

PRAYERS

INTRODUCTION TO PRAYERS

Introduction to Prayers

Prayer brings us closer to God. When we ask for things from God, even though God already knows what we want and need, we get merit (zechut) for the prayer.

Particularly in synagogue, a holy place, we must be always cognizant of God's presence and take special care to show respect to God in His house. This awareness is even more important than memorizing the halachot of prayer: those who speak in synagogue are showing disrespect to God as well as disturbing others and preventing them from praying with concentration (kavana).

The three daily prayer services--shacharit, mincha, and ma'ariv--are related to the three forefathers who instituted them. They partly take the place of—and are modeled after--the Temple sacrifices.

If you find you have made an error in saying a blessing or prayer, you may correct your error without having to repeat any previous parts if you do so within 2.5 seconds.

NOTE Prayers (tefilot) are said at set times; blessings (brachot) are said whenever the correct situation occurs for them. Even though prayers contain blessings within them, blessings and prayers are in separate sections in this website.

PRE-PRAYER

PRE-PRAYER: MENTAL PREPARATION

Introduction to Mental Preparation for Praying

Before saying blessings, but especially before saying any of the prayer services that include the amida, consider that you are speaking to the Creator of the universe and focus your thoughts on whatever prayers you will be saying.

PRE-PRAYER: ATTIRE

Man's Head Covering for Prayers or Torah Study

See Attire: Man's Head Covering for Prayers or Torah Study.

Attire for Amida

The minimum attire required for men and women to say the amida is to be dressed appropriately to meet an important and respectable person.

Praying in Bare Feet on Stone Floor

You may pray in bare feet on any type of floor, even a stone floor, except when saying the amida.

NOTE You may not say the amida in bare feet.

Praying in a Kittel on Rosh Hashana

For those who have the custom of wearing a kittel on Rosh Hashana, the kittel is only worn for shacharit and musaf.

PRE-PRAYER: CHARITY

Charity To Enhance Prayers

It is an enhancement of our prayers to give charity at shacharit and mincha (except on Shabbat and Jewish festivals).

PRE-PRAYER: WASHING HANDS

Washing Hands before Prayer Service with Amida

You should wash your hands, even if they are not dirty, before saying any prayer service that contains the amida, but you do not need to go out of your way to wash them.

Washing Hands after Touching Animal

You must wash your hands after touching an animal, before saying blessings or prayers.

PRE-PRAYER: GREETING PEOPLE

Pre-Shacharit: Greeting People

Greeting people before shacharit is OK; just don't go out your way to meet someone.

WHO SHOULD PRAY

WHO SHOULD PRAY: WOMEN

WOMEN'S REQUIREMENTS TO PRAY

Women's Requirements To Pray

For women's and girls requirements to pray, see [Women: Prayer](#).

BABY CARE OR PRAYER

Baby Care instead of Praying

A mother of young children who require her continual attention should skip saying prayers, even for an entire day, if it will take her attention away from caring for her baby.

When You May Nurse a Baby while Praying

If a baby is clean, a woman may nurse a baby while reading Psalms, saying blessings, and saying the shema, but not while saying the amida.

REASON It is difficult to concentrate while holding a baby.

WITH WHOM TO PRAY

WITH WHOM TO PRAY: PRAYER QUORUM (MINYAN)

WITH WHOM TO PRAY: SEEKING A QUORUM (MINYAN)

How Much Effort To Pray with a Minyan

Praying with a minyan is very important and you should travel up to 18 minutes away in order to get to a minyan.

NOTE If waking up early will mess up the rest of your day, you do not need to wake up to go.

EXAMPLE You may pray by yourself if joining a minyan would cause you:

- To be late to work,
- To lose your job,
- To interfere with your caring for a sick person or someone who needs attention,
- To injure your health,
- Financial loss, or

- Shalom bayit problems.

WITH WHOM TO PRAY: WHAT CONSTITUTES A QUORUM (MINYAN)

How Many Men Needed for a Minyan

A minyan is a prayer quorum of 10 Jewish men who are at least 13 years old. At least six of the men must be praying.

WITH WHOM TO PRAY: WHO MAY BE COUNTED IN A QUORUM (MINYAN)

Non-Shomer Shabbat Jew Counted in Minyan

A non-*shomer* Shabbat Jew may be counted as part of a minyan.

Boy less than 13 Years Old

A boy who has not reached 13 years of age may not be counted in a minyan, even if one day short of 13 years.

WITH WHOM TO PRAY: QUORUM (MINYAN) SIZE

Large Minyan or Small

In general, praying with a large group of Jews is preferable to praying with a small group.

REASON A large group is considered to be more honoring of God (*b'rov am hadrat melech*).

NOTE You may pray with a smaller minyan if you are not happy with the large minyan, such as the speed of the service, people talking during the service, or inconvenient timing when you need to get to work.

WITH WHOM TO PRAY: WHICH PRAYERS REQUIRE A QUORUM (MINYAN)

Prayers that Require a Minyan

Although it is preferable to join a minyan whenever possible, prayer services may be said without a minyan. However, certain prayers may be said (or omitted) only with a minyan present:

- Bar'chu (morning and night),
- The word “*Eloheinu*” in the birkat ha'mazon introduction,
- Kaddish,
- Kedusha,
- Reader's repetition of the amida,
- Sheva brachot (the seven blessings) at a wedding,
- Sheva brachot during the week following the wedding,
- 13 midot in selichot,
- Torah reading if there will be aliyot, and
- Skipping the three introductory words for the shema.

NOTE A minyan is preferable but not required for a circumcision.

WITH WHOM TO PRAY: MINYAN ETIQUETTE

WITH WHOM TO PRAY: MINYAN ETIQUETTE: PRIORITY

Priority of Synagogue Members

In leading the prayers, members of a synagogue have priority over ANY non-member, regardless of status.

Next in priority:

- Yahrzeit up to second *ashrei*;
- Mourner within 30 days;
- Mourner after 30 days.

EXCEPTION A mourner from out of town may lead one prayer service.

WITH WHOM TO PRAY: MINYAN ETIQUETTE: NUSACH

Minyan Leader Follows Custom of Minyan

Say the entire prayer service (and not just the public portions) according to the custom of the minyan of which you are the leader, even if it differs from your custom.

WITH WHOM TO PRAY: MINYAN: AMEN

MINYAN: AMEN: WHEN TO SAY

Wait for Amen until after Completion of Blessing

Don't say amen to reply to the prayer leader's blessing until he has completely finished the blessing.

Don't Answer Amen within 2.5 Seconds

Don't answer amen if you finish a prayer or blessing within 2.5 seconds after the prayer leader (cantor) finishes the same prayer or blessing as you are saying. However, in these three cases, you may say amen, even if you finish exactly together with the leader:

- End of yishtabach;
- End of Hallel;
- Ma'ariv's shomer amo yisrael la'ad.

MINYAN: AMEN: WHEN TO INTERRUPT YOUR PRAYER

Interrupting Your Prayer To Say Amen

You may say amen to a prayer leader's blessing even if you are at a different part of the prayer service, but only at a part that you are permitted to interrupt.

Interrupting Your Blessing To Say Amen

You may not interrupt saying your own blessing in order to say amen to someone else's.

Interrupting Your Amida To Say Amen

When saying the amida yourself, do not say amen or any other replies to the prayer leader's repetition. If he says kedusha or kaddish:

- Pause in your own amida and listen without answering or saying anything.
- Once the leader has finished kedusha or kaddish, resume your private amida.

EXCEPTION If you finish the final blessing of the amida (“...Ha'mevareich et amo yisrael ba'shalom”) as the leader starts to say the kedusha, and you want to respond along with the congregation:

- Quickly say the line, “Yihiyu l'ratzon”

- Reply to the entire kedusha (kadosh, amen, and any other words that are said by the congregation) as if you had finished the amida.
- Once the leader has said the final blessing of kedusha, say “elohai netzur...”

MINYAN: AMEN: WHEN YOU CANNOT HEAR BLESSING

Saying Amen When You Cannot Hear the Blessing

Answer amen even if you cannot hear the leader saying blessings or prayers, as long as you know when he is finished each blessing.

