JEWISH FESTIVALS: CANDLES

JEWISH FESTIVALS: CANDLES: WHO LIGHTS

Jewish Festivals: Candles: One Person per Home

Like *Shabbat* candles, *Jewish festival* candles should be lit only by one person per home. Priority order: wife; then husband; then children.

It is customary for each married woman to light candles on each festival even though she is not eating in her own home and even though her hostess is already lighting candles. She may light her candles at her hostess's house or at her own home (but if at her own home, she must see the candles are burning after dark if she lights there).

Girls should not be encouraged to light *Jewish festival* candles except when no parent can.

Single people should light *Jewish festival* candles in their homes if they will eat there.

Jewish Festivals: Candles: Have Others in Mind

Whoever is lighting the *Jewish festival* candles should have in mind all other people who will be eating dinner in that home.

JEWISH FESTIVALS: CANDLES: WHEN TO LIGHT

Jewish Festivals: Candles: Earliest Time To Light

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

SITUATION *Mincha minyan* begins at *plag ha'mincha. Y*ou 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).

Jewish Festivals: Candle-Lighting Times

In most countries, candle lighting time is 18 minutes before sunset. In Jerusalem, many people have the custom of lighting candles 40 minutes before sunset.

Jewish Festivals: Candles: Lighting Two Days

The custom is to light candles:

- Before sunset on the first day of a *Jewish festival,* and
- After dark on the *Jewish festival's* second day (except when the second day coincides with *Shabbat*!).

Jewish Festivals: Candles: Lighting after Sunset

Men and women may light candles after sunset on *Jewish festivals*, with these conditions:

- You may light only from an already-burning flame.
- You may not light *Jewish festival* candles after sunset on Friday nor on the evening before *Yom Kippur* begins.

Jewish Festivals: Candles: Lighting with Delay until Sunset

As on *Shabbat*, you may say “I am lighting *Jewish festival* candles but not starting the *Jewish festival* until sunset” to delay observing the *Jewish festival* until sunset, but this in only *b'diavad*.

NOTE As for *Shabbat*, women should not routinely start *Jewish festivals* at sunset since the proper time for women to begin *Jewish festivals* is at candle lighting (typically 18 minutes before sunset).

JEWISH FESTIVALS: CANDLES: WHERE TO LIGHT

Jewish Festivals: Candles: Dinner Location

As on *Shabbat*, light *Jewish festival* candles wherever you will eat dinner that night.

NOTE If you will be eating away from home, do not light the candles at home unless you will be home for some period of time after dark (in which case you must see the candles burning for at least one minute after dark/*tzeit ha'kochavim*; otherwise you will have made a *bracha l'vatala*). This is not the ideal situation, as the ideal is to light where you will eat.

NOTE You do not need to light candles at all if you are not eating at your own home on the *Jewish festival* (this applies to men and women, even wives and mothers who normally light at their own home) as long as someone else is lighting candles where you will eat. While the basic *halacha* is that the hostess lights for everyone, it is a widespread custom for any woman who is--or was--married to light at the hostess's home.

JEWISH FESTIVALS: CANDLES: HOW MANY TO LIGHT

Jewish Festivals: Candles: How Many Required To Light

As on *Shabbat*, wives should light two candles for *Jewish festivals*, even though we say the blessing over “ner” (“candle” in the singular). Lighting any more than two candles is a universal custom**.**

Jewish Festivals: Candles: How Many To Light when Eating Elsewhere

A wife lighting *Jewish festival* candles in a place other than her own home lights only two candles, even if she normally lights more than two candles in her own home. This is a non-binding custom, not a *halacha*.

Jewish Festivals: Candles: Adding a Candle

Unlike on *Shabbat*, on *Jewish festivals* you do not add an extra candle to the number you normally light for the rest of your life if you miss lighting *Jewish festival* candles.

JEWISH FESTIVALS: CANDLES: HOW LONG TO BURN

Jewish Festivals: Candles: How Long Candles Must Burn

As on *Shabbat*, *Jewish festivals* candles must burn at least until you have eaten the bread of *ha'motzi*.

JEWISH FESTIVALS: CANDLES: HOW TO LIGHT

Jewish Festivals: Candles: Lighting before Blessing

On the first day of *Jewish festivals*, both women and men may say the blessing before lighting the candles, but it is customary for women to light before they say the blessing, as they do on *Shabbat*.

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