



Rosh HaShanah Candle Lighting

Lighting candles for the two day Rosh Hashanah festival involves a beautiful transition into sacred time, but the rules differ slightly between the first and second nights.

Here is your complete guide on how, when, and what blessings to say for both nights.



Night 1: Welcoming the Holiday

The Timing: Candles must be lit 18 minutes before sunset. It is critical to light them before the sun goes down, as you cannot strike a new fire once the holiday begins

 **Tip:** Before lighting, spark a long-burning candle (like a 24-hour yahrzeit candle). You will need this existing, continuous flame to safely light your candles tomorrow night!

The Ritual: Light the candles first, then draw your hands inward toward your face three times to accept the holiday holiness. Cover your eyes and recite the blessings below.

Night 1 Blessings

You will say two blessings. (If the first night falls on a Friday evening/Shabbat, add the bracketed words)

1. The Holiday Candle Blessing

Transliteration: “Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel [Shabbat v'shel] Yom Tov.”





Translation: “Blessed are You, our God, Ruler of the world, who sanctifies us with mitzvot and calls upon us to kindle the lights of [Shabbat and] the Festival day”

2. The Shehecheyanu (Blessing for New Seasons)

Transliteration: “Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam, shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higi'anu laz'man hazeh.”

Translation: Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this season.



Night 2: Continuing the Festival

The Timing: Candles must be lit strictly after nightfall (roughly 45 to 60 minutes after sunset, once the first day of the holiday has fully concluded). “...it is forbidden to prepare anything on the first day of Yom Tov for the second...” so no candle prep or lighting can happen early.

The Flame: You **cannot strike a match** or **use a lighter** tonight. You must transfer fire from an existing flame, like the long-burning candle you lit yesterday, or a pilot light, using a toothpick or an extra unlit candle.

The "New Fruit" Custom: To say the Shehecheyanu blessing on the second night, it is customary to have a **new seasonal fruit** (like a pomegranate) on the table or wear a **new piece of clothing**. Keep this new item in mind as you say the blessing

Night 2 Blessings

Light the candles using your pre-existing flame, cover your eyes, and recite the exact same two blessings as Night 1 (The Holiday Candle Blessing and the Shehecheyanu) *Note: Just ensure you drop the bracketed Shabbat references unless the second night happens to fall on Friday night.*