



Chabad Lubavitch of Maine

Simchat Torah
UNDER THE STARS
IN OUR LARGE OPEN TENT

FUN FOR ALL AGES! ALL SOCIAL DISTANCING
PRECAUTIONS WILL BE OBSERVED.

**Oct 10, 7:00 pm
& Oct 11, 11:00 am**

Dear Friends,

As the month of holidays starts winding down, we always go out with a bang! The final days of Sukkot Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah are the most joyous days on the Jewish calendar, celebrating the conclusion of the annual Torah reading cycle.

But before we even read the Torah, we start celebrating. We dance through the night, and then again in the morning, with closed scrolls. This is a

celebration that belongs to every Jew, even those that aren't proficient in Torah, and those who have never studied it at all.

The scrolls remain closed during the celebration to remind us that Torah belongs to everyone, and that every single Jew can access it if he or she chooses to.

And even in a year like this one, where the typical Simchat Torah celebrations may not be the same as usual, the message remains the same: Torah belongs to each and every single one of us equally.

See below the Simchat Torah schedule, we look forward to greeting you! We will be outdoors in our tent at Chabad, and all social distancing precautions will be observed.

For those of you that are unable to attend in person, we have compiled a list of 10 useful tips for spending Simchat Torah at home.

Chag sameach!

Rabbi Wilansky

Schedule:

Hoshana Rabah // October 9

Candle lighting: 5:49 pm

Mincha: 6:00 pm

Followed by Maariv and Hakafot

Shemini Atzeret // October 10

Shacharit: 10:00 am

Yizkor: 12:00 pm

Followed by Kiddush luncheon

Mincha: 6:00 pm

Candle lighting: After 6:48 pm *Light from an existing flame

Followed by Maariv and Hakafot

Simchat Torah // October 11

Shacharit: 10:00 am

Followed by Hakafot and Kiddush luncheon

Holiday ends: 6:46 pm

TIPS FOR SIMCHAT TORAH AT HOME:

1. PREPARE FESTIVE FEASTS

The two days of Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah contain at least four festive meals, so make sure to prepare accordingly. In addition to wine (or grape juice), challah and other delicacies, note that some have a tradition ([read why here](#)) to serve stuffed cabbage, known in Yiddish as *kholoptches*. (Also note that since Shemini Atzeret is Shabbat, all food for that day must be cooked in advance.)

Read: [Miriams Decadent Easy Stuffed Cabbage Recipe and Other Great Recipes](#)

2. CRAFT FLAGS

A classic element of the Simchat Torah celebration is for children to join the festive dancing in synagogue while waving flags. This year the little ones can have their own colorful homemade flags to flutter around your home-turned-sanctuary.

Not sure how to make one? Print these Simchat Torah coloring pages, which you can then mount on the cardboard shaft of a dry cleaners hanger or another handy stick well in advance of the holiday.

Print: [Simchat Torah Flag to Color](#)

3. PREPARE YOUR FAVORITE DRINKS

It is customary (but not at all mandatory) for adults to responsibly enjoy a little *lechaim* before (and during) the Simchat Torah services. If you can safely do so, have a little something special to help you and your adult loved ones get into the Simchat Torah spirit. For kids (and adults who cannot drink), perhaps get some sparkling grape juice or another treat.

4. LIGHT FESTIVE CANDLES

Like Shabbat and other holidays, the two nights of Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah are celebrated in the warm glow of holiday candles (married women light at least two, and single girls light one). If you are in a male-only household, one of the guys should light candles for everyone. (Note that since the first night is Shabbat, the candles must be lit 18 minutes before sunset, and on the following night they must only be lit after night has fallen and from a pre-existing flame.)

[Print the Appropriate Blessings in Advance](#)

[When to Light in My Area](#)

5. PRAY @ HOME

The Simchat Torah prayers follow the standard holiday procedure, with the addition of Hakafotthe joyous chanting of verses and circling the synagogue with Torah scrolls in hand (well get to that later).

With the exception of Kaddish, the Barechu call to prayer, the repetition of the Amidah, and the Torah reading, you can pray anywhere in the world, including your home.

So make sure you have a siddur handy (Simchat Torah services are all in the standard Siddur) and a place set aside to serve as your ad hoc shul. If you are with others, pray together. Even though you don't make a minyan, you can say the words and sing the songs together.

[Print This Handy Guide to Prayer at Home in Advance](#)

6. PARADE AROUND WITH A CHUMASH

On both the evening (Oct. 10) and morning (Oct. 11) of Simchat Torah (as well as the eve of Shemini Atzeret (Oct. 9), according to Chassidic custom), it is customary to perform Hakafot ("circles"), which involve reciting a medley of verses from the Torah, while joyously dancing with the Torahs around the Torah-reading table seven times. The entire proceeding can be found in your standard Siddur (pp. 383-388 in the Kehot Annotated Edition), and you can do this at home, circling your dining room table or the furniture of your choice, holding a Chumash (the printed version of the [Five Books of Moses](#)), another holy book, or even some Torah content you printed from Chabad.org before the holiday. As you make your sacred circles, know that you are bringing the sublime Simchat Torah energy directly into our home.

[Print the Complete Hakafot Service \(PDF\)](#)

7. READ THE TORAH READING

Chances are that you do not have a Torah scroll at home. However, it is still ideal to read through the Torah reading of the day. This is especially so on Simchat Torah morning, when the reading includes both [VZot HaBerachah](#), which concludes the Torah, as well as the start of the opening portion, [Bereishit](#). You can find the reading in a Chumash or starting on page 484 in the Chabad Siddur.¹

Print: [Parshah Articles to Read on the Holiday](#)

8. SING AND DANCE!

The Chassidic masters tell us that joy breaks through all barriers. When we sing and dance in our homes this year, our joy will pierce through the walls and miles that may separate us from our fellow Jews, and make us into one mass of shimmying, singing, swaying, and soaring souls. So get ready to elevate your home, put on your dancing shoes, and, whenever you feel the need, belt out those Simchat melodies like no one is watching. (Right, no one is watching.)

Practice: [A Classic Chabad Simchat Torah Tune](#)

9. ENJOY FESTIVE MEALS

Simchat Torah marks the end of a long season of holiday meals that began more than three weeks prior with apples and honey on Rosh Hashanah eve. In addition to enjoying delicious food, we recommend printing up some stories and Torah thoughts to spice up your repasts.

Print: [Simchat Torah Essays and Stories](#)

10. GET A HEAD START ON THE YEAR

Simchat Torah starts the annual Torah reading cycle. It is customary to read one part of the weekly portion (parshah) each day, finishing on Shabbat. Since Simchat Torah is on Sunday this year, this is your time to learn the opening portion of Bereishit, in which we read the amazing process by which Gd created Heaven and Earth. This is the optimal time to get on board of the daily study cycle, so that you will complete the entire Torah and Rashi in time for next Simchat Torah.

Print: [Bereishit Parshah Articles](#)

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