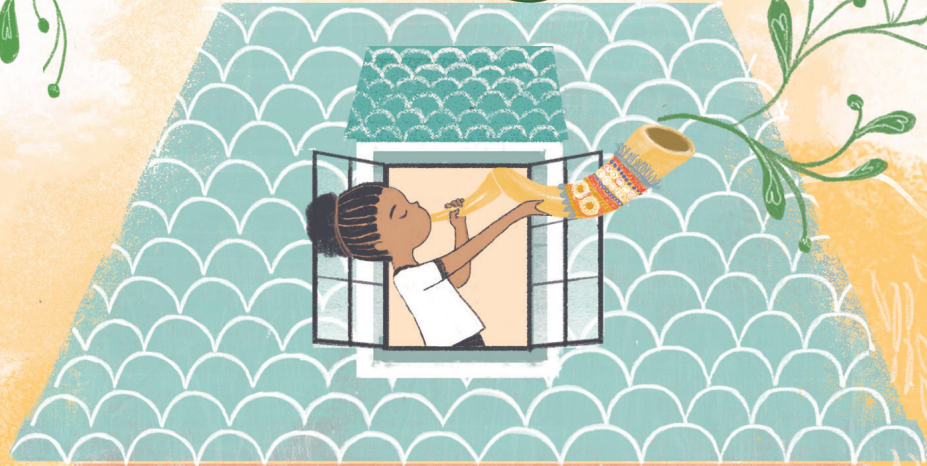


A PJ LIBRARY FAMILY GUIDE FOR STARTING THE JEWISH NEW YEAR

# A TIME TO GROW





## BLESSING FOR SITTING IN THE SUKKAH

Say this blessing  
for sitting in the  
sukkah:



בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתַי  
וְצִוָּנוּ לֵישֵׁב בַּסֻּכָּה.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, asher kideshanu  
bemitzvotav vetzivanu leishev basukkah.

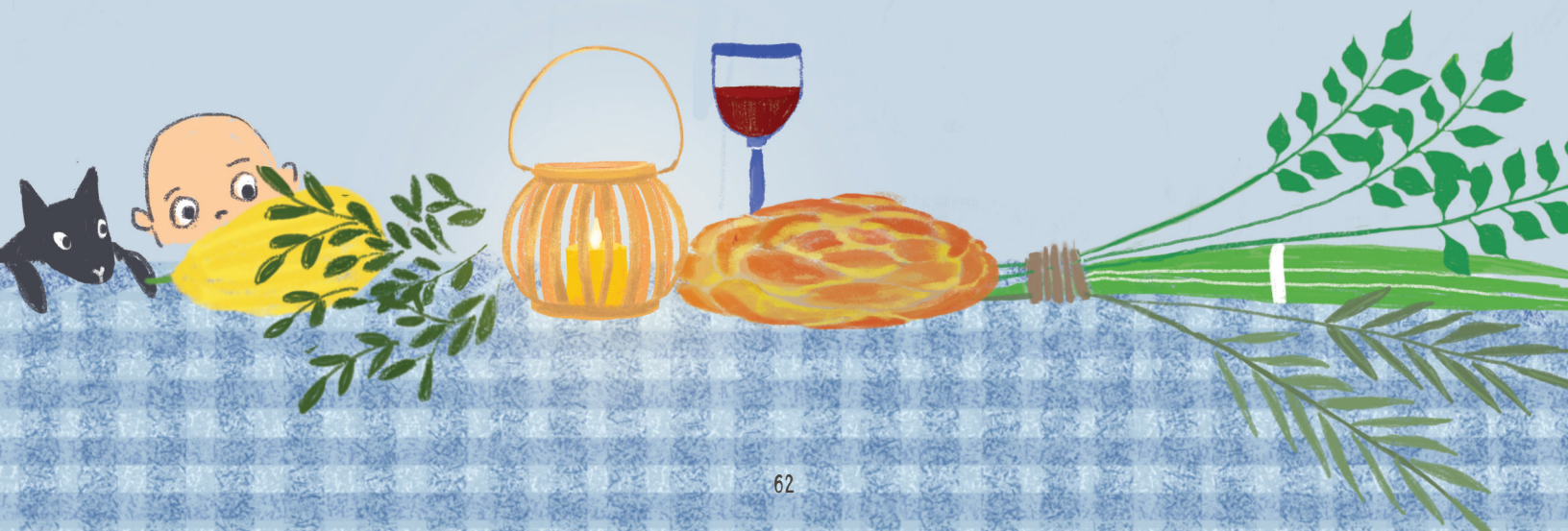
Dear God, Creator of our world, thank You for this special opportunity  
to sit in the sukkah.

When eating in the sukkah for the first time this  
year, also add the following blessing:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם  
שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, shehecheyanu  
vekiyemanu vehigi'anu lazman hazeh.

Dear God, Creator of our world, thank You for keeping us  
alive so we can celebrate this important moment.





## WASHING HANDS & EATING CHALLAH

As on Rosh Hashanah, it is traditional to dip challah in honey for Sukkot. Keep bringing in the sweetness of a new year!

For blessings on washing hands and eating challah, see page 20.

