

Passover 2016 begins Friday evening, April 22, and ends Saturday evening, April 30. The first Passover seder is on the evening of Friday, April 22, and the second Passover seder takes place on the evening of Saturday, April 23.

What is Passover?

Passover is a festival of [freedom](#).

It commemorates the Israelites' [Exodus](#) from Egypt, and their transition from [slavery](#) to freedom. The main ritual of Passover is the [seder](#), which occurs on the first night (or, outside of Israel, the first two nights) of the holiday — a festive meal that involves the re-telling of the Exodus through stories and song and the consumption of ritual foods, including [matzah](#) and [maror](#) (bitter herbs).

What are some Passover practices?

The central Passover practice is a set of [intense dietary changes](#), mainly the absence of [hametz](#), or foods with leaven. (Ashkenazi Jews also avoid [kitniyot](#), a category of food that includes legumes.) In recent years, many Jews have compensated for the lack of grain by cooking with [quinoa](#). The ecstatic cycle of psalms called [Hallel](#) is recited both at night and day (during the seder and morning prayers). Additionally, Passover commences a 49-day period called the [Omer](#), which recalls the count between offerings brought to the ancient [Temple](#) in Jerusalem. This count culminates in the holiday of [Shavuot](#), the anniversary of the receiving of the [Torah](#) at Sinai.

What foods do we eat on Passover?

[Matzah](#), or unleavened bread, is the [main food of Passover](#). You can purchase it in numerous stores, or you can make your own. But the holiday has many traditional, popular foods, from [haroset](#) (a mixture of apples, nuts, wine, and cinnamon) to [matzah ball soup](#) — and the absence of leavening calls upon a cook to employ all of his/her culinary creativity.

Passover Seder

The Passover *seder* (meaning order) is probably the most celebrated and beloved of Jewish home rituals. Most Jews have cherished memories of past family times spent at a seder. It is believed that the obligation to [tell the story of the Exodus](#) was observed by Jews' ancestors ever since the [actual Exodus](#) itself. The scriptural command ([Exodus 13:8](#)) to tell the story of the exodus to our children is interpreted as a positive commandment ([mitzvah](#)).

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-passover-pesach-seder/>