

Sukkot



**REBUILD &
REJOICE**

A Message From SOS MOM



For a whole week we are expected to sit in the Sukkah, but the Sukkah is really a part of our hearts all year long. It is a reminder of how so much of life is temporary, and that it takes a lot of initiative to build and rebuild ourselves each year.

You may not know the halacha, the prayers or the names of the *ushpizin*. You may not know any special songs to inspire you and your Sukkah, but you know it's something you want more of. You want the opportunity to fill otherwise empty space with the joy of being a Jew in the world. That space begins at home, and that is what we at SOS MOM will continue to try and help you do.

In this kit there are three **recipes** for your Sukkot table. There are also **information sheets** about celebrating Sukkot, including some relevant blessings. Lastly, we have included some fun Sukkot **activities** that will add to the beauty and creativity of your Sukkah. These activities are fun for the whole family and a great way for your kids to express themselves as well as help each other in creating a beautiful product.

As this holiday is one that gives us the opportunity to create our own sukkah we hope you will infuse yours with symbols that help you and your family connect and pass on our unique legacy to the next generations. From our heart to yours, from our holy hut to yours, as we welcome this unique Jewish holiday, let us be reminded the power goal is to be under one sukkah of unity.

We also encourage you to invite friends and family over to indulge in your dinner as it is a tradition to have guests on Sukkot (for more information check out [Who Are Your Ushpizin?](#) on the Israel Forever website).

We ask that you don't cook any of these recipes on Shabbat, and that you don't turn your oven on on Sukkot to cook them.

We also ask that you print any articles you plan to read on Sukkot before the holiday begins. We ask the same of any articles you plan to read on Shabbat.

Please do not engage in the arts-and-crafts activities on Shabbat or the first/last days of the holiday itself.

Sukkot: Rebuild & Rejoice

The festival of insecurity, the reminder of how all things are temporary... There is something about this holiday that every mom can identify with. As our kids grow up, it isn't always easy to keep them interested. Sometimes, all we can do is help connect the dots from the past to the present in creative and imaginative ways.

What would have been of the Jews without Sukkot as a reminder? What would have been of the Jews if we forgot, if we stopped our efforts of memory, if we stopped building our temporary huts each year so that we could see the stars in the sky above? What would be if we stopped the tradition of the lulav and etrog?



Today, many Jews don't understand what these items truly symbolize. Because without them all that would be left is a show of what it has meant to be a part of the nation of Israel for the thousands of years we have carried with us our sukkot; our lulav, hadas, arava, and etrog; our faith; our joy...

Sukkot is a holiday, rich in symbolism and rituals designed to convey deep messages in a simple way.

The Sukkah connects between the two aspects of the holiday –

1. The journey of the children of Israel towards the promised land, following God through the desert, to the unknown, dependent entirely on God for survival.
2. The harvest gathered by the farmers of ancient Israel

In both cases the people of Israel dwelt in impermanent dwellings but one tells of the journey to the other – from impermanent and uncertain existence in the galut to the land where Jews can put down roots and reap the fruit of their labors.

Unless overtly religious, Orthodox or whatever stream, most just don't know why each of these species make a difference. They don't know what are the Hoshanot, or even what is the balagan at the Kotel that they keep seeing pictures of on Facebook. Why be a Jew if you don't know what it meant since the birth of our people?

To use a Sukkah for symbolic fun is great. Deepening that connection is essential, and can grow each year with the efforts of every parent, grandparent, as well of course as our educators and community leaders. They have their own platforms and communities, whereas educators have to navigate the difficult landscape of political correctness in a classroom.

At home, we can shake our words to the feelings of our heart, to the memories of the Sukkot we have grown up in every year since our own childhood. It is up to us, each one of us, with our kids, our friends, with our colleagues. It begins at home, it begins in the heart.



Eating in the Sukkah

At every meal eaten in the Sukkah say the following blessing:

*Baruch ata Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam
asher kiddishanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu
le-shev ba-sukkah.*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר
קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לֵישֵׁב בַּסֻּכָּה.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us to dwell in the Sukkah.

