

Calendar of Jewish festivals

(see next page for notes)

| | | 2015 / 5775 | 2016 / 5776 | 2017 / 5777 | 2018/5778 | 2019/5779 | 2020/5780 |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Fast of Tevet | | Thu 1 Jan | – | Sun 8 Jan | – | – | Tue 7 Jan |
| Tu b'Shvat (New Year for Trees) | | Wed 4 Feb | Mon 25 Jan | Sat 11 Feb | Wed 31 Jan | Mon 21 Jan | Mon 10 Feb |
| Fast of Esther | | Wed 4 Mar | Wed 23 Mar | Thu 9 Mar | Wed 28 Feb | Wed 20 Mar | Mon 9 Mar |
| Purim | eve | Wed 4 Mar | Wed 23 Mar | Sat 11 Mar | Wed 28 Feb | Wed 20 Mar | Mon 9 Mar |
| | day | Thu 5 Mar | Thu 24 Mar | Sun 12 Mar | Thu 1 Mar | Thu 21 Mar | Tue 10 Mar |
| Pesach (Passover) | eve | Fri 3 Apr | Fri 22 Apr | Mon 10 Apr | Fri 30 Mar | Fri 19 Apr | Wed 8 Apr |
| | 1 st day | Sat 4 Apr | Sat 23 Apr | Tue 11 Apr | Sat 31 Mar | Sat 20 Apr | Thu 9 Apr |
| | 2 nd day | Sun 5 Apr | Sun 24 Apr | Wed 12 Apr | Sun 1 Apr | Sun 21 Apr | Fri 10 Apr |
| | Middle days | 6–9 Apr | 25–28 Apr | 13–16 Apr | 2–5 Apr | 22–25 Apr | 11–14 Apr |
| | eve | Thu 9 Apr | Thu 28 Apr | Sun 16 Apr | Thu 5 Apr | Thu 25 Apr | Tue 14 Apr |
| | 7 th day | Fri 10 Apr | Fri 29 Apr | Mon 17 Apr | Fri 6 Apr | Fri 26 Apr | Wed 15 Apr |
| | 8 th day | Sat 11 Apr | Sat 30 Apr | Tue 18 Apr | Sat 7 Apr | Sat 27 Apr | Thu 16 Apr |
| LaG b'Omer | | Thu 7 May | Thu 26 May | Sun 14 May | Thu 3 May | Thu 23 May | Tue 12 May |
| Shavuot (Pentecost) | eve | Sat 23 May | Sat 11 Jun | Tue 30 May | Sat 19 May | Sat 8 Jun | Thu 28 May |
| | 1 st day | Sun 24 May | Sun 12 Jun | Wed 31 May | Sun 20 May | Sun 9 Jun | Fri 29 May |
| | 2 nd day | Mon 25 May | Mon 13 Jun | Thu 1 Jun | Mon 21 May | Mon 10 Jun | Sat 30 May |
| Fast of Tammuz | | Sun 5 Jul | Sun 24 Jul | Tue 11 Jul | Sun 1 Jul | Sun 21 Jul | Thu 9 Jul |
| Tisha b'Av (Fast of Av) | eve | Sat 25 Jul | Sat 13 Aug | Mon 31 Jul | Sat 21 Jul | Sat 10 Aug | Wed 29 Jul |
| | day | Sun 26 Jul | Sun 14 Aug | Tue 1 Aug | Sun 22 Jul | Sun 11 Aug | Thu 30 Jul |
| | | 2015 / 5776 | 2016 / 5777 | 2017 / 5778 | 2018/5779 | 2019/5780 | 2020/5781 |
| Rosh HaShanah (New Year) | eve | Sun 13 Sep | Sun 2 Oct | Wed 20 Sep | Sun 9 Sep | Sun 29 Sep | Fri 18 Sep |
| | 1 st day | Mon 14 Sep | Mon 3 Oct | Thu 21 Sep | Mon 10 Sep | Mon 30 Sep | Sat 19 Sep |
| | 2 nd day | Tue 15 Sep | Tue 4 Oct | Fri 22 Sep | Tue 11 Sep | Tue 1 Oct | Sun 20 Sep |
| Fast of Gedaliah | | Wed 16 Sep | Wed 5 Oct | Sun 24 Sep | Wed 12 Sep | Wed 2 Oct | Mon 21 Sep |
| Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) | eve | Tue 22 Sep | Tue 11 Oct | Fri 29 Sep | Tue 18 Sep | Tue 8 Oct | Sun 27 Sep |
| | day | Wed 23 Sep | Wed 12 Oct | Sat 30 Sep | Wed 19 Sep | Wed 9 Oct | Mon 28 Sep |
| Succot (Tabernacles) | eve | Sun 27 Sep | Sun 16 Oct | Wed 4 Oct | Sun 23 Sep | Sun 13 Oct | Fri 2 Oct |
| | 1 st day | Mon 28 Sep | Mon 17 Oct | Thu 5 Oct | Mon 24 Sep | Mon 14 Oct | Sat 3 Oct |
| | 2 nd day | Tue 29 Sep | Tue 18 Oct | Fri 6 Oct | Tue 25 Sep | Tue 15 Oct | Sun 4 Oct |
| | Middle days | 30 Sep – 4 Oct | 19–23 Oct | 7–11 Oct | 26–30 Sep | 16–20 Oct | 5–9 Oct |
| Shemini Atzeret | eve | Sun 4 Oct | Sun 23 Oct | Wed 11 Oct | Sun 30 Sep | Sun 20 Oct | Fri 9 Oct |
| | day | Mon 5 Oct | Mon 24 Oct | Thu 12 Oct | Mon 1 Oct | Mon 21 Oct | Sat 10 Oct |
| Simchat Torah | day | Tue 6 Oct | Tue 25 Oct | Fri 13 Oct | Tue 2 Oct | Tue 22 Oct | Sun 11 Oct |
| Chanukah - eve (1st / 8) | | Sun 6 Dec | Sat 24 Dec | Tue 12 Dec | Sun 2 Dec | Sun 22 Dec | Thu 10 Dec |
| Chanukah - last day | | Mon 14 Dec | Sun 1 Jan | Wed 20 Dec | Mon 10 Dec | Mon 30 Dec | Fri 18 Dec |
| Fast of Tevet | | Tue 22 Dec | – | Thu 28 Dec | Tue 18 Dec | – | Fri 25 Dec |

