

CUSTOMS (MINHAG)

CUSTOMS (MINHAG): HOW THEY BECOME HALACHA

Observance of Customs (Minhag)

Any custom that has been accepted by the entire Jewish world or an entire Jewish community becomes halacha; it is then required to be observed by members of that community.

CUSTOMS (MINHAG): ADOPTING

Changing Your Customs (Minhag) in New Community

When moving to a community with customs different from your own, adopt the customs of your new community but ONLY:

- If you intend to stay in that new community, and
- If the entire community follows the same customs.

NOTE An Ashkenazi who moves to a Sefardi community could eat kitniyot on Passover but would have to wake up extremely early for selichot and say them for the month of Elul, so think carefully about the trade-off!

Adopting Customs (Minhag) If You Are Newly Observant (Ba'al Teshuva)

A newly observant Jew (ba'al teshuva) may:

- Follow the customs of the person who teaches him to be religious, or
- Follow the dominant custom in the community, or
- Revert to the customs of his ancestors, if their customs are known.