



Matzah Mania

with

PJ Library®

**COME TASTE
THE FREEDOM**

Homemade Matzah

- 1 cup flour, plus more for dusting
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 to 1/3 cup water (as needed)
- **Flavorings** (optional: we recommend finely minced herbs, lemon or orange zest, or granulated garlic or onion)

**Holy roll-y! A fun DIY
in less than 18 minutes.**

*For families who keep strictly kosher for
Passover, visit pjlibrary.org/passover
for a more detailed recipe and instructions.*

1 Place two upside-down baking sheets as high in the oven as possible. Heat the oven to 500°.

2 Heavily dust a flat surface with flour, then measure out all the ingredients; you'll need them ready before you begin mixing. Set a timer for **18 minutes**.

3 Put the flour, salt, and any of the optional flavorings into a food processor. Turn on the processor, start the timer, then slowly drizzle in water until the dough forms a ball. (Alternately, this mixing can be done by hand.)

4 Place the dough ball on the floured surface, kneading it a bit to ensure it isn't sticky. Divide it into 12 small balls. Using a rolling pin, flatten each ball into a very thin sheet (about the thickness of a lasagna noodle). Prick each sheet with a fork to prevent it from rising while it bakes.

5 Carefully remove the upside-down baking sheets from the oven and place as many flattened balls of dough as will fit on the sheet bottoms (we fit six on a 13- by 18-inch baking sheet). Return the sheets to the oven and bake for 1 to 2 minutes per side or until matzah's edges begin to brown. Remove the matzah from the oven — before your timer goes off! — and let the matzah cool on a cooling rack.

Why? If more time passes between when flour meets water and the baked pieces come out of the oven, the pieces will ferment a bit. That means they're no longer matzah!

Can you imagine a simpler recipe? Flour and water, mix and bake within 18 minutes. The Jewish people's original "fast food." Perhaps there's ancient wisdom here — a connection between freedom and keeping it simple. Matzah is a symbol of humility, of finding joy and meaning in simple things.

What makes YOU feel free this Passover?

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Matzah Trail Mix

Colorful fuel for your own Passover journey.

- 1/3 cup coconut oil
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- Pinch of salt
- 3 cups matzah farfel
- 1 cup slivered almonds
- Food coloring (optional)
- Mix-ins

(we used dried or freeze-dried fruits, nuts, shredded coconut, and chocolate chips)

- 1** Heat oven to 300°.
- 2** In a small saucepan, combine oil, honey, cinnamon, and salt. Stir gently over low heat until the oil and honey are combined.
- 3** To add pops of color, divide the oil mixture evenly between three medium-size bowls and add a few drops of food coloring to each one (we used green, blue, and purple). Place 1 cup farfel and 1/3 cup of almonds in each bowl, stirring to coat. (If you prefer to leave out the food coloring, simply combine the oil mixture, farfel, and almonds in a large bowl and stir to coat.)
- 4** Arrange the farfel mixture on a parchment-lined baking sheet, creating separate rows for each color if needed, and bake for 20 minutes.
- 5** After the mixture cools completely, break up the pieces and combine them with your favorite mix-ins.

Matzah is a symbol of the Jewish people's journey from slavery to freedom. And what a start to that journey — in the middle of the night, beneath a gleaming full moon, word spreads to leave Egypt ... now! There's no time for the bread to rise, but that's a small price to pay for a ticket to freedom.

Soon after, the Red Sea will part — a breaking of the waters that gives birth, as Rabbi Sharon Cohen Anisfeld writes, to “a people that was born in a hurry.” In one night, the bread of affliction (flat bread we ate in slavery) becomes the bread of freedom (dough that couldn't rise as we fled Egypt), and our 3,000-year-old journey begins.

What kind of journeys will you go on this year?

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Grazing Board with Matzah

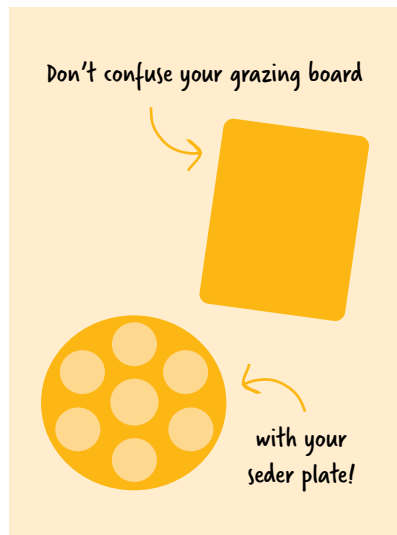
Tempt your guests at a seder or anytime.

- 2 to 3 sheets of matzah, broken into large pieces
- Jam or preserves
- Nuts
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Dried fruits
- Cheeses

1 Arrange the matzah pieces along the center of a large wooden board (a cutting board, marble pastry board, or flat platter will also work well).

