# SHABBAT: CANDLES: WHEN TO LIGHT

## Shabbat: Candles: Earliest Time To Light

You may not light *Shabbat* (or *Jewish festival*) 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*. You cannot light candles at home and still get to *mincha minyan* on time.

WHAT TO DO 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*.

## Shabbat: Candles: Normal Lighting Times

In many countries, candle lighting time is 18 minutes before sunset.

NOTE In Jerusalem, many people have the custom of lighting candles 40 minutes before sunset.

## Shabbat: Candles: Lighting with Delay until Sunset

Under extenuating circumstances, women may make a "condition" by saying "I am lighting *Shabbat* candles but not starting *Shabbat* until sunset" to delay *Shabbat* until sunset, when it will begin anyway.

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

REASON An opinion exists that *Shabbat* actually begins at 18 minutes before sunset; that is the origin of this time for women to begin *Shabbat*.

## Shabbat: Candles: Latest Time To Light

You may not light after sunset (or after whatever time the entire community starts *Shabbat* if they start *Shabbat* before sunset).

NOTE If a woman lights candles after sunset, she not only violates *Shabbat* but she must light one extra candle on every subsequent *Shabbat* for the rest of her life.

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