Waving the Lulav

Lift the lulav in your right hand and hold the etrog in your left.
Make sure the *pitom*, the brown stem of the etrog (or stem end) is pointing down.

*Baruch ata Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam
asher kiddishanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu
al netilat lulav.*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר
קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת לוּלָב.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, Who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us about waving the lulav.

Turn the etrog so the *pitom* end is pointing up. (Be very careful, especially with younger children, not to break this stem off!)
Make sure to press the lulav and etrog together and shake in all 6 directions - left, right, front, back, up, and down.



Which of the Arba Minim Are You?

Historically, Sukkot represents the wandering of the Israelites and dwelling in booths until their entry into the land of Israel. In addition to the sukkot themselves, the main symbols of the holiday are the arba minim, the four species - lulav (palm), etrog (citron), hadas (myrtle) and arava (willow). The four species can represent many things.

Some say it reflects the four types of Jews, according to the senses:

- The etrog (having both a taste and smell) represents a person who studies Torah and fulfills the mitzvot,
- the lulav (having taste but no smell) represents one who studies Torah but does not perform mitzvot,
- the myrtle (having smell but no taste) represents one who fulfills mitzvot but does not study Torah,
- and the willow (having neither taste nor smell) represents a Jew who neither studies Torah nor observes mitzvot.



It is important to note that, according to this interpretation, these therefore represent a symbol of national unity, since we need all four together in order to properly complete the mitzvah.

Others say that the four species are symbolic of ourselves - the **lips** (arava), **heart** (etrog), **spine** (lulav) and **eyes** (hadas) - all elements of how we see, act or speak, think and feel.

According to the RaMBaM (Maimonides), the Four Species are symbols of our journey. The date palm, a source of sustenance for desert nomads to this day, evokes the oases where the Israelites encamped in the Sinai Desert. The willow, growing on the banks of the Jordan River today as in antiquity, recalls the Israelites' crossing the Jordan into the land of Israel. When they entered the land and settled in its hills, the Israelites found forests and thickets where myrtle proliferated. After many generations of clearing, terracing, plowing, and planting, the Israelites could grow grain and fruit and even the demanding citron.

ACTIVITY 1: Write a quiz together with this title, modeled after those from teen/tween magazines, that you can print and have as a fun activity for any of your guests throughout Sukkot!

ACTIVITY 2: Print and color this page, and discuss why these different body parts are important and how they can add to Jewish practice or identity.

WILLOW

relates to the lips through which we speak out for others.



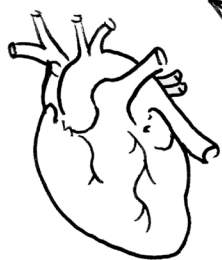
LULAV

represents the spine with which we stand strong.