MINYAN: AMEN: MISPRONOUNCED BLESSING

Saying Amen to Mispronunciation

Do not answer amen if the prayer leader is not saying blessings or prayers correctly, such as mispronouncing words, mumbling, slurring words, etc.

MINYAN: AMEN: WHEN 10 MEN INCLUDES PRAYER LEADER

Prayer Leader of 10 Men Should Wait

A prayer service leader for a group of only 10 men including himself should (but is not required to) wait until all 10 men have finished the private amida before he begins the reader's repetition.

- Shabbat
- Jewish Festivals
- Rosh Chodesh musaf.

REASON To have nine men replying amen to each blessing.

NOTE A minimum of six men must be finished before the reader begins the repetition. If delaying the repetition at mincha will cause the repetition to be finished after sunset, consult a rabbi.

NOTE If all nine other men will not (or may not) say amen, the leader should intend that his public amida be a “free-will offering” (nedava); otherwise, his public amida may be a bracha l'vatala. He may not intend to offer a “free-will offering” on days or services that this sacrifice was not offered in the Temple in Jerusalem:

- Shabbat
- Jewish Festivals
- Rosh Chodesh musaf.

Amida with Minyan but with less than Nine Men Answering

On Shabbat, even if there will not be at least nine men answering amen to the reader's repetition of the amida, the reader should say the repetition anyway, without intending that his repetition be counted as a nedava (which can only be offered on weekdays). If less than six men will be answering, the leader must wait before doing the repetition.

WITH WHOM TO PRAY: MINYAN: KEEPING PACE

MINYAN: KEEPING PACE: SHACHARIT MINYAN

What To Skip To Catch Up in Shacharit

If you arrive late for a shacharit minyan, or if you are lagging behind the leader, you may skip all of psukei d'zimra to catch up--except for:

- Baruch she'amar,
- Ashrei, and
- Yishtabach.

You may also not skip any parts from yishtabach to the amida.

NOTE After you have said the amida, you do not need to return to say the rest of psukei d'zimra.

NOTE This should not be done routinely. It is better to pray alone or to say the amida along with the leader during the reader's repetition of the amida in order to allow yourself time to say the psukei d'zimra.

If Arrive Late on Shabbat or Jewish Festival Morning

If you are late to minyan on Shabbat (or Jewish festival) morning, say:

- Shacharit while the minyan is saying the musaf amida (as long as it is not yet too late to say shacharit), and then say
- Musaf while the reader is repeating the amida.

MINYAN: KEEPING PACE: ANY MINYAN

FINISHING AMIDA BEFORE KEDUSHA

Finishing Amida before Leader Says Kedusha

If you arrive late for any minyan (except ma'ariv) that is about to start the amida, try to finish saying your amida before the leader gets to kedusha, if you can.

If you know you will not be able to finish your amida in time to say kedusha with the minyan:

- Wait for the leader to start the repetition of the amida.
- Say the repetition of the amida word for word with the leader, including kedusha, until the end of the third blessing (ha'el ha'kadosh).
- Once you and he have both finished saying the third blessing, you may continue at your own pace regardless of whether you will finish before or after him.

If for any reason you have not yet finished saying your amida by the time the leader begins saying the reader's repetition, do not say amen or any other replies to the prayer leader's repetition. However, when he begins to say kedusha or kaddish:

- Pause in your own amida and listen without answering or saying anything.
- Once the leader has finished kedusha (that is, he has said baruch kevod adonai mi'mkomo) or kaddish (that is, he has said da'amiran be'alma v'imru amen), resume your private amida.

EXCEPTION See [Responding to Prayer Leader before Elohai Netzur](#).

NOTE For ma'ariv, if you arrive late and the minyan is about to start the amida, do not say shema and the other prayers that precede the amida but start immediately so you say your amida with the minyan and then return to say the parts you skipped.

WHEN TO PAUSE OR JOIN MINYAN

When To Pause or Join Minyan: Regular Shacharit

Shema

When the minyan reaches the shema in shacharit:

- If you are between bar'chu and end of amida, simply:
 - Cover your eyes like everyone else, but don't say the shema line.
- If you are anywhere else:
 - Pause and, with everyone else, say the first two lines of the shema (Shema, Yisrael... and Baruch shem...), and then
 - Resume where you were.

REASON You may not interrupt your prayer between bar'chu and end of amida.

Amida

SITUATION You are saying your amida in a minyan and it is close to the end of the fourth hour of the day.

WHAT TO DO Do not pause, even if the leader says kaddish or kedusha, if doing so will delay you past the fourth hour.

When To Pause or Join Minyan: Shabbat/Jewish Festival Shacharit

If the leader gets to kedusha on Shabbat or Jewish festival morning and you are saying the amida, you must:

- Pause until the leader has finished the blessing after kedusha (ha'el—or ha'melech—ha'kadosh), and then
- Resume your amida.

During birkat cohanim, you must:

- Pause in your amida until the end of birkat cohanim.

EXCEPTION Do not pause, even if the leader says kaddish or kedusha, if doing so will delay you past the fourth hour.

When To Pause or Join Minyan: Mincha

During mincha, don't pause at all (such as for kedusha or kaddish) if, by pausing, you will not finish saying your amida before sunset.

When To Pause or Join Minyan: Ma'ariv

If the ma'ariv minyan says shema, you must join them for the first two sentences (“Shema, Yisrael...” and “Baruch shem...”), unless you are saying the amida.

When To Pause or Join Minyan: General Prayer Services

Here is when to pause or join the minyan during general prayer services:

- Ashrei

You do not need to interrupt your prayers to join the minyan for ashrei.

- Torah Reading

If you are saying the amida, pause only during the actual Torah reading, not during the blessings.

- Kaddish

During kaddish, you must pause in your amida until the prayer leader finishes the line of da'amiran b'alma...

- Alenu

If the minyán says alenu and you are at a part of the prayer service at which you are permitted to interrupt, you may join them.

NOTE It is a proper practice to say alenu with the congregation, even if you have already finished that prayer service.

REASON If you don't, it seems as if you are not accepting ol malchut shamayim.

WHERE TO PRAY

WHERE TO PRAY: SET PLACE

Set Place (Makom Kavú'a): Enhancement of Prayers

It is an enhancement of your prayers to set aside a regular place for praying (makom kavú'a), but it is not required.

NOTE If you have a regular seat/makom kavú'a in synagogue and you find someone sitting in your seat, it is not proper to ask that person to move if it will upset that person.

NOTE Your makom kavú'a extends to 4 amot/6'7" away from the actual seat and so you could sit in a nearby seat and still be within your makom kavú'a. However, even if there are no other seats available near your normal seat, it is still not proper to upset a person by asking him or her to move from your seat.

WHERE TO PRAY: HOW CLOSE

Prayer with Minyan in another Room

If you are outside the room in which a minyán is praying, you may still join and reply to all of the prayers as long as:

- You can see or hear the congregation, or
- There are at least 10 men (in addition to you) inside the main room.

WHERE TO PRAY: AVOIDING DISTRACTION

WHERE TO PRAY: DISTRACTING ATTIRE

Men's Prayer near Immodestly Dressed Woman

A man may not pray within visible distance of an immodestly dressed woman. She must be far enough away that he cannot tell what she is wearing. Alternatively, he can turn away from her.

Husband's Prayer near Wife

A husband may say shema and the amida (and study Torah) in his wife's presence if her hair is uncovered (as long as he is not looking at her hair), but not if she is immodestly dressed.

Women's Prayer near Immodestly Dressed People

A woman may say blessings or prayers around men who are not completely dressed as long as the men's genitals are covered. Women may say even the amida around immodestly dressed women as long as the woman praying is dressed appropriately.

WHERE TO PRAY: DISTRACTING SMELL

Prayer near Feces

Don't say prayers or blessings within 6'7" (4 amot, or 2 m) (in any direction except in front of you) of any feces—human or animal—unless:

- They have no odor, or

- They are covered by something and you cannot smell them.

NOTE If there are no feces in front of you as far as you can see, assume that none are there.

