

Passover 2017 begins Monday evening, April 10, and ends Tuesday evening, April 18. The first Passover seder is on the evening of Monday, April 10, and the second Passover seder takes place on the evening of Tuesday, April 11.

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 two night (in Israel just the first night) 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). The seder's rituals and other readings are outlined in the [Haggadah](#)— today, [many different versions](#) of this Passover guide are available in print and online, and you can also [create your own](#).

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](#), although not all recognize it as kosher for Passover. 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 fruit, 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. View our extensive collection of [Passover recipes here](#), or check out [The Nosh](#), our lively food blog!

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