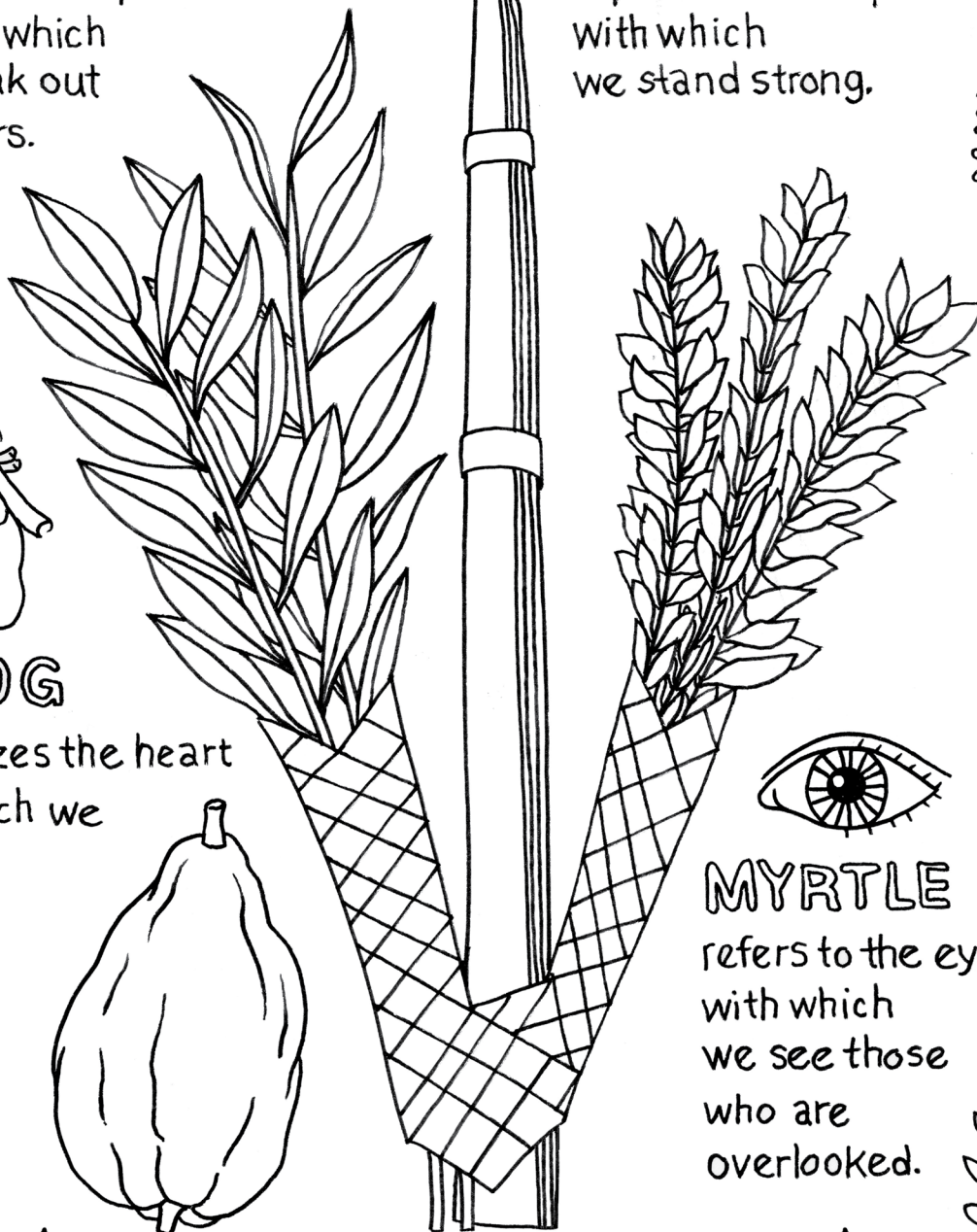
ETROG

symbolizes the heart with which we feel for others.



MYRTLE

refers to the eyes with which we see those who are overlooked.



Lulav and Etrog Symbolism of the 4 Species



Luscious Lemon and Herb Chicken Thighs

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tsp zaatar
- ¼ cup rosemary
- 2 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 tsp oregano
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup olive oil
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 kg chicken thighs

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine oil, lemon juice, and seasonings.
2. Mix well, making sure to massage the flavor under the skin into the thigh meat.
3. Marinate for 1 hour or overnight, grill over a medium hot fire.
4. Baste as needed with marinade, turning periodically until cooked through with meat just turning opaque at the bone.



Fun With Figs

by *Natasha Rosenstock Nadel*

INGREDIENTS

- 5 figs
- 1 teaspoon raw honey
- Cinnamon
- 1 Tablespoon pistachios (It's up to you if you like them raw, roasted or salted)

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 350.
2. Slice the tops off of the figs. Scoop out a tiny bit of fig to make space for the pistachios. (You can just pop those pieces in your mouth so you don't, G-d forbid, waste any food!)
3. Spray a small Corningware-type pan or cover a cookie sheet with parchment paper.
4. Mix the pistachios with the honey and stuff a few pistachios inside each fig.
5. Shake a bit of cinnamon over each fig.
6. Place them on the baking sheet and bake for 10 minutes. (Watch the pistachios closely to make sure they don't burn.)
7. Serve warm as a new fruit appetizer for Sukkot or as a dessert with non-dairy ice cream.