Prayer near Animal

You may say blessings, the shema, and even the amida if you are near an animal, as long as the animal does not smell.

WHERE TO PRAY: DISTRACTING PEOPLE/MECHITZA

Room Divider/Mechitza: Purpose

Men and women should be separated during prayer services with a mechitza that blocks the men's view of the women. The goal is to keep the men and women from distracting each other during prayer. This idea originated in the Temple in Jerusalem.

Where Mechitza Needed

A mechitza to separate men and women is needed only when praying in a place dedicated as a permanent location for regular Jewish prayer services with a minyan. If not, no mechitza is needed, and any separation that prevents distraction between men and women is sufficient. Even if the women are just behind the men, that is sufficient, even without a physical barrier.

WHERE TO PRAY: SYNAGOGUE ETIQUETTE

WHERE TO PRAY: SYNAGOGUE ETIQUETTE: HUGGING/KISSING

Don't Hug or Kiss People in Synagogue

Don't hug or kiss people in synagogue.

REASON We are supposed to show love only for God there.

WHERE TO PRAY: SYNAGOGUE ETIQUETTE: EATING OR SLEEPING

Eating or Sleeping in Synagogue

You may not eat or sleep in a synagogue that is only used for prayer.

Eating or Sleeping in Bet Midrash

You may nap or eat in a bet midrash, even if the same room is used for prayer.

WHERE TO PRAY: SYNAGOGUE ETIQUETTE: CHILDREN

Bringing Children to Synagogue

Do not bring children to minyan until they are able to say the prayers and to keep quiet.

WHERE TO PRAY: BLESSINGS

Where To Pray: Blessings

For where to say blessings, see [Blessings: Where To Say](#).

WHERE TO PRAY: NON-JEWISH PRAYER PLACES

Where To Pray: Non-Jewish Prayer Places

See [NON-JEWISH PRAYER PLACES](#).

HOW TO PRAY

HOW TO PRAY: READING

Use Siddur or Not

You may use a prayer book (*siddur*) or not—whichever way helps you concentrate on the prayers.

HOW TO PRAY: SPEAKING

HOW TO PRAY: VOLUME

Saying Prayers Out Loud

Say prayers (and blessings) out loud, but not overly loud, in order to help you to concentrate on what you are saying.

EXCEPTION The main exception is the *amida* prayer, which is said quietly enough that you can hear yourself but that people near you cannot hear what you are saying.

HOW TO PRAY: LANGUAGE/PRONUNCIATION/NUSACH

Praying in Own Language

Praying in *Hebrew* is preferable, even if you don't understand *Hebrew*.

NOTE You MAY pray in your own language, but only if that is the language of the country in which you are praying.

NOTE If your native language is not commonly spoken in the country in which you are now present, you may not pray in that language, even if you are with a *minyán*. If several languages are commonly spoken in your country (such as *Hebrew* and English in Israel, or English and Spanish in Florida and California), you may pray in any of those languages.

Ashkenazi Jew, Sefardi Pronunciation

An *Ashkenazi* Jew should ideally not pray using *Sefardi* pronunciation, but since it is OK to pray in any language, this is not a problem.

HOW TO PRAY: ACTIONS

HOW TO PRAY: ACTIONS: STEPPING

How To Pray: Actions: Stepping

See *Amida* Actions: Stepping Before *Kedusha*.

HOW TO PRAY: ACTIONS: BOWING

HOW TO PRAY: ACTIONS: BOWING: WHEN REQUIRED

Bowing: Halacha or Custom?

The places in the prayer services where we bow are required by *halacha* and are not just customs.

HOW TO PRAY: ACTIONS: BOWING: DIRECTION

When To Bow toward Jerusalem

Normally, when saying the *amida*, or bowing at any other prayers such as *kaddish*, *alenu*, and *bar'chu*:

- If you are in a room with an ark (*aron kodesh*), face the ark—even if the ark is NOT in the same direction as Jerusalem.

- If you are not in a room with an ark, face Jerusalem during the amida. You do not need to face Jerusalem when bowing at any other times except during the amida.

HOW TO PRAY: ACTIONS: BOWING: TWO MAIN TYPES

Waist-Bowing and Knee-Bowing

There are two main types of bowing during the prayer services:

- Bowing just from the waist (with and without taking steps), and
- Bowing with the knees, plus two variations on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur (hands and knees on floor).

I. Waist-Bowing (Two Forms)

A. Waist-Bowing/No Steps, for:

- Modim;
- Modim in reader's repetition of amida;
- Bar'chu;
- Lecha Dodi; and
- Alenu.

To bow this way, keep your legs straight and bend forward from your waist.

B. Waist-Bowing/Take Steps, for:

Oseh shalom at the end of:

- Amida, and
- Kaddish.

To bow this way:

- Bow down from waist with your legs straight.
- Take three steps backward (left foot, right foot, left foot),
- Then:
 - Bow from your waist to the left and say, oseh shalom bi'mromav,
 - Bow from your waist to the right and say, hu ya'aseh shalom alenu, and
 - Bow from your waist to the front and say, ve'al kol yisrael v'imru amen.

II. Knee-Bowing (Three Times during Amida)

- Beginning of amida's first blessing,
- End of amida's first blessing, and
- Next-to-last amida blessing: ha'tov shimcha.

To bow this way:

- Bend knees (at baruch),
- Bow forward (at ata), and
- Straighten up (before God's name).

III. Knee-Bowing to Floor (Two Forms)

A. Knee-Bowing to Floor--Hands and Knees Only

(Rosh Hashana musaf: alenu in reader's repetition of amida)

To bow this way:

- Kneel (with your back straight up) (at “hayu kor'im”), and
- Bow down with hands and knees on floor (at “u'mishtachavim u'modim”), but
- You are not required to touch your forehead to ground.

NOTE You should still bow from your waist (but not to the floor) on Rosh Hashana--even if you are praying alone and even if there is no Torah present.

B. Knee-Bowing to Floor--Hands, Knees, Forehead

(Yom Kippur musaf: alenu reader's repetition of amida describing how the people bowed down on Yom Kippur.)

To bow this way:

- Kneel (with your back straight up) (at “hayu kor'im”),
- Bow down with hands and knees on floor (at “u'mishtachavim u'modim”),
- Touch forehead to floor (at v'noflim al pneihem).

NOTE You may not bow down (modim for Yom Kippur) on a bare stone floor (this also includes concrete, terrazzo and other stone-like materials). You must put a cloth, paper, or some other separation on the floor where you will place your forehead and your knees. A talit may be used for this purpose. If you have only one paper towel, put it under your forehead.

NOTE It is customary today to cover any floor, not only if it is bare stone.

SITUATION You are bowing down (modim for Yom Kippur; also for Rosh Hashana if you bow down this far) on a bare stone floor (concrete, terrazzo, and other stone-like materials).

WHAT TO DO You may not touch your forehead or knees (if covered by pants legs or skirt) to the floor. You may cover the floor with some separation such as cloth, paper, or even a talit at the place where your forehead (or knees) will touch.

REASON You might wipe off any dirt from the floor on your pant knees or skirt, which is prohibited on Yom Kippur. There is no need to use a paper towel or other separation for knees if they are bare (for example, due to wearing shorts or a short skirt).

NOTE There is no problem with brushing dirt off your hands, so you can touch the bare stone floor with your bare hands during the bowing.

HOW TO PRAY: ACTIONS: BOWING: WOMEN

Bowing: Women

Women are not required to bow to the floor on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, but some women have that custom.

HOW TO PRAY: ACTIONS: BOWING: IN FRONT OF ANIMALS AND MIRRORS

Bowing If Animal in Front of You

You may not bow down, as during the amida, if an animal is in front of you.

Mirror or Picture of People in Front of You

Don't face a mirror or picture of people when saying amida or any other prayer at which you will bow.

REASON You should not bow down to an image.

HOW TO PRAY: ACTIONS: BOWING-LIKE ACTIVITIES

Bending Down during Amida To Pull Up Socks,...

You may bend down during the amida to slide up your socks, scratch your legs through your pants, and other permitted actions.

