

Getting Ready for Pesach, Step by Step

Here is Rabbi Ruhi Sophia's guide for those who are managing their own seder for the first time.

ASAP:

- Decide what Haggadah you will use and acquire it (*see some suggestions farther down on this page*)
- Have a household conversation about goals for the seder, which could include:
 - Traditional Passover liturgy
 - Singing Passover Songs together
 - Being silly together
 - Having interesting conversation about how we do liberation today
 - Any other you come up with (My family's seder goals are usually all of the above, and our Seders are very long! You decide what your goals are, and how much of the liturgy to focus on, how much open conversation time, etc.)

In the next two weeks:

- Clean your house as best you can, getting rid of food containing the five forbidden grains: wheat, spelt, barley, rye and oats, or "quarantining" (see what I did there?) all of them to one spot in your house and...
- Sell your hametz (either entrusting me or Chabad to do so on your behalf)
- Plan a menu for seder night. I grew up having vegetarian seders; some of my favorite recipes are spinach cheese squares and quinoa stuffed mushrooms). You can also google lots of other Pesach recipes online. Or you can keep it minimalist: eat the traditional seder plat foods plus just some soup and salad.
- Buy matzah, maror, and wine/grape juice

In the final days leading up to Pesach:

- Finish cleaning your house
- Clean out your oven (self-clean cycle, if it has one)
- [Kasher any dishes that you can](#), (and you decide how far to go with this) and/or pull out Pesach dishes

Day before first night:

- Advance prep cooking and shopping
- Make charoset (It takes a day or two to sit and absorb flavors. There are many recipes, from many Jewish traditions. Ashkenazi recipes like [this one](#) usually have fewer ingredients, whereas Sephardi recipes [like these](#) feature more dried fruit and spices.)
- Boil eggs (if not vegan)

Bedikat Chametz (check web page for exact date)

Day of first night:

- Set table, make sure you have:
 - Wine in glasses plus more for future glasses and Elijah's cup
 - Salt water for dipping parsley and eggs
 - Napkins for people to wipe fingers after dripping wine for the 10 plagues
 - 3 Matz in a covered stack
 - Special napkin or other cloth to be afikomen cover
 - Seder plate with parsley, maror, charoset, egg (or vegan substitute), shankbone (or veg substitute)
 - Some people put an orange on the seder plate, or other additions (see the supplemental materials)