Rosemary Focaccia

from the chefs at *Puzzle Israel*



INGREDIENTS

- ½ kg white flour
- ½ kg whole wheat flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon dry yeast
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 600-700 ml cold water
- fresh rosemary, finely chopped (dried, freshly chopped or frozen)

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat up the oven to 450F (250C).
2. Mix the dry ingredients (except the salt) in a bowl.
3. Add the water and start mixing with one hand in the center of the bowl.
4. After 3 minutes of mixing, add the olive oil, salt and chopped rosemary and continue mixing from the center out, filling the dough with air for 5-10 minutes.
5. Cover with a plastic bag for 1 hour.
6. Add three tablespoons of chopped rosemary.
7. Add three tablespoons of flour and mix the dough for 1 minute taking the air out.
8. Cover for 1 more hour.
9. Shape 6-8 balls of dough using a good amount of flour so the dough does not stick to your hands.
10. Roll out each ball of dough, 2-3 cm thick.
11. Sprinkle some olive oil and salt.
12. Place dough on a pan and put in the oven until brown and crispy.

B'TEAVON AND ENJOY!!

ACTIVITY

Cloth Print

This activity is to decorate a cloth that you will hang in your sukkah or use as a tablecover. This activity is great for little kids to get excited for the *chag*, as well as a great way for your older kids to engage their artistic sides and do something off their screens. It'll also be a great memento for years to come.

SUPPLIES:

- Pomegranates
- Forks
- 1 large cloth
- Paint and brushes
- Plastic plates for paint

DIRECTIONS:

1. Lay the cloth onto a table or floor
2. Cut the pomegranates into half.
3. Stick a fork into the rounded uncut side and press into the paint color of choice.
4. Make an impression on the cloth of the painted pomegranate, either in random places or a specific pattern - such as a border, or a Star of David, or the word Chai/יח.

FOR NATURAL DYE you can squeeze the juice of a pomegranate into a bowl and use that to make the colored impressions. This ancient practice of dyeing with natural materials can open up a conversation for you and your family about how the Jews have decorated their Sukkot for thousands of years!



ACTIVITY

Make Your Own Challah Cover

Have your kids create their very own challah cover with personal touches to be used at Shabbat or holiday dinners!



SUPPLIES:

- 2 pieces of 11"x 17" fabric
- Fabric markers
- Scissors
- Hot glue
- 3-5 Shabbat or holiday images you want to include
ex: challah, Star of David, kippah, siddur (prayer book), Torah, candlesticks, Israeli flag, kiddush cup, lulav and etrog, etc.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Look up, print and cut out the Judaic symbols you want to include on your challah cover
2. Trace desired images onto one of the pieces of fabric with a fabric marker
3. Cut out images from fabric
4. Use the hot glue to adhere the images onto the other piece of fabric
5. Let glue dry on a flat surface so the images stay in place before moving onto the next step
6. Write שבת טוב or שבת שלום with fabric or with a fabric maker
7. Draw extra details onto the almost finished challah cover
8. Allow time to fully dry before using on Shabbat

NOTE: We love the collage effect, but if you have younger kids or don't have hot glue, you could always use 1 piece of fabric and trace directly on to it. Also feel free to experiment with puffy paint or other fabric paints, instead of or in addition to the markers. Just have fun with it, and make your kids proud of their contribution to your table.

Where Can I Find More?

Sukkot

- [Learn more](#) on Israel Forever
- Get [beautiful art posters](#) celebrating Jewish unity
- Download [your favorite images](#) and add Israel to your sukkah

Simchat Torah

As Sukkot comes to an end, we celebrate the Torah as the tree of life. Simchat Torah is the joyous celebration of the gift that changed our people and, in turn, changed the world.

- Make your own flags every year - no one is ever too young or too old to raise their flag for Jewish pride!
- Explore the beauty of the Torah in [this powerful photo essay](#).

A true example of someone who loved the Jewish people, we are always inspired by the words of the late Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, OBM, the former chief rabbi of England. We recommend you take some time to read his words.



[The Festival of Insecurity:
A Message for Sukkot](#)



[Dance with the Law:
A Message for Simchat Torah](#)