EXCEPTION You may not do so when you are saying the final sentence (the actual blessing) in each paragraph.

When You May Crawl on Stone Floor

You may crawl on a bare stone floor if you are trying to find something on the floor, are chasing a child, or for any purpose other than prayer.

When Kneeling Is Forbidden

Kneeling is only forbidden if it is for praying (except for prescribed prayers such as at “*hayu kor'im*” in Yom Kippur) or if it looks like praying, but there is nothing inherently wrong with kneeling for fun, gardening, or other purposes.

WHEN TO PRAY

WHEN TO PRAY: TRAVELER'S QUESTIONS

When To Pray: Traveler's Questions: Crossing from Day-Night or Night-Day

Always say the prayer service based on the day and time where you are at the moment you are ready to pray.

Flying West

SITUATION

You fly west and take off before sunrise.

WHAT TO DO

If the sun will rise while you are flying, you may say shacharit from the time of *alot ha'shachar* on the ground below where you are when you begin to pray.

SITUATION

You fly west, taking off during the daytime.

WHAT TO DO

Say mincha whenever the sun has gone at least 30 minutes past the local midday where you are at that time.

SITUATION

You fly west into the night.

WHAT TO DO

Say *ma'ariv*. once it is night on the ground below you.

NOTE On a long west-bound flight, you might not have to say any prayer services, since you might still be covered by whatever prayer service you said before you took off.

Flying East

SITUATION

You cross the international dateline passing through the night and are now back in the day you already

experienced.

WHAT TO DO

You ignore the fact that you said the prayer service on that day and say it again.

SITUATION

You fly from Australia on Tuesday, departing during the daytime. You will fly into the night of Monday and continue on back into Tuesday.

WHAT TO DO

You disregard the fact that you already said *ma'ariv* for Monday and you say *ma'ariv* again. If your flight continues until sunrise, you will also say shacharit for Tuesday again.

SITUATION

You fly from Australia on Tuesday morning and cross the IDL during the daytime of Tuesday and are now back into Monday.

WHAT TO DO

You do not say any prayer service until your flight crosses into night, whether that happens in flight or after you have landed. You will need to say mincha at some time during the day.

SITUATION

You fly east but you do not cross the international dateline.

WHAT TO DO

If you cross into the night, you will say *ma'ariv* as you normally would do. If you took off at night and cross into daytime, you will say shacharit.

NOTE When flying east from night into day, there is a very brief time period when you may say shema of the morning, since you may not say shema until *alot ha'shachar* and must say shema by the end of the third hour of the local day. When flying east, instead of having about 4 hours during which to say shema, you might only have two or so hours.

NOTE Regarding saying the shir shel yom (psalm for the day of the week), follow the local day.

WHEN TO PRAY: MORNING PRAYERS/SHACHARIT

WHEN TO PRAY: MORNING PRAYERS/SHACHARIT (WEEKDAY): ORDER OF PRAYERS

INTRODUCTION TO MORNING PRAYERS/SHACHARIT (WEEKDAY): ORDER OF PRAYERS

Introduction to Morning Prayers/Shacharit (Weekday): Order of Prayers

Here is a typical order of waking/morning prayers for weekdays (many people say these blessings at the synagogue instead of at home):

- **Wake**
Wake and wash hands (Three-Times Method).
- **Bathroom**
Take care of any toilet needs, wash your hands (One-Time Method).
Say blessings al netilat yadayim and asher yatzar (until *l'fgarim meitim*).
- **Torah Blessings**

Say Torah blessings (from la'asok bi'divrei Torah until talmud Torah ki'negged kulam).

- **Talit Katan**

Put on talit katan (for men).

Say blessing if not married or if not putting on talit gadol later.

NOTE You may put on the talit katan before washing your hands

- **Birchot HaShachar**

Say birchot ha'shachar (from natan la'sechvi... until ven brit) before, or at, synagogue.

- **Talit/Tefilin**

Put on:

- Talit (for married men or other men with that custom).

- Tefilin (for men).

- **L'olam Yihei Adam/Korbanot**

Say:

- L'olam yihei adam,

- Short shema,

- Paragraph ending mekadeish et shimcha ba'rabim,

- Readings on sacrifices/korbanot,

- 13 rules.

- **Psukei D'Zimra**

Say:

- Psalm 30/Mizmor Shir Chanukat habayit.

- Baruch she'amar through yishtabach (includes ashrei).

- **Bar'chu/Shema/Amida**

Say bar'chu through end of amida (including shema, with two blessings before and one after), tachanun (when appropriate) and ashrei through to alenu.

- **Psalms/Alenu**

Say alenu and psalm for the day.

Terms To Know

- Neitz, HaNeitz—Sunrise

- Alot HaShachar—72 minutes before sunrise

- MiSheyakir-- 36 minutes before sunrise in New York in winter and 40 minutes in summer. Nearer to the equator, the maximum time is shorter.

NOTE Even though mi'sheyakir means when there is enough light to identify your friend, it also means when you can differentiate between blue and white threads in the tzitzit, since the mitzva of tzitzit is

only during the daytime.

When Things Happen

Before **Alot HaShachar** (72 minutes before sunrise)

You can put on tzitzit/talit and tefilin without blessings.

Alot HaShachar

You can say:

- Birchot ha'shachar.
- Shema and amida, b'di'avad.

Mi'sheyakir (36-40 minutes before sunrise)

You can say:

- Blessings over tefilin and tzitzit/talit.
- Shema and amida as necessary.

K'Vatikin

You can say shema l'chatchila--and begin saying the amida exactly at sunrise.

By Third *Halachic* Hour of the Day

You have until the third *halachic* hour of the day to say:

- The blessing mekadeish et shimcha ba'rabim if you want to include the word Adonai.
- Morning shema.

By Fourth *Halachic* Hour of the Day

You have until the fourth *halachic* hour of the day to say any of the prayers from barchu until the end of the amida.

Halachic Mid-Day

You have until *halachic* mid-day, b'di'avad, to say the shacharit amida.

WHEN TO PRAY: SHACHARIT: WHAT TIME TO BEGIN

Introduction: Shacharit: When To Begin

B'di'avad, you can say shema and amida as early as 72 minutes before sunrise (alot ha'shachar). You can put on tefilin and tzitzit/talit even earlier, although you may not say the blessings over them until “mi'sheyakir”—which is later than you can say shema and amida! (See above.)

Shacharit: Earliest Time for Blessings over Tefilin and Tzitzit

Earliest time to say blessings over tefilin and tzitzit/talit is mi'sheyakir (in New York, 36-40 minutes before sunrise).

Very Early Shacharit: How To Begin

If you must say shacharit very early:

1. Say birchot ha'shachar;
2. When you reach the end of yishtabach, if it is:
 - 36 minutes (or less) before sunrise:
 - Pause after the blessing (ending El chay ha'olamim),
 - Put on your talit and tefilin, and

- Say the appropriate blessings.
- More than 36 minutes before sunrise:
 - Put on your *talit* and *tefilin* WITHOUT saying the blessings. Later, after it is less than 36 minutes before sunrise:
 - Hold your *tzitzit* and say the *tzitzit* blessing,
 - Move your *tefilin* slightly,
 - Say the *tefilin* blessings (if you are in a place in the prayer service where you are permitted to interrupt).

WHEN TO PRAY: SHACHARIT: WHAT TIME TO FINISH

When To Pray: Shacharit: What Time To Finish

You must say the *shema* no later than the end of the third halachic hour of the day in the morning. If you did not say it in time:

1. If it is before the fourth halachic hour of the day, say the entire *shacharit* service, as long as you will complete the *amida* before the end of the fourth halachic hour.
2. If it is after the fourth halachic hour of the day but before the end of the sixth halachic hour of the day, say *birchot ha'shachar* (and you may also say *korbanot*) and then skip all of *shacharit* up to the *amida*, which you should say as soon as possible.

WHEN TO PRAY: SHACHARIT: BLESSINGS OF DAYBREAK (BIRCHOT HASHACHAR)

When To Say Blessings of Daybreak (Birchot HaShachar)

Both men and women may say *birchot ha'shachar* all day, until sunset (beginning from *alot ha'shachar*—72 minutes before sunrise).

