



## Sukkot

Having both agricultural and historical significance, Sukkot is a jubilant seven-day festival that comes on the heels of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The Torah literally tells us to “rejoice in your holiday” (Deuteronomy 16:14). Many Jewish families build a *sukkah*, a hut reminiscent of the temporary booths in which the Hebrews lived as they wandered forty years through the desert after the Exodus from Egypt. One of the rules about the placement and structure of a *sukkah* instructs that its roof covering (in Hebrew - *s’chakh*) provides shade from the sun, yet allows the light of the stars to shine through at night. There is a *mitzvah* (commandment) to dwell in the *sukkah*, which is fulfilled by eating one’s meals inside. Hearty enthusiasts even sleep in the *sukkah*, though it is not required to suffer through very bad weather. Sukkot is one of the three pilgrimage holidays, for which many Jews traveled to the site of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. It is also a celebration of the fall harvest - one of the reasons many people choose to decorate their *sukkah* with fruit. The Hebrew calendar date is the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month of *Tishrei*. This date always coincides with the evening of the full moon closest to the autumnal equinox, otherwise known as the Harvest Moon.

### It’s All about the Décor

Decorating the *sukkah* is all part of the fun of the holiday. Turn the holiday into a celebration of families by creating family photo mobiles. Photos can be of past or present family members. Add in the *ushpizin* (mysterious guests) and draw pictures of Bible characters.

### What are the sounds of Sukkot?

Ask your children to imagine what sounds they hear when they are outside in a *sukkah*, such as sirens, tweeting birds or the rustling of trees. What sounds do they hear when they are inside your home? Make recordings or buy inexpensive sound effects CDs to play for fun.

### What Do You Do With an Old Etrog?

The schools at [Adath Israel](#) in Philadelphia have collected etrogs to create Havdallah spice boxes. For complete instructions, check out our [Sukkot Pinterest board](#).

### More New Tricks for Old Etrogs

Etrogs are great for science and cooking experiments, such as measuring and weighing. Compare and contrast with other citrus fruits for language development. For lots of etrog fun, [click here](#).



### The Great Etrog (or Anything) Cook-off

The staff of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation sponsored an apple cake bake-off before Rosh Hashanah. Challenge your families to come up with recipes that use etrogs – or ask families to create confections that look like Torahs in honor of Simchat Torah. Come up with other creative and healthy food challenges as the year progresses, and everyone will be well-fed and happy!