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.

© Copyright 2026 Richard B. Aiken | www.practicalhalacha.com