Where To Say Blessings of Daybreak (Birchot HaShachar)

You may say *birchot ha'shachar* at home, in the *synagogue*, or along the way.

NOTE You should say *birchot ha'shachar* for yourself and not have the prayer leader fulfill your requirement.

WHEN TO PRAY: SHACHARIT: L'OLAM YIHEI ADAM

When To Say Mekadeish et Shimcha BaRabim

You may only include God's name in *Baruch ata Adonai, mekadeish et shimcha ba'rabim* if:

- You have not yet said the full morning *shema*, and
- It is still before the third *halachic hour* of the day.

NOTE If you already said the morning *shema*, whether on time or not, you may still return to fill in the morning blessings. When you get to *l'olam yihei adam*, don't include God's name in the concluding blessing. Rather, say, “*Baruch ata, mekadeish et shimcha ba'rabim.*”

When To Say Baruch She'Amar

After the fourth *halachic* hour, unless in extreme circumstances, neither men nor women may say any of the prayers from *baruch she'amar* through the line before the *amida*.

Shacharit: Might Return To Sleep and Miss Latest Time To Say Shema

SITUATION You wake up after daybreak, but you might go back to sleep and thereby miss the time for saying *mekadeish et shimcha ba'rabim* and *shema* (both of which must be said by the third *halachic* hour of the day).

WHAT TO DO You should say at least the:

- Blessing on washing your hands,
- Blessings on studying *Torah*, including *Elohai neshama* and all other related sayings, and
- Complete *shema*--with the condition that:
 - If you sleep past the latest time for *shema* (*sof zman kriet shema*), this *shema* fulfills your obligation; but
 - If you do not go back to sleep, this *shema* does not fulfill your obligation.

Then, whether you go back to sleep or not, having made the condition allows you to say the full blessing of *mekadeish et shimcha ba'rabim*, including God's name, if you get to *l'olam yihei adam...* before the third hour of the day.

NOTE If you said the *shema* when you woke up but did not made the condition, you would not be able to say the concluding blessing *mekadeish et shimcha ba'rabim* with God's name when repeating the *shema* (but you may say it without using God's name: see [When To Say Mekadeish et Shimcha BaRabim](#)).

NOTE If you go back to sleep, don't repeat the blessings on washing hands and studying *Torah* when you wake up.

WHEN TO PRAY: SHACHARIT: SHEMA

SHACHARIT: SHEMA: WHEN TO SAY SHEMA

Earliest Time for Shema (and Amida)

Earliest time to say *shema* and *amida* is 72 minutes before sunrise, *b'di'avad*, since the guideline is *halachic* "day."

NOTE *L'chatchila*, you should say *shema* anytime from 3 minutes before sunrise until the end of the third *halachic* hour of the day.

Latest time To Say Shema

Shema may be said anytime during the day. But to fulfill the *halachic* requirement of saying *shema* in the morning, *shema* must be said by the end of the first quarter of the daylight hours, known as the "third hour" of the day. To derive this time, divide the time from sunrise to sunset by 4 and add that to the time for sunrise.

Late Shema: L'Olam Yehei Adam by Third Hour

SITUATION

You will not have time to say the morning *shema* by the end of the third hour of the day, but you will say *l'olam yehei adam* by then.

WHAT TO DO

Instead of saying the first line of *shema*, say:

- El melech ne'eman.

- Entire shema. Then
- Paragraph that ends in *mekadeish et shimcha b'rabim*.

Saying Shema after Proper Time

Even if you have not said the morning shema by the latest proper time (no later than the end of the first quarter of the daylight hours), say it as soon as you can.

SHACHARIT: SHEMA: WHEN TO SAY SHEMA BLESSINGS

When To Say Shema Blessings

Neither men nor women may say the blessings that precede and follow the shema after the fourth *halachic* hour of the day. In extreme circumstances (if compelled or forced), men (but not women) may still say the shema blessings until *halachic* midday.

Shacharit: Shema: El Melech Ne'eman

SITUATION

You are not with a minyan. You begin saying the shema and you realize you had forgotten to say El melech ne'eman before beginning the shema.

WHAT TO DO

Finish the shema; do not go back to say El melech ne'eman (and your saying the shema is still valid).

WHEN TO PRAY: SHACHARIT: SHEMONEH ESREI/AMIDA

When To Say Morning Amida

Say the morning amida by the first third of the day (by the 4th hour), but you may still say it until *halachic* midday, *b'di'avad*, except if you delay intentionally.

SITUATION

You are running out of time to say the morning amida. You have said the shema without saying *yishtabach* or anything following *yishtabach* (except for the shema).

WHAT TO DO

Just say the amida.

SITUATION

You wake up too late to say the amida before *halachic* noon:

WHAT TO DO

- Wait until a half-hour after *halachic* noon and then say mincha, and then
- Repeat the mincha amida as tashlumin.

NOTE

Men who intentionally delayed saying shacharit past the fourth *halachic* hour of the day may not say that amida at all and may not say the mincha amida as tashlumin.
See Minyan: Keeping Pace: Shacharit Minyan.

WHEN TO PRAY: MINCHA

Timing of Mincha

Mincha may be said from 1/2 hour after *halachic* midday until sunset.

Mincha Gedola

Mincha gedola is the earliest time that you may say mincha: from 1/2 *halachic* hour after *halachic* midday until 2 1/2 *halachic* hours before sunset.

Mincha Ketana

Mincha ketana is the preferred time period for saying mincha: from 2 1/2 halachic hours before sunset until sunset.

WHEN TO PRAY: MA'ARIV

When To Say Ma'ariv

Ma'ariv may be said from sunset (or even from plag ha'mincha if mincha was said early enough).

NOTE If you say ma'ariv before dark, you must repeat the three paragraphs of the shema once it is actually halachic night.

REASON Shema must be said after dark.

When To Say Mincha To Allow Early Ma'ariv

To be permitted to say ma'ariv early, before sunset, say mincha no later than 1 1/4 halachic hours before sunset.

WHAT TO PRAY

WHAT TO PRAY: FOR WHAT TO PRAY

Ask for Ultimate Goal

During personal prayers, ask for the ultimate goal of what you seek, not for the means of getting there.

EXAMPLES

- Ask to find an appropriate spouse very soon (rather than praying to marry a specific person).
- Ask to get a good job (rather than praying to get a specific job for which you will interview).

Praying for a Miracle

You may not pray for a miracle or any occurrence that would require a large deviation from nature.

WHAT TO PRAY: PERSONAL REQUESTS

WHAT TO PRAY: PERSONAL REQUESTS: AMIDA

Where To Add Personal Requests in Amida

You may add personal requests to the amida on weekdays (not Shabbat or Jewish festivals) in these prayers:

- For livelihood:
 - In the amida's 9th paragraph (bareich aleinu), between mi'tuvecha and u'vareich shnateinu.
- For a general request:
 - In the amida's 16th paragraph (shema koleinu), before ki ata shomei'a.
 - Even better, just before saying yihyu l'ratzon.

WHAT TO PRAY: PRAYING FOR SICK PERSON

Yehi Ratzon of Refa'einu for a Sick Person

To pray for a sick person, say the yehi ratzon inserted into the refa'einu (8th) paragraph of the amida on weekdays (but not on Shabbat or Jewish festivals) either:

- When saying the amida (add your request after "*makoteinu*"), or
- After reciting Tehilim (Psalms) for the sick person (see Concluding Tehilim with Yehi Ratzon of Refa'einu).

Praying for a Very Sick Person

When you have been praying for a sick person who might have died: assume he or she is still alive until you know otherwise.

Praying for a Sick Non-Jew

You may pray for a sick non-Jew to be healed.

NOTE Use his or her normal (first and last) names in any language he or she uses. It is customary to use the sick person's mother's name.

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS: SHEMA

SHEMA: MENTAL PREPARATION

Shema: Mental Preparation

When saying the shema, focus on the idea that God is:

- Everywhere,
- Infinite,
- Unique,
- Present now and always.

