

MOTZI MATZA: BLESS ON/EAT MATZA

MATZA: WHY

Matza: Meaning

Matza represents:

- Food of poor people, and
- The unleavened bread that the Israelites ate when leaving Egypt.

NOTE A pun reflects this dual meaning of poor bread plus the story of leaving Egypt, since “lechem oni” may mean “bread of poor people” or “bread of (many) answers.”

MATZA: WHAT KIND

When Shmura Matza Is Necessary

The only time you must use shmura matza is for the four commandments of motzi, matza, koreich, and afikoman.

NOTE You may use any other kosher for Passover matza, even for the rest of seder. There is no need for using shmura matza for the other days of Passover.

Hand Shmura Matza or Machine Shmura Matza

Hand shmura matza has some advantage in that it was made with the intention of being for a mitzva, but machine shmura matza has the advantage of being less likely to become chametz since it is automated and not touched by human hands.

MATZA: HOW MUCH

How Much Matza To Eat

Motzi, Matza

For motzi and matza together, you must eat at least 1.9 fl. oz. (56 ml) of matza within a 4-minute period from when you begin eating.

Afikoman

For afikoman, you must eat another 1.9 fl. oz of matza; b'di'avad, at least 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup) is sufficient.

NOTE This amount is about 1/2 of a machine shmura matza, or 1/3 of a hand shmura matza.

NOTE If your mouth is too dry to eat that quickly, you may drink water with the matza.

MOTZI/MATZA: BLESSINGS

Why Two Blessings over Matza

We say two blessings over the matza: ha'motzi lechem min ha'aretz and al achilat matza.

REASON The blessing on motzi is one of enjoyment (nehenin); the blessing on matza is a blessing on a commandment (mitzva).

How To Do Motzi and Matza

The seder leader says the blessing “ha'motzi” while holding the three (which are now 2 1/2) shmura matzas, drops the bottom one, and says the next blessing, al achilat matza. Everyone takes a small piece from the two top matzas and eats it, along with enough additional shmura matza to fulfill the minimum requirement.

