

# BEING AN ONEN

## Onen Restrictions

An onen is prohibited from doing positive mitzvot so as not to be distracted from taking care of the dead body.

An onen may not:

- Do any positive commandment (no blessings, prayers, shema...).
- Eat meat or drink wine (until after the burial).
- Work or operate a business.

**NOTE** Before the relative dies, if possible, the onen should sell his business for whatever days he or she will be an onen and in shiv'a. Otherwise, the owner may have to close the business until shiv'a is over.

**NOTE** If there will be a large financial loss, consult a rabbi. A large loss is subjective to the individual's actual wealth and also to that person's perception of what is a large loss. Consult a rabbi for how much constitutes a large loss.

## Onen Traveling with Body

An onen who accompanies a body to a foreign country for burial may have two extra days (or more) of onenut. If the onen then returns home and joins other mourners in the shiv'a house, the onen may end shiv'a with the other family members. (For more details, see [When Shiv'a \(and Shloshim\) Starts: Normal Days](#).)

## Being an Onen: Saying Kaddish

Some communities have the custom of an onen's saying kaddish.

**NOTE** When a person's parent dies on or just before (erev) Shabbat or a Jewish festival, a daughter of any age should not be told until after Shabbat or the festival is over. A son should only be told if he is 6 years old and above and the custom in that community is to say kaddish as an onen.