Witness to God's Uniqueness

We are witnesses to the fact that God is unique, as alluded to in the word "eid"--made up of the "ayin" of shema and the "dalet" of echad.

Love God

We are required to love God with our:

- **Hearts** (Good Inclination--yetzer ha'tov--and Evil Inclination--yetzer ha'ra),
- **Souls** (regardless of whether we are happy with Hashem's decrees or not), and
- **"Much-ness"** (interpreted to mean with all of our material belongings).

SHEMA: WHAT TO WEAR

What To Wear for Shema in Shacharit

Men should wear a talit katan (for married men, also wear a talit gadol) and tefilin in order to say shema in shacharit. However, if none are available, say the shema without them.

SHEMA: WHAT TO SAY

Men and Shema in Shacharit

Men must say shema in shacharit and the blessings before and after.

Women and Shema in Shacharit

Women are not required to say the full shema or the blessings before it. Even if women do not say the whole shema, it is proper for them to say the first line of the shema and baruch shem kevod malchuto l'olam va'ed.

NOTE If women say entire shema, even though they are not required to do so, it is a mitzva.

Amen before Shema

Some say the pre-shema blessing in shacharit or ma'ariv with the leader. Best is to finish the blessing before the leader does and then reply amen when he finishes saying the blessing.

Baruch Hu before Shema

Don't say baruch hu u'varuch shemo in response to a prayer leader saying the two pre-shema blessings.

Starting Shema before Prayer Leader Says

If you are late to shacharit or ma'ariv minyan and start the shema before the prayer leader has finished saying "emet" at the end of the shema, do not say El melech ne'eman.

SHEMA: HOW TO SAY

Covering Eyes for First Line of Shema

Cover your eyes with either hand when saying the first line of shema. This is to help prevent distraction. There is no need to remove your glasses first.

NOTE Covering your eyes for the shema is a widespread custom, not a halacha.

"Stretching Out" Echad in Shema

Stretch out the first line of the shema by pausing after saying "echad" and before saying Baruch shem kevod malchuto l'olam va'ed.

NOTE

- It is incorrect to stretch out the "chet" + vowel sound (*chaaaaaad*).
- It is incorrect (and much worse) to say a vowel sound after the "dalet" (*echadihhh!*), since that changes the word and by doing so, you are not saying the shema.
- The "dalet" stops the sound and should not be pronounced as a syllable.

Kissing Tzitziyot in Shema

Kiss all four tzitziyot in a talit gadol when saying the shema. Just kiss the front two tzitziyot if you only wear a talit katan. Doing either one is a non-binding custom, not a halacha.

GA'AL YISRAEL/ HAMELECH BI'CHVODO

Saying Ga'al Yisrael with Leader or Amen

The prayer leader should say out loud the blessing preceding the amida (ga'al yisrael for shacharit; ha'melech bi'chvodo for ma'ariv). If you:

- Are up to where he is in the prayers, say the last blessing with him (and don't say amen but do say amen in ma'ariv).
- Pray slowly and will not be able to join the minyan for saying the amida, you should start earlier than the minyan and catch up at ga'al yisrael.

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS: AMIDA

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS: AMIDA: PRE-PRAYER

Amida: Bathroom Needs

If you need to use the toilet, you may not say the amida.

NOTE If you could refrain—even with difficulty—from using the bathroom for 72 minutes after you finish the amida, it is OK b'di'avad.

Amida: Intention/Concentration (Kavana)

When saying any amida, concentrate (at least for the first blessing) on the idea that you are standing in front of God (but if you did not concentrate, don't repeat the blessing or the amida).

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS: AMIDA: WITH WHOM TO PRAY

Amida: With Whom To Pray

Say shemoneh esrei (amida) with a minyan—ideally starting together. The key is to begin with the other people, even if you will not finish at the same time. You should not begin before the congregation begins saying any amida.

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS: AMIDA: LOCATION

AMIDA: LOCATION: CHANGING

Amida: Location: Moving Away

You may not move from where you began saying the amida until you finish the amida.

EXAMPLE

You may not get on or off a bus in the middle of saying the amida.

NOTE It is better to say the abridged version of the amida (this appears in some *siddurs*) if you do not have time to say it without interruption (but you may say the abridged version only during the summer, since you must say mashiv ha'ruach and other additions during the winter).

EXCEPTIONS Walking To Avoid Being Disturbed

You may walk to another place, even in the middle of the amida, if you are disturbed or distracted where you are, such as to move away from:

- An immodestly dressed woman or other visual distraction,
- Bad smell,
- Animal, or
- Noise (such as people talking).

Walking To Correct a Mistake

You may walk across the room—even in the middle of the amida--in order to look in a book of halacha to see how to correct a mistake or omission you made while saying the amida.

AMIDA: LOCATION: WHERE TO FACE

When To Face Jerusalem

Face toward Jerusalem when saying the amida.

NOTE You may not stand with your back to an ark containing a Torah scroll, so you might need to modify the direction in which you are facing.

How To Face Jerusalem

To face Jerusalem, turn toward the “great circle”—the shortest route over the surface of a sphere or the globe (not necessarily eastward). If you don't know which is the correct direction, or if facing toward Jerusalem would make you face improperly dressed people, feces, or other distracting or disgusting items, then focus

your thoughts on Jerusalem and face any direction.

Where To Face for Wisdom or Wealth

When praying:

- To gain wisdom, face slightly south.
- To gain wealth, face slightly north.

This is a non-binding suggestion, not a halacha.

AMIDA: LOCATION: NEAR SOMEONE PRAYING

Amida: Someone Praying

Don't cross within 7 feet (4 amot, or 2.1 m) in front of someone who is saying the amida, even if there is an intervening chair or other furniture in front of the person who is praying. If you finish before someone who is directly behind you, you must wait for the person to finish his or her amida before you step directly back. However, you may step back on an angle so that you do not end up in front of the person who was behind you.

Amida: Someone Blocking the Way while Praying

You may walk in front of someone who is praying in a doorway or otherwise blocking the way, since they are not allowed to block other people from entering.

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS: AMIDA: VOLUME

How Loud To Say the Amida

Whisper the individual amida so that you can just hear yourself but people standing near you cannot hear you, whether you are praying as an individual or as a prayer leader (during your private amida).

Amida Phrases That Are Never Said Aloud

These phrases are never said aloud, not in the personal amida and not in the reader's repetition:

- Ki shem adonai ekra
- Adonai sifatai
- Elohai netzur
- Yihiyu l'ratzon imrei phi.

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS: AMIDA: ACTIONS

AMIDA: ACTIONS: STANDING

Amida: Standing Up

Stand up when saying the amida. Unless you are not able to stand unaided, you may not lean on something if you would fall over if that item were removed.

Amida: Standing with Feet Together

Stand with your feet together to resemble the angels, who only have one leg, during the private amida and for kedusha.

AMIDA: ACTIONS: SITTING

Amida: Sitting for Concentration

You may sit during the amida (and other standing prayers) to avoid distraction, such as when you might be jolted in a moving vehicle or disturbed by people passing in the airplane aisle.

AMIDA: ACTIONS: STEPPING

Amida Actions: Steps Before and After

Stepping To Begin the Amida

After saying ga'al Yisrael, take three steps forward (any size of steps is fine):

- Step forward with your right foot,
- Step forward with your left foot, then
- Step forward with your right foot so that both feet are touching at the heels and at the balls (so that you are standing as if you had one leg, like the angels!).

NOTE Taking three steps backward immediately before taking three steps forward, as instructed in some *siddurs*, defeats the purpose of taking the three steps forward. The purpose of stepping forward is to symbolically approach Hashem. If you step backward and then take your three steps forward, you are back to where you began and have not approached Hashem at all!

If you do not have enough room in front of yourself to take three steps forward when beginning your amida, step back somewhat (at least a few seconds) before you say ga'al Yisrael. There is no need to take three steps back; a single large step that will give you room to take three steps forward is all that is needed.

By making a practice of taking three steps back, people have made the stepping backward part of the entire procedure, and it should not be.

Similarly, once you have finished saying the amida and walked three steps backward, wait at least three seconds before walking forward so as not to defeat the purpose of having stepped backward. Take as many steps as you need to get back to your seat--one step should suffice.

