

Do It Yourself Passover Seder Guide – by St. Louis Hillel at Washington University

General

The table is usually set with the best dishes, a tablecloth and two candles and candlesticks. It should be an enjoyable festive meal in which you will deal with issues of slavery and experience true freedom.

What goes on the table?

1. Three **Matzot** (covered)

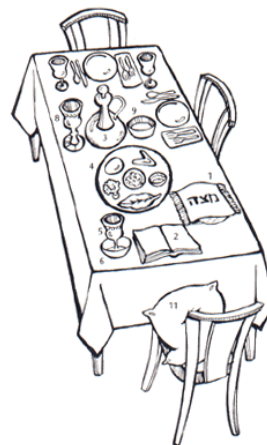
- The matzot can either be part of the Seder Plate (if the plate is so constructed) or left separately. Also, they should be whole.

2. **Haggadot** (one for each person if possible)

3. **Wine** or grape juice

4. **Seder Plate**

- A **shank bone** of a lamb or chicken bone (some use a beet if they are a vegetarian)
 - ❖ A reminder of the "mighty arm of G-d" as the Bible describes it. It is also symbolic of the Paschal lamb offered as the Passover sacrifice in Temple days.
- Bitter herbs or **Marror** (usually horseradish, represents the bitter life of the Israelites during the time of their enslavement in Egypt)
- **Karpas** (a green vegetable, usually parsley or celery and dipped in salt water to represent tears)
- Hard boiled **Egg** (symbolic of the regular festival sacrifice brought in the days of the Temple)
- **Charoset** (a mixture of apple, nuts, and wine, symbolic of the mortar the Jewish slaves made in their building for the Egyptians)
 - ❖ To make charoset, prepare 1 cup of walnuts, 1 granny smith green apple, 2 tsp. cinnamon, 2 tsp. sugar, and red wine to moisten. Chop the nuts and apples to the consistency you want (a food processor can be used). Sprinkle with spices, and moisten with wine. The texture of charoset should remind us of mortar.
- Three pieces of **matzah**, in a matzah cover or within three cloth napkins.



5. **Kiddush cup**

6. **Cup for Elijah**

7. **Salt Water** (in a bowl to be passed around)

8. **Extra Marror, Karpas, Charoset and matzah** (these need not be on the table)

9. A **place setting** at each seat (includes a large plate for the meal, a small plate for the rituals during the Seder, a glass for water, a glass for wine, a napkin, and silverware)

Food

When it comes to food, you should eat well at your Seder. Enjoy everything from chicken soup, to gefilte fish, to your favorite main dishes, and do not forget dessert.

Cooking?- If you are planning to cook your own meal, look online for recipes. Some good sites are:

- <http://allrecipes.com/HowTo/Seder-Menus/Detail.aspx>
- <http://www.foodnetwork.com/holidays-and-parties/passover-seder-dinner/index.html>
- http://kosherfood.about.com/od/sedermenurecipes/a/seder_trad3.htm

Buying Kosher Food

- Schnucks – local grocer at Ladue and 170 carries many Kosher for Passover items
- Diamant's Meat Market 314-721-9624 is a local kosher butcher

Ordering?- If you'd like to order a Kosher for Passover meal from a local caterer, contact them **well in advance** of the date of your Seder. Remember, they have lots of orders to fill for the same night! Local Kosher caterers are:

- Simon Kohn's - <http://kohnsk kosher.com/>, 314-569-0727, talk to Lenny
- Bon Appetit** - 314- 935-5062, rosemary.pastore@cafebonappetit.com, talk to Rosemary
***if you order with Bon Appetit, ask about using meal points and let them know this is part of Hillel's Do Your Own Seder program. Their final deadline to order is **April 8**, but they have limited capacity, so order early.*

Location

If you want to hold your Seder somewhere other than your dorm room or apartment, make plans early to reserve a space. St. Louis Hillel has space for some student led Seders in their building each night on a first come-first serve basis. If you want to reserve a room at Hillel, please call 314-935-9038 or email denise@stlouishillel.org no later than April 8.

To reserve a room on campus, visit the event services website <http://www.eventservices.wustl.edu/forms/general/> or The Link to book a room in advance. Make the reservation at least one week before the Seder to ensure you get a space that meets your needs.

Leading a Seder

In every generation, a person is obligated to regard him/herself as though s/he personally had been liberated from Egypt.
-Mishnah Peshachim 10:5

It is not sufficient to just go through the Seder in order to fulfill this commandment. You need to find ways to make the ritual of the Seder speak to all those present. While there is value in connecting to the way we have done things in the past, you need to find ways to have people relate to their understanding of slavery and freedom today. Finding terms that speak in modern idiom without falling out of communication with our past is not a science. But, here are some ideas:

- Less is More- Have one or two guiding questions to which everyone at the Seder can respond. Review the Haggadah in advance and select the parts you want to do. And think about where and how you will engage people in interesting discussion.
- Multiple Intelligences- The Seder is full of various symbols for teaching the story of liberation. Be sensitive to the various ways in which people learn. Think of contemporary meanings for these symbols. Try different media for communicating these ideas. If you need inspiration, stop by Hillel to look at the various Haggadot that we have for your use.
- Balancing- It is critical to find ways to get everyone to participate. Go around the table and have people read or share ideas. This does not mean that there should be no leadership. You still need some people to keep the momentum going. While you do not want a rushed experience, you always want to cap a discussion before it loses steam. Keep them wanting more. There is always next year.
- Sharing- Make room for everyone at the Seder to share memories from their own home rituals. Making people feel welcome at your Seder is about embracing all of who they are. Giving them a moment to share will be a gift for the whole group.

The Overall Structure of the Seder

1. First Cup: “Kadesh”

The evening opens with the sanctification of the holiday by an initial invocation and with appetizers (dips).

2. Second Cup: “Maggid”

Questions and storytelling in multiple versions fill this longest part of the seder. After telling the story of Exodus and explaining the symbolic foods that trigger memories of Egypt, we sing a song of praise to God our liberator.

3. Third Cup: “Shulchan Orech”

The meal begins with matza and maror and concludes with the blessing after eating called “Birkat HaMazon”.

4. Elijah’s Cup

After dinner an extra cup is poured in honor of Elijah and the door is opened to welcome the messianic age.

5. The Fourth Cup: “Hallel”

The Psalms and their blessings are sung responsively.

6. Concluding Songs

The famous folksongs like “Chad Gadya” constitute a medieval appendix to the Rabbinic four cup structure. [top](#)

The Bare Bones Basic Seder

Before the Meal

1. Signposts of the Seder: Kadesh Urchatz
2. First Cup: Kiddush
3. Dips: Karpas
4. Breaking the Matza: Yachatz
5. The Story of the Matza: Ha Lachma
6. Four Questions: Ma Nishtana
7. Storytelling - “We were slaves”: Avadeem Hayeenu
8. Four Children
9. The Promise: V’hee She-am-da
10. The Tale of the Wandering Jew
11. Ten Plagues
12. Da-yeinu
13. Explaining Pesach, Matza and Maror
14. “In every generation”
15. Psalm 114: Hallel
16. Second Cup
17. Eating Matza, Maror, and Korech

After the Meal

18. Afikoman
19. Blessing after Eating: Barech
20. Third Cup
21. Elijah’s Cup
22. Fourth Cup
23. Folksongs: Echad Mee Yo-dei-a; Chad Gad-ya
24. Next Year in Jerusalem: La-Shana Haba-a

