ"ג ס"ק ד'. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. רמ"א סי' תקפ"ג סע' ב' ועיי"ש במשנ"ב ס"ק ט"ו. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. ש"ע סי' תקפ"ג סע' א' וב'. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. מט"א שם סוף ס"ק ב' וכן בסי' ת"ר ס"ק י"ד. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. כף החיים סי' תקפ"ג סקכ"ה. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. כך היא משמעות המשנ"ב שם ס"ק ג' ומט"א שם ס"ק א'. ולמי שרוצה לקיים מנהגו לברך על התפוח תחילה, יש עצה שלא להביא שאר הסימנים להשולחן עד אחרי שאכל התפוח. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. מג"א שם סק"ב. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. מסתימת הפוסקים שרק הביאו שצריך לברך העץ על התפוח ולא הוזכר שום דבר לגבי שאר ירקות. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. משנ"ב שם ס"ק ב'. וע' באלף למטה שם ס"ק י"ד. (ובליל שני יש שלא אומרים שם ה' בה'יהי רצון'.) [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. שו"ת מנחת שלמה קמא סי' כ' סק"ב. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. ובעצם אפ' מי שאין לו שום סימנים בפניו יכול לומר 'יהי רצון' אבל יותר טוב שיהא בפניו. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. שו"ע סי' תק"צ סע' א' וב'. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. ע' תוס' ר"ה דף לג: ד"ה שיעור, וכן ע' ברא"ש ר"ה פ"ד סי' י'. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. שו"ע סי' תקצ"ב סע' ג'. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. ובאמצע תקיעות דמיושב נכון שלא להפסיק כלל. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. משנ"ב שם ס"ק י"ג וי"ד. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. מיהו כתב במשנ"ב סי' תקפ"ט ס"ק ט"ז שכל עוד שבאה לבית הכנסת בדעתו לצאת יד"ח אע"פ שבשעה ששמע לא כון אלא בסתמא, יצא. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. משנ"ב סי' תקצ"ג ס"ק י'. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. משנ"ב סי' תקפ"ב ס"ק ב'. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. וכידוע שהאריכו בזה רבים. ובהלכות תקיעת שופר בעצמה לא הביא השו"ע והרמ"א שום הקפדה על זה (וע' שע"ת סי' תקפ"ד סק"ג). ומי שבודאי יסיים תפילתו קודם חצות כגון שמתפלל כוותיקין יש לשאול שאילת רב אם מותר לאכול קודם התקיעות. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. מט"א סי' תקפ"ח ס"ק ב'. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. רמ"א סי' תקפ"ג סע' ב', ומשנ"ב שם ס"ק ח. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. וכתב הערה"ש סי' תקפ"ג סע' ד' שיזהר ממצב של תערובות בשעת אמרית התשליך. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. מט"א סי' תקצ"ח ס"ק ז' וח' [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. מט"א שם ס"ק ה'. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. מט"א סי' תקצ"ח ס"ק ו'. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. מט"א סי' תקצ"ט ס"ק ט'. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. ש"ע סי' ת"ר סע' ב'. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)