## SHAKING THE LULAV AND ETROG

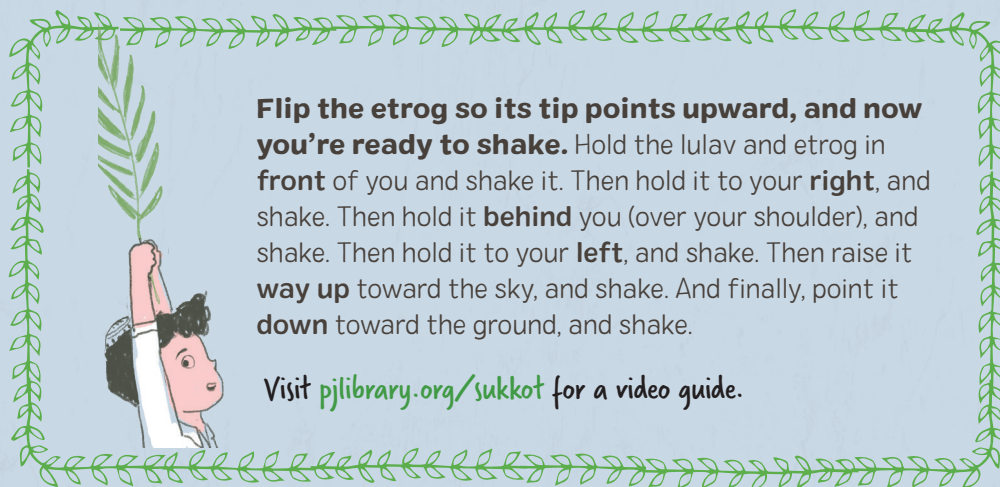
It's customary to shake a lulav and etrog in the sukkah on each morning of Sukkot. But shaking any time of day is fine, especially if you're all gathered together for a festive meal.

Hold the lulav in your right hand and the etrog in your left hand with the tip of the etrog pointing toward the ground. Bring the lulav and etrog together so they're touching and say this blessing:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ  
עַל נְטִילַת לֻלָב.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, asher kideshanu bemitzvotav  
vetzivanu al netilat lulav.

Dear God, Creator of our world, thank You for this opportunity to shake the lulav.



# SUKKOT ACTIVITIES



Sukkot is a time to gather and celebrate. Here are suggested activities your family can do in a sukkah (or in your house) to make this week a “time of joy” — in your family’s own unique way.

## INVITE REAL GUESTS ...

Sukkot is a wonderful time to host guests or be a guest. What family or friends can you get together with? Is there someone you’ve never invited over before or someone new to your community or neighborhood? Everyone enjoys eating in a **sukkah** — and everyone enjoys a little holiday hospitality.



## FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Try making a new dish to serve at home or bring as a guest. For recipe ideas, visit [pjlibrary.org/sukkot](http://pjlibrary.org/sukkot). Videoconference with relatives or friends who live far away (and maybe you haven’t spoken to in a while). Welcome them virtually into your sukkah or to your table to reconnect.

## AND IMAGINARY GUESTS

The first “sukkah” in Jewish history was built by Abraham and Sarah, the first Jews. They lived in the wilderness in a tent that was open on all sides to welcome travelers passing by. On Sukkot we return the favor: In a custom called **ushpizin** (Aramaic for “guests”), we invite Abraham and Sarah into our sukkah along with other legendary figures of the Jewish past.



## FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Go around the table discussing this question: If you could invite anyone from the past or the present (or even from a book or movie) as a guest for a meal in a sukkah, who would you invite? Why them? For extra fun, dress up as a surprise guest and show up at your own table. Have someone interview you!





## SONGS, TOASTS & MORE

In ancient Israel, people made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem during Sukkot, coming from near and far to bring part of their harvest to the Temple. On the streets, people would juggle flaming torches, do handstands, play instruments, and dance and sing, causing the rabbis to say, "If you haven't seen this celebration, you've never experienced true joy." Sukkot is a special opportunity for your family to party together!



### FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Prepare song sheets so everyone has the lyrics. Pass them around and start singing! Make a playlist with your favorite dance songs (visit [pjlibrary.org/grow](http://pjlibrary.org/grow) for some ready-to-go dance mixes) and shake your body like a lulav and etrog! Make toasts on grape juice ("**L'chaim!** To life!"). Or go mellow: Have a game night or a candlelit story hour. Read a PJ Library book while cuddling in the sukkah (a couch works too).

## STARGAZING AND SLEEPOVERS

A sukkah's roof lets us see the night sky with a full moon and stars. (Stars helped the Israelites navigate their journey through the desert wilderness.) Any evening that's not too cloudy or wet could be a good night for stargazing.

The last day of Sukkot has a special name: **Hoshana Rabbah** (basically, Hebrew for "help is on the way"). In ancient times, people would march around the Temple in Jerusalem holding the lulav and etrog, wishing for rain and good things in the year ahead. It also became customary to stay up through the night learning together. Then on the following morning — in a dramatic finale — it's traditional to hit willow boughs from the lulav against the ground until all the leaves fall off, symbolizing a final farewell to our bad actions from the past year.



### FAMILY ACTIVITIES

Pick a night for stargazing with family or friends. Combine it with a final-night sleepover, in a sukkah or in the house. In the morning, take the willow boughs from your lulav (if you have one) and hit them against the ground!