2 Place several small bowls on the board and fill them with jam, nuts, fruits and veggies, and cheeses.

3 Arrange additional ingredients to cover the rest of the board. (The more the better!)



Did someone say “grazing”? Here’s a Passover backstory: Moses was watching his sheep graze when a lamb strayed from the flock. When Moses tended to this lost lamb, he saw the Burning Bush. That’s when God spoke to Moses, setting the entire arc of liberation from Egypt in motion. Sometimes big acts (like leading one’s people out of slavery) start with small acts (like helping a stray lamb rejoin the flock).

What’s a small act of compassion you can do this Passover season?



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Matzah Pizza Lasagna

This combo may become your kids' Passover favorite.

- 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 (24-ounce) container small-curd cottage cheese
- 1-2 tablespoons fresh Italian herbs (oregano, Italian parsley, basil), chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Pinch of salt and pepper

- 4 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 (23-ounce) jar marinara
- 6 sheets of matzah
- Your family's favorite pizza toppings

1 Heat oven to 350°. In a bowl, combine eggs, cottage cheese, fresh herbs, garlic, salt and pepper, and 1 cup of the mozzarella. Set the mixture aside.

2 Grease a 9- by 13-inch glass baking dish and spread a thin layer of marinara over the bottom.

3 Lightly dampen the matzah with water (run quickly under a faucet, so as not to completely soak), then place two sheets on top of the layer of marinara. Spread a third of the remaining marinara over the matzah, and spoon half of the cottage cheese mixture on top. Sprinkle 1 cup of mozzarella over the cottage cheese mixture and add the first layer of pizza toppings.

4 Continue to layer ingredients, adding another two sheets of matzah, half of the marinara, the remaining cottage cheese mixture, half of the mozzarella, and more toppings.

5 Add the last two sheets of matzah and the remaining marinara, mozzarella, and toppings.

6 Loosely cover the dish with foil and bake for 35 to 40 minutes. Then remove the foil and broil the lasagna for 3 to 5 minutes, or until top is browned to taste. Let the dish rest for 10 minutes before serving.

(we used green bell peppers, sliced mushrooms, olives, fresh basil, and red pepper flakes)

Passover is the most celebrated Jewish holiday. That means that Jewish diversity is on full display on seder night. Some families consume their first piece of matzah in total silence (a traditional practice), others playfully wallop one another with scallions (a Persian-Afghani ritual). Some add an orange to the seder plate (a call for LGBTQ+ rights), others make animal sounds during the Passover tune “One Little Goat” (*Chad Gadya*) or belt out the tune “Who Knows One?” (*Echad Mi Yode’a*) in Italian — perhaps after eating matzah pizza lasagna.

***What are your family's special Passover traditions?
What new traditions would you like to try this year?***

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Donate to a Food Bank

Clean your house and help others — in one easy step!

In the ramp-up to Passover, two Jewish practices have traditionally stood side by side:

- Removing *chametz* from one's home. These foods — bread, pasta, cakes, cookies — include grain that has been allowed to “rise” (ferment or leaven).
- Giving *tzedakah* (charitable donations) to make sure everyone in the community has enough food for the holiday.

Here's a simple way to be inspired by those two traditions. Fill a box or backpack with foods to give away — pasta, cereal, or any chametz or other nonperishable items. Then donate that food to a local food bank! (Consider calling the food bank first to find out what's most needed.)

At the Passover seder (ritual meal), we begin our story with words of crunchy compassion. We hold the matzah high for all to see and we call out, “*Ha lachma anya*, this is the flat bread of poverty the Israelites ate as slaves in Egypt.” Then we connect the dots (or lots of holes?) between ancient servitude and contemporary challenges by saying, “All who are hungry — come and eat!” Sharing with others — whether donating to a food bank or hosting guests — is a recognition and a celebration of our freedom.

***What are different ways your family can help
make sure everyone has enough?***

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Matzah Box Centerpiece

Turn an empty box into a thing of beauty.

SUPPLIES:

- 1 empty matzah box or matzah farfel canister
- Colorful wrapping paper or homemade drawings
- Tape or glue
- Box fillers (pipe cleaners, tissue paper, and dried plants and flowers)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1** Wrap an empty matzah container in paper, using tape or glue to secure. Make sure to leave one side open.
- 2** Add fillers to decorate. We used dried wheat stalks and pipe-cleaner flowers (we found helpful instructions on YouTube).
- 3** Place your centerpiece on the seder table for all to enjoy!

A key takeaway of the Passover story is this: Things don't have to stay as they are. Change — even radical change — is possible. Looks like a matzah box? Turn it into a centerpiece. We tell this ancient tale of transformation to our children to inspire the next generation to imagine change and work for it; it's a parent's #1 task each Passover. As writer Elie Wiesel reminds us, "People become the stories they hear and the stories they tell."

What freedom stories does your family tell?

A top-down view of a white plate featuring several pieces of golden-brown, perforated matzah. In the upper left corner, a small glass bowl contains a thick, white hummus, garnished with finely chopped green onions and a dusting of brown spices. To the right of the matzah, a large bunch of fresh green herbs, including flat-leaf parsley and long green chives, is arranged. The entire dish is set against a plain white background.