Amida Actions: Stepping Before Kedusha

You do not need to take three steps forward (or any steps at all!) before saying kedusha.

AMIDA: ACTIONS: HITTING YOUR CHEST

When To Hit Your Chest during Prayers

Hit your chest near your heart with your fist at:

- *Chatanu...* and *...fashanu...* in slach lanu,
- First line of Avinu malkein (except on Rosh Hashana),
- Ve'al cheit and ve'al chataim in the al cheit for Yom Kippur, and
- *Ashamnu* on
 - Rosh Hashana,
 - 10 Days of Repentance,
 - Fast days, and
 - Selichot.

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS: AMIDA: INTERRUPTIONS

Responding to Prayer Leader before Elohai Netzur

SITUATION You have finished saying the final amida blessing “...ha'mevareich et amo Yisrael ba'shalom,” but you have not yet said Elohai netzur... You now need to respond to the prayer leader when he says kaddish, kedusha, blessings, or modim.

WHAT TO DO Quickly say the line “Yihiyu l'ratzon imrei phi...” and then you may reply to all parts of the public prayer, except that you may not say “Baruch hu u'varuch shemo.” Then you may say Elohai netzur.

NOTE If you need to say the mourner's kaddish, say the entire line of Yihiyu l'ratzon imrei phi and then say mourner's kaddish. You may step back at Oseh shalom in kaddish and then, after completing saying kaddish, you may say Elohai netzur.

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS: AMIDA: ERRORS

AMIDA: ERRORS: TASHLUMIN

Introduction to Amida: Errors: Tashlumin

Introduction to Missed Amida/Tashlumin

If you accidentally miss any amida, you may make up for it (tashlumin)--unless you intentionally missed it.

Amida: Errors: Missed Amida/Tashlumin: Regular Days

Missed Ma'ariv Amida

If you accidentally did not say the amida for ma'ariv:

- Say the normal shacharit amida the next morning with the other men in the minyan.
- Say ashrei.
- When the leader begins his repetition of the amida, say the amida along with him, word for word, including kedusha.
- After saying ha'el ha'kadosh, finish your amida at your own pace.
- If you are not with a minyan, say ashrei and then repeat the shacharit amida.

Missed Shacharit Amida

If you accidentally did not say the amida for shacharit:

- Say the normal mincha amida with the other men in the minyan.
- Say ashrei.
- When the leader begins his repetition of the amida, say the amida along with him, word for word, including kedusha.
- After saying ha'el ha'kadosh, finish your amida at your own pace.
- If you are not with a minyan, say ashrei and then say the mincha amida a second time.

Missed Mincha Amida

If you accidentally did not say the amida for mincha:

- Say the normal ma'ariv amida with the other men in the minyan.
- Say ashrei.
- Say the ma'ariv amida a second time. Skip modim.
- If you are not with a minyan, say ashrei a second time and repeat the ma'ariv amida.

NOTE At the next prayer service, say whatever is the correct amida for that later prayer service, even if it is not the same amida that you missed.

If you miss mincha on Friday, say the ma'ariv service for Shabbat and repeat that amida again.

NOTE Once the time for the next amida has passed, you may not make up the missed amida.

EXAMPLE

If you missed mincha on Thursday, you may only say tashlumin for mincha as long as you may still say ma'ariv, which is daybreak of Friday morning.

Amida: Errors: Missed Amida/Tashlumin: Shabbat/Jewish Festivals

Even if you forgot to say a prayer service on Shabbat and Jewish festivals, say the next prayer service amida and repeat THAT amida to make up (tashlumin) for the one you missed--even if it is no longer Shabbat or the Jewish festival.

EXCEPTION

There is no tashlumin for musaf. However, you may say musaf until sunset, even if you already said mincha.

NOTE If the time for mincha has arrived (½ hour after halachic midday), you must say mincha before saying musaf (but if you could join a mincha minyan later, you may say musaf now).

SITUATION

You miss Shabbat mincha.

WHAT TO DO

Say ata chonantanu in ma'ariv, but only for the first time you say the amida, not the second time (which is tashlumin).

SITUATION

You forget to say ma'ariv on Saturday night.

WHAT TO DO

Say ata chonantanu on Sunday morning in the second amida (which is tashlumin).

If Doubt about Whether You Said Amida

If you are not certain whether you said an amida:

- On a weekday, assume that you did not say the amida and say it anyway. Intend that:
 - If you forgot the previous amida, this makes up for it, and
 - If you did say the previous amida, the second one is a nedava (free-will “offering”).
- On Shabbat and Jewish festivals, do not say the amida twice as tashlumin.

REASON You may not say a voluntary prayer service (nedava) on these days.

Men who intentionally delayed saying shacharit past the fourth halachic hour of the day still say that amida until midday but if they did not say it by midday, they may not say tashlumin. See Minyan: Keeping Pace: Shacharit Minyan.

AMIDA: ERRORS: AMIDA ADDITIONS

INTRODUCTION: AMIDA: ERRORS: AMIDA ADDITIONS

Introduction: Amida: Errors: Amida Additions

If you forgot to say, or incorrectly said, a phrase in the amida, you must correct your errors in:

- Mshiv ha'ruach
- Ha'el ha'kadosh
- Tein bracha/Tein tal u'matar l'vracha
- Ya'ale v'yavo (except Rosh Chodesh night).

Do not correct errors in other additions/changes if you have already said the blessing for that paragraph, such as:

- Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, and Ten Days of Repentance changes (except ha'melech ha'kadosh)
- Al ha'nisim
- Aneinu
- Ya'ale v'yavo (if Rosh Chodesh night).

NOTE You may correct any prayer error within 2.5 seconds of making it.

NOTE If you omitted part of the amida that would normally require you to repeat the amida, you do not need to repeat the amida if you intend (have kavana/concentrate from the beginning of the reader's repetition until the end of the repetition) to have your amida covered by the reader's repetition.

AMIDA ERRORS: MASHIV HARUACH

Introduction to Amida Errors: Mashiv HaRuach

Saying the seasonal addition to the amida of mashiv ha'ruach... begins at musaf of Shmini Atzeret. The last time it is said is on the first day of Passover in musaf.

Amida Errors: Mashiv HaRuach

What: Mashiv HaRuach

Where: Amida 2nd paragraph

Error: Omitted or said in wrong season

SITUATION Did Not Finish Paragraph

WHAT TO DO You must return to beginning of paragraph (Ata gibor...).

SITUATION Already Finished that Paragraph

WHAT TO DO You must stop saying the amida and repeat the amida from the beginning.

EXCEPTION If you erroneously said Mashiv HaRuach in a country that needs rain after Passover, don't repeat the blessing and don't return to the beginning of the amida.

AMIDA ERRORS: HAEL HAKADOSH

Amida Errors: HaEl HaKadosh

What: Ha'el ha'kadosh

Where: Amida 3rd paragraph

Error: Said ha'el ha'kadosh instead of ha'melech ha'kadosh on days between/including Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur

SITUATION Already Finished Paragraph

WHAT TO DO You must stop saying the amida and start the amida from the beginning.

AMIDA ERRORS: CHONEIN HADAAT/YISMACH MOSHE/TIKANTA SHABBAT/ATA ECHAD/RASHEI CHODASHIM/ATA VICHARTANU

Amida Errors: Chonein HaDaat/Yismach Moshe/Tikanta Shabbat/Ata Echad/Rashei Chodashim/Ata Vichartanu

What: Chonein HaDaat/Yismach Moshe/Tikanta Shabbat/Ata Echad/Rashei Chodashim/Ata Vichartanu

Where: Amida 4th paragraph

Error #1: You Said the Wrong Paragraph on Shabbat or Jewish Festival

EXAMPLES

- You said the weekday version on Shabbat or Jewish festival--or the reverse.
- You began to say the version for a different Shabbat service (say, it is Shabbat mincha and you said the version for Shabbat shacharit).

WHAT TO DO

1) If you erroneously began the fourth paragraph for weekday on Shabbat or Jewish festival ma'ariv, shacharit, or mincha:

Finish the erroneous blessing and then begin the correct version.

