SHEMA: HOW TO SAY

Covering Eyes for First Line of Shema

Cover your eyes with either hand when saying the first line of *shema*. This is to help prevent distraction. There is no need to remove your glasses first.

NOTE Covering your eyes for the *shema* is a widespread custom, not a *halacha*.

"Stretching Out" Echad in Shema

Stretch out the first line of the *shema* by pausing after saying "*echad*" and before saying <u>Baruch shem kevod</u> malchuto l'olam va'ed.

NOTE

- It is incorrect to stretch out the "*chet*" + vowel sound (*chaaaaaad*).
- It is incorrect (and much worse) to say a vowel sound after the "*dalet*" (*echadihhh!*), since that changes the word and by doing so, you are not saying the *shema*.
- The "*dalet*" stops the sound and should not be pronounced as a syllable.

Kissing Tzitziyot in Shema

Kiss all four *tzitziyot* in a *talit gadol* when saying the *shema*. Just kiss the front two *tzitziyot* if you only wear a *talit katan*. Doing either one is a non-binding custom, not a *halacha*.

© Copyright 2025 Richard B. Aiken | www.practicalhalacha.com