

### **How to Celebrate Shavuos 5778:**

1. Shabbos immediately precedes Shavuos this year. Therefore, one should ideally light a two or three day Yahrzeit candle prior to Friday evening candle lighting, so that there will be a pre-existing flame from which the women may light from on Saturday and Sunday evening.
2. One is not permitted to prepare for Yom Tov on the preceding Shabbos. Therefore, **For this year of 5778, the earliest time to make preparations for Yom Tov, light Yom Tov candles, and to make Kiddush on Saturday night is 9:32 PM.** (It would be more ideal after 9:37 PM or even more ideal after 9:52 PM.)
3. One makes 2 blessings on the candle lighting: One for the Mitzvah of lighting the Yom Tov candles and the other "Shehechyanu" blessing. Ideally, the women should light by the time the men arrive home from Shul. However, if they did not, they may light the entire night.
4. One may sleep on Shabbos; thereby having the strength to stay up Shavuos night. However, one should not express this before sleeping, as such a verbalization would degrade the holiness of the day.
5. One should ideally finish eating Shalosh Seudos before **5:00 PM** in order to be hungry for the Yom Tov meal. Additionally, one should ideally daven Shabbos Mincha before eating Shalosh Seudos. If one forgot or was negligent and did not eat the third meal in time, it may still be eaten afterwards. However, a full meal should not be eaten then.
6. There is a well known minhag to bring flowers into shul and one's home as a remembrance that on Shavuos we are judged on "Peiros Ha'ilon" - fruits. However, one should not cut off branches from fruit bearing trees for this purpose because of the Torah prohibition of "Bal Tashchis".
7. Kiddush on the first night should include blessings of 1) Wine, 2) Kiddush, 3) Candle, 4) Havdala, 5) Shehechyanu.
8. Many have the minhag to eat a milchige [dairy] meal (and milk and honey) on Shavuos. However, one is also obliged to eat fleishig [beef] to be yotze [discharges his obligation of] Simchas Yom Tov with meat.
9. In order to satisfy all opinions, it is preferable to have a meat meal both in the evening and in the day of both days of Yom Tov [4 meals], and to have a dairy meal or snack in the day before your meat meal.
10. If one finds it difficult to eat meat so late at night, there are opinions that permit you to eat dairy meals at night.
11. **All agree that you should have meat meals at least one time on each of the two days of Yom Tov.**
12. If one eats milchig but not "hard cheese" (which requires one to wait six hours before eating meat) one need not bentch and wash again before eating meat. However, one should wash his /her mouth well and the tablecloth should be changed. (Other poskim require one to bentch).
13. There is a custom to stay up the night of Shavuos and learn Torah. This is based on the Midrash which says that the Jewish people overslept the night before Matan Torah and Hashem had to awaken them to receive the Torah. Therefore we stay up all night to rectify their oversight.
14. The Arizal [The Kabbalist Rabbi Yitzchok Luria] writes that one who does not sleep the night of Shavuos and toils in Torah is assured to live out the year and no harm will occur to him.
15. There is a compilation of Torah learning known as "Tikkun Lay'l Shavuos," which has The Zohar and the writings of The Ari'zal as its source, and many have the minhag to say/learn this on Shavuos night.
16. Generally women should not say the "Tikkun Lay'l Shavuos". However, some say that a woman who counted all the days of Sefiras Ha'omer may learn the portions of the Tikkun which are from Tanach.
17. One who stayed awake all night of Shavuos should immediately, at Alos Hashachar wash one's hands for Netilas Yadayim without a beracha, and listen to Birchos Hatorah from someone who slept, before one continues to learn.
18. Before Shachris one should use the restroom, wash his hands and then make the berachos of "al netilas yadayim" and "asher yotzar".
19. One who stayed awake all night should not make a beracha on his tzitzis. Rather, he should make the beracha on his Tallis Gadol and have in mind to be yotze for his tzitzis with the same beracha. Someone who does not wear a Tallis Gadol, should hear the beracha from someone else who will discharge his obligation.
20. One who stayed awake all night should listen to the berachos of "Elokai Neshama" and "Hamaveir Shayna Mayeinai" from someone who slept during the night.
21. One who goes to sleep after Alos Hashachar Shavuos morning (or on any day) does not say the beracha of Hamapil.
22. To summarize, for those who have stayed awake all night, the minhag of Ashkenazim is that after Alos Hashachar (**3:57 AM**) one goes to the bathroom, washes ones hands, makes al netilas yadayim, and asher yatzar, and then listens to and is yotze [discharges his obligation of] Birchos Hatorah, Elokai Neshama, and birchas Hamaavir Chevlei Sheynah, from someone who slept, and then one says all rest of the usual morning berachos for oneself.
23. While reciting Birchos Hatorah on Erev Shavuos, one may clearly stipulate that his berachos should be in effect **only** until the next morning. In this case, he may recite the berachos on Shavuos morning although he did not sleep.
24. If no person who slept is available, many poskim rule that the berachos of Elokai Neshama and Hamaavir Chevlei Sheynah may be recited even by one who did not sleep.
25. One may not make any Yom Tov preparations on the first day of Yom Tov for the second night, light candles, or make Kiddush until after **9:33 PM.**
26. Second night candle lighting is done in the same way as on the first night. Kiddush has the blessings on 1) Wine, 2) Kiddush, and 3) Shehechyanu. It does not have blessings for the Candle or Havdala.