Key:

Day on which work is forbidden.

Day on which work is forbidden after sunset.

Observed as a Festival by Orthodox outside Israel and a “Middle Day” (when work is permitted) by others.

Day on which work is permitted, although some people do not work on the Middle Days of Pesach and Succot.

25 hour fast.

Dawn to nightfall fast (work permitted).

NOTES

The Jewish calendar counts years from the Creation, which, according to the Biblical account, would correspond to 3760 BCE of the western calendar. Consequently, the year 2015–16 corresponds to the Jewish year 5776.

The Jewish calendar is based on lunar months, so the dates of festivals in the civil calendar change each year, but is adjusted to the solar calendar so they stay in the same season.

The Jewish day begins and ends at sundown, so the Jewish Sabbath and Festivals always commence a short time *before* sundown and terminate at nightfall the following day, a period of around 25 hours. These times vary according to the season and local sunset times.

Jewish Law prohibits 'work' on the Sabbath and Festivals. This is interpreted as any kind of creative activity, writing, spending or handling money, operating equipment (even a telephone), travelling (other than on foot), engaging in commercial transactions, sitting examinations, and many other activities that may not be considered as "work" in ordinary parlance. There is no provision in Jewish Law for a dispensation from these restrictions and obligations, other than that all prohibitions *must* (not may) be set aside in order to save life.

The principal festivals are:

Rosh HaShanah

Two-day New Year celebration in autumn that begins the "Ten Days of repentance" culminating in ...

Yom Kippur

"Day of Atonement" marked by spending the entire day in worship and fasting.

Succot

"Festival of Tabernacles", an autumn festival, five days after Yom Kippur. Observant Jews construct a temporary hut (*succah*) in which to eat during the festival, to commemorate the temporary structures in which the Israelites lived after leaving Egypt. Succot lasts seven days and is immediately followed by ...

Simchat Torah

"Celebration of the Torah", when the annual cycle of readings from the Torah is concluded and immediately recommenced. (1 day in Israel and for non-orthodox groups; 2 days otherwise.)

Pesach

"Passover", the spring festival, commemorating the Exodus from Egypt, and lasting 8 days (7 in Israel and for non-Orthodox groups). The *Seder*, the ceremonial meal eaten in the home on the first night (two nights for Orthodox outside Israel) has many elements of symbolism of the escape from slavery and the foundation of the Jewish Nation. *Matzah* (unleavened bread made with only flour and water) replaces bread for the entire week, and Orthodox Jews are meticulous about avoiding any food that might contain leavened grain.

Shavuot

"Pentecost" or "Festival of Weeks", the fiftieth day after Pesach, commemorating the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai. (1 day in Israel and for non-Orthodox groups; 2 days otherwise.)

Minor festivals include:

Chanukah

A winter festival to commemorate the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after its desecration by the Greeks; marked by some by exchange of gifts.

Purim

In early spring, this marks the deliverance of the Jews from attempted genocide in ancient Persia; celebrations include fancy dress, charitable giving, and exchange of gifts.

Tisha b'Av

A fast day mourning the destruction of the Temples in Jerusalem, the first by the Babylonians in 586 BCE and the second by the Romans in 70 CE.