Jewish Festivals: Candles: Earliest Time To Light

You may not light <u>Jewish festival</u> (or <u>Shabbat</u>) candles before <u>plag ha'mincha</u>. The candles must burn until at least dark (<u>tzeit ha'kochavim</u>) and someone must be there to see the light from the candles after dark.

SITUATION *Mincha minyan* begins at *plag ha'mincha*. You cannot light candles at home and still get to *mincha minyan* on time.

WHAT TO DO You may light a candle without a blessing, just so you can have a flame for after the festival has begun. You go to *synagogue* and after *ma'ariv* you return home and light the candles from the flame which was burning from before sunset. If you will not have a flame burning from before sunset, you must say *mincha* on your own (anytime from half an hour after mid-day until sunset). You will light candles after *plag ha'mincha* but before sunset and not join the *mincha minyan*. Women should skip *mincha* and light candles either 18 minutes before sunset or have a flame burning from before sunset and light candles from that flame once the festival has begun (but she may not light from a new flame or a match).

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