

An Outline of the Seder for Children

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The table is set, the food is prepared, the children are READY...the curtain rises on a national drama . . .

The outline presented here is primarily for the purpose of indicating ways in which children can be incorporated into the ritual. [Suggestions for children will appear in blue.](#)

NOTE: THIS OUTLINE IS NOT BY ANY MEANS A COMPLETE DESCRIPTION.

Procedures and Berakhot (Blessings) can found in any Haggadah.

- Candlelighting:** Candles should be lit in a place where they can remain unmoved. [If there is space, each child can light his or her own candle \(with adult help as necessary\).](#) After candlelighting and before Kiddush is the best time to introduce the song that tells the order of the seder and/or other ways of keeping track of the seder's progress.
- Kadesh:** Traditionally, the leader of the seder should not have to pour his own wine - he is celebrating his freedom in royal fashion! [An older child with a good pouring arm can be given the job of "wine steward."](#)
- Urḥatz:** This is the first washing, which is performed without a Berakhah. [An older child can be commissioned to carry the water, cup and towel from guest to guest or to the leader only.](#)
- Karpas:** As mentioned earlier, when the Berakhah is said over the karpas, it becomes open season on vegetables! A generous supply of a variety of cut vegetables will help everyone, from three to 83, to maintain attention without distracting hunger pangs.
- Yahatz:** Once the middle matzah is broken, the children will want to get their hands on that Afikoman. [Traditionally, children can either look for it after it is hidden by the leader, or they can try to get it away from him at the table itself. The "taking" method keeps the children at the table for more of the time, and prevents the newly cleaned house from being given the once-over by wandering pint-sized gangs! It is highly recommended that the taking and ransoming are a group project for all of the children, and therefore each of them receives a prize when it is returned at the end of the meal.](#)

- Maggid:** After an opening, the Maggid proceeds with [the four questions](#). Following an indirect answer to these questions, we turn to "The Four Children". [The real children at the table can be asked why each of the sons described acted the way that he did](#). More selections from the Haggadah follow. [After this section, the children can provide their enactment of the story, interviews, or other story-related activities](#). We then enjoy the rousing seder song Daiyeinu. If you would like to give your seder a new twist, provide each guest with a leek right before the song. When the chorus of "Dai, daiyeinu" is sung, each person slaps his neighbors with his onion! This is a custom that was practiced by some of the Jews of Iran. The next section, "Rabban Gamliel Hayah Omer" is on the "required listening" list. This selection describes some of the items on the seder plate - the "Passover sacrifice," the matzah, and the maror. [The children can be asked to explain why the egg, the karpas, and the haroset are included](#). At the end of the Maggid we drink the second cup of wine.
- Rahtzah:** At this point, we all wash hands and say the Berakhah for handwashing. [As previously mentioned, a child can help with this procedure](#).
- Motzi, Matzah:** The Motzi and special Berakhah for the Matzah is said, and FINALLY we get to eat some Matzah!!!
- Maror:** Horseradish can be too much for young mouths. [Don't forget that lettuce can also be used for children AND adults!](#)
- Koreikh:** [The children can be told that on the night of the seder we remember many Jewish teachers. One is Moshe, and another is Hillel. Hillel told us to eat a "sandwich" at the seder about 2000 years ago! If they become Jewish teachers, who knows how long they will be remembered...](#)
- Shulhan Oreikh:** So far so good - we made it to dinner!
- Tzafun:** [Now, who has that Afikoman? You should know, in case the takers fall asleep or can't remember where they hid it, that a truly lost Afikoman can be replaced!](#)
- Bareikh:** Following the successful (if expensive) retrieval and sharing of the Afikoman, we sing Birkat HaMazon (the Blessing after eating), followed by the third cup of wine.

- Hallel: This section of songs of praise is ushered in by opening the door for Eliyahu (Elijah). Children can perform this task, and will probably be seen sneaking glances at the cup to see if Eliyahu has drunk his wine! Some children actually are disappointed when a personage does not appear on their doorstep. These children can be told that we may see Eliyahu with our feelings instead of with our eyes. If we can feel the peace and joy of being together, and hope that everyone everywhere can feel this way, we can think that we have been with Eliyahu! Hallel, with its wonderful, healing tunes and lyrics, follows. At the end of Hallel we have our fourth cup of wine.
- Nirtzah: We have reached the conclusion of the seder rites, but not the end of the celebration! We sing together "Next year in Jerusalem."
- Table songs: These may be found before the conclusion. Many of them can be "played" as well as sung. For instance, each person at the table can take one verse of Ehad Mi Yodea, and sing it in turn as the song counts down with each repetition. Also, the children can pass out cards with the characters in the song Had Gadya that they made while preparing for the holiday. When each guest hears his character named, he holds up the picture and makes an appropriate sound. If only the children can stay awake this long, the ending fun can become one of their favorite parts of the seder!!

A Zissen Pesah – A Sweet Passover – to all!

Hag Sameah!