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Matzah Chips & Dip

**Bet you'll want to dip
more than twice!**

INGREDIENTS for the chips:

- 5–6 matzah sheets
- ½ cup unsalted butter, melted
- 1 (1 ounce) ranch seasoning packet

(you can also make your own by combining 2 teaspoons each of dried parsley, dried dill, garlic powder, and onion powder and 1 teaspoon each of ground black pepper, dried chives, and fine sea salt)

INGREDIENTS for the dip:

- 1 (8 ounce) container sour cream
- 1 tablespoon fresh chives, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh Italian parsley, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce (optional)

- 1 Heat oven to 300°. Break the matzah into pieces and lay them flat on two baking sheets.
- 2 In a small bowl, combine the melted butter and ranch seasoning. Use a pastry brush to top the matzah pieces with half of the butter mixture, then flip the matzah over and brush the mixture on the other side.
- 3 Bake for 20 minutes, trading tray positions halfway through the cooking time. Let the chips cool before serving.
- 4 To make the dip, combine all ingredients and stir.

As the Four Questions remind us, we traditionally dip twice at the Passover seder — a green vegetable in salt water (symbolizing the tears of slaves) and a bitter vegetable (*maror*) in a mortar-like mixture (*charoset*). On Passover, eating is time-traveling, whether it's matzah, maror, or the paschal lamb (or for vegetarians, as Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi suggested, the paschal yam). One way to “see ourselves as if we personally came out of Egypt” is through our bellies.

What's your favorite Passover food?

THE HOLDER OF THIS CARD IS ENTITLED

Flip the card over
to see the Four Questions.

to say or sing the **Ma Nishtana** (the Four Questions) — WHY IS THIS NIGHT DIFFERENT FROM ALL OTHERS?

Traditionally, the Four Questions are asked by the youngest participants at the Passover seder. They look at the **MATZAH** sitting on the table and say — in essence — “What’s **that** doing here?” and then ask about other unusual symbols and customs that help us tell the Passover story. Visit pjlibrary.org/haggadah for a Ma Nishtana singalong.

These questions are just the beginning; kids and adults alike can think of other questions to ask at the seder. Passover is a festival of curiosity and wondering, of asking questions and inspiring conversation — and kids take the lead!

AND GETS
to break
a piece of
matzah —
in half!

AND GETS to
search for the
hidden piece of
matzah — the
afikomen!

AND GETS
out of Egypt —
free!



Share your photos! [#pjlibrary](https://twitter.com/pjlibrary)

For additional Passover recipe and craft cards, as well as other helpful Passover resources, visit pjlibrary.org/passover

Recipes and
photography by
Jennifer Stempel
jenniferstempel.com

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MA NISHTANA (THE FOUR QUESTIONS)

מה נשתנה הלילה
הזה מכל הלילות?

*Ma nishtana halaila hazeh
mikol haleilot?*

**Why is this night
different from all others?**

1

שֶׁבֶּחַל הַלֵּילוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין חֶמֶץ וּמָצָה. הלילה הזה כלו מצה.

*Shebechol haleilot, anu ochlin chametz umatzah.
Halaila hazeh, kulo matzah.*

**On all other nights we can eat *chametz*, bread
that rises when it bakes. Why tonight do we
eat only the flat bread, *matzah*?**

2

שֶׁבֶּחַל הַלֵּילוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין שְׂאֵר יֵרָקוֹת. הלילה הזה מרור.

Shebechol haleilot, anu ochlin she'ar yerakot. Halaila hazeh, maror.

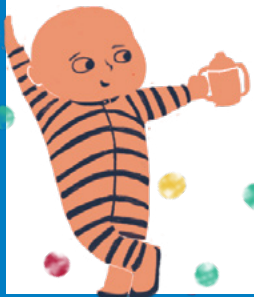
**On all other nights we eat any kind of vegetables.
Why tonight do we eat bitter vegetables, *maror*?**

3

שֶׁבֶּחַל הַלֵּילוֹת אֵין אָנוּ מְטְבִילִין אֶפִּילוּ פַּעַם אַחַת. הלילה הזה שתי פעמים.

*Shebechol haleilot, ein anu matbilin afilu pa'am echat.
Halaila hazeh, shtei fe'amim.*

**On all other nights we don't need to dip our food into a sauce
even one time. Why tonight do we dip foods two times?**



4

שֶׁבֶּחַל הַלֵּילוֹת אָנוּ אוֹכְלִין בֵּין יוֹשְׁבִין וּבֵין מְסֻבִּין. הלילה הזה כלנו מסבין.

*Shebechol haleilot, anu ochlin bein yoshvin uvein mesubin.
Halaila hazeh, kulanu mesubin.*

**On all other nights we eat sitting up straight or leaning.
Why tonight do we make sure to eat while leaning?**

