

SHEVA BRACHOT

Introduction to Sheva Brachot

At the end of the wedding meal, the seven blessings (sheva brachot) are said in birkat ha'mazon. The final blessing is on wine. This is the only required festive meal after the wedding. Any festive meal on the subsequent six days is optional but, when held, all the blessings are required.

Sheva Brachot: Celebration Period

If the bride and/or groom had never been married before, there are seven days of celebration (don't go to work, no tachanun). If both bride and groom were married before, there is one day of sheva brachot (in birkat ha'mazon) at the meal eaten after the chuppa, but three days of celebration (don't go to work, no tachanun).

NOTE Neither husband nor wife should go to work; however, if the husband gives his wife permission, she may work.

How Many Present at Sheva Brachot

To be able to say the special blessings after a festive sheva brachot meal, there must be present at least:

- 10 Jewish males at least 13 years old, and
- One person (male or female) who was not present at the wedding or at any meals since then with the bride and groom.

Sheva Brachot: Order of Blessings

The order of blessings is the same every time sheva brachot are said--except under the chuppa, when the first blessing is borei pri ha'gafen.

NOTE At all other times, borei pri ha'gafen is the final blessing.

NOTE If the blessings are said out of order, it is OK.

Sheva Brachot: What To Eat in order To Bless

A man saying any of the seven blessings does not need to have eaten bread at that meal, but he must have eaten enough food (anything except water or salt) to say an after-blessing.

Sheva Brachot: When to Bless

At any meal with bread that was made to honor the bride and groom during the first week of marriage, say the introductory lines each time (dvei haser...; the leader says the leader's lines and everyone else says their lines), even if you have two or more such meals in one day.

Sheva Brachot: Who Drinks

1. Under the chuppa, the groom and bride drink the wine.
2. At the meals, the sheva brachot leader plus the bride and groom drink, and anyone else who wants to drink may do so.

Sheva Brachot: Over Which Cups To Bless

- Birkat ha'mazon is made on one cup of wine at sheva brachot.
- The first six sheva brachot blessings are made on the second cup.

- Borei pri ha'gafen is made on the first cup.

Sheva Brachot: Mixing the Cups

After the blessings have been said:

- Pour some wine from the two cups into a third cup.
- Pour some wine back into the first two cups.
- The bride, groom, and person who made the blessing each drink from a different cup.

NOTE Each cup will contain some wine from each of the original two cups on which the blessings had been made.