2) If you erroneously began the fourth paragraph for weekday at musaf:

Stop wherever you are and say correct fourth paragraph.

3) If you began to say the fourth paragraph from the wrong Shabbat service:

It is OK, b'di'avad.

Error #2 You Said the Wrong Paragraph on a Weekday or at any Musaf:

EXAMPLE

You said the weekday fourth paragraph at musaf for Rosh Chodesh.

WHAT TO DO

Stop wherever you are and say correct fourth paragraph.

AMIDA ERRORS: TEIN BRACHA/TEIN TAL U'MATAR L'VRACHA

Amida Errors: Tein Bracha/Tein Tal U'Matar L'Vracha

Outside of Eretz Yisrael, begin saying Tein tal u'matar l'vracha at ma'ariv of Dec. 4. In a secular leap year, begin saying it at ma'ariv of Dec. 5 (but there might be rare exceptions!).

Where: Amida 9th paragraph

Error: Said tein bracha or tein tal u'matar l'vracha in the incorrect season

SITUATION Did Not Finish Paragraph

WHAT TO DO You must return to beginning of paragraph (bareich aleinu).

SITUATION Already Finished that Paragraph

WHAT TO DO

- If you said tein bracha in the wrong season, you may add tein tal u'matar l'vracha in shema koleinu, just before ki ata shomei'a...
- If you said tein tal u'matar l'vracha in the wrong season, you must return to the top of the paragraph.

SITUATION Already Finished Shema Koleinu

WHAT TO DO If you did not correct your mistake in shema koleinu, you must return to the beginning of bareich aleinu.

SITUATION Already Finished Amida (such as you are ready to take 3 steps backward when you realize your error.)

WHAT TO DO You must repeat the entire amida.

NOTE If you said tein tal u'matar l'vracha in the wrong season but you are in a place that needs rain, you do not need to correct yourself or repeat that blessing.

AMIDA ERRORS: YA'ALEH V'YAVO

Amida Errors: Ya'aleh V'Yavo

SITUATION You forgot to say ya'aleh v'yavo in the 15th amida paragraph (retzei) when required on Rosh Chodesh day or chol ha'moed.

STATUS Not Yet Ready To Take 3 Steps Back

WHAT TO DO As soon as you realize that you forgot, return to the beginning of retzei and continue.

STATUS Ready To Take 3 Steps Back

WHAT TO DO You must repeat the entire amida from the beginning.

NOTE If you forgot to add ya'aleh v'yavo on Rosh Chodesh night, even if you just finished retzei when you realized that you had omitted ya'aleh v'yavo, do not repeat the amida.

AMIDA ERRORS: SIM SHALOM

Amida Errors: Sim Shalom

SITUATION It is mincha for a fast day and you said shalom rav instead of sim shalom.

WHAT TO DO If you realize that you erred before you finish saying that blessing, go back and say sim shalom. If you have already finished the final blessing, don't repeat.

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS: AMIDA: AMBIGUITIES

Tein Bracha If in Eretz Yisrael Cheshvan 7/Dec. 4

If you are in Eretz Yisrael between Cheshvan 7 (when people in Eretz Yisrael begin saying tein tal u'matar l'vracha) and December 4 (when people outside Eretz Yisrael begin saying the phrase):

- Follow your home custom (say tein bracha in the 9th amida paragraph, bareich aleinu).
- Then, add tein tal u'matar l'vracha in the 16th amida paragraph (shema koleinu) between al teshiveinu and ki ata shomei'a.

REASON To cover both situations.

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS: AMIDA: READER'S REPETITION

AMIDA: READER'S REPETITION: BEGINNING

Standing for Reader's Repetition of Amida

Ashkenazim commonly stand for the entire reader's repetition of the amida, but it is not the universal custom.

Adonai Sifatai by Prayer Leader

The prayer leader should say Adonai sifatai... quietly before saying the reader's repetition of the amida out loud.

Ki Shem by Prayer Leader

The prayer leader should not say ki shem... at all since some people have the custom of not ever saying ki shem... .

AMIDA: READER'S REPETITION: REPLYING

Replying during Your Private Amida

If you have finished the amida's yihiyu l'ratzon (but have not yet finished the segment from Elohai netzur through u'chshanim kadmoniyot), you may reply to:

- Bar'chu,
- Kedusha,
- Amen to ha'el ha'kadosh,
- Amen to shomei'a tefila,
- Modim anachnu lach (just those 3 words),

- Birkat cohanim, and
- Kaddish.

However, you may not say anything else (such as other *amens*) until you have completed the entire amida (including the last word, *kadmoniot*).

AMIDA: READER'S REPETITION: KEDUSHA

Say Minyan's Version of Kedusha

At a minyan with a custom different from yours, say their version of kedusha.

Bowing for Kara Zeh El Zeh

Some people bow from side to side for kara zeh el zeh ... but it is not required.

AMIDA: READER'S REPETITION: PRIESTLY BLESSING (BIRKAT COHANIM)

Birkat Cohanim: Pausing in Private Amida

When the priests/cohanim begin the Priestly Blessing (birkat cohanim), you must pause when saying your private amida and wait until they finish before continuing your praying.

Birkat Cohanim: Seeing Each Other

A cohen/priest does not need to see the congregants and they do not need to see him during birkat cohanim. Birkat cohanim is effective even if you are outside the synagogue when you hear it. But if you are at the front of the synagogue such that you would be behind the cohanim when they turn to face the congregation and say the blessing, you should move far enough so the cohanim will be facing you during the blessing.

Birkat Cohanim: Looking at Priests'/Cohanim's Hands

No one should look at the priests'/cohanim's hands while the cohanim say the Priestly Blessing (birkat cohanim).

Birkat Cohanim: Talit over Child's Head

It is a custom for fathers to cover their sons' heads with their talit while the priests/cohanim bless the congregation.

REASON So the boys do not to look at the Divine Presence (shechina) present at the priests'/cohanim's fingertips at that time.

NOTE The priests'/cohanim's hands should be covered by a talit anyway.

NOTE This custom applies to ANYTIME the priests/cohanim say birkat cohanim, whether on:

- Jewish festivals (the only time the priests/cohanim say this blessing outside of Eretz Yisrael), or
- Daily (as is done in Eretz Yisrael).

Birkat Cohanim: Priest/Cohen in the Room

If a priest/cohen is in the room during the Priestly Blessing (birkat cohanim), he must bless the non-cohanim. If he will not say the blessing, he must leave the room immediately after modim.

WHAT TO PRAY: SET PRAYERS: AVINU MALKEINU TO PSALMS

INTRODUCTION TO AVINU MALKEINU TO PSALMS

Introduction to Avinu Malkeinu to Psalms

It was not traditional for women or girls to say any of shacharit after the amida, other than saying alenu.

AVINU MALKEINU

When To Say Avinu Malkeinu

Say avinu malkeinu, even if you are praying by yourself, after amida of shacharit and mincha on:

- Public fast days, and
- Between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur.

Avinu Malkeinu on Tzom Gedalia

On Tzom Gedalia, in avinu malkeinu, say katveinu (not zachreinu).

TORAH READING

TORAH READING: OFFERING/DECLINING ALIYA

Consecutive Aliyot for Family Members

Consecutive aliyot (going up to the Torah during Torah reading) should not be given to brothers or to a father and son unless the aliyot are from different Torah scrolls. This is a custom.

Declining an Aliya

You should not decline an aliya, if one is offered to you.

TORAH READING: THE BIMA

Shortest Route to Bima

When you go up to the Torah, take the shortest route to the bima. This is a non-binding custom, not a halacha.

Stand on Bima after Aliya

After getting an aliya to the Torah, stand on the bima until the next aliya has ended. This is to show respect for the Torah and not appear to be running away.

Returning to your Seat after Aliya

When you go back to your seat after an aliya to the Torah, take the longer way around the bima--even if it is inconvenient or you want to avoid someone who is along the way back to your seat.

TORAH READING: SAYING TORAH BLESSINGS

When Saying Torah Blessing

When called to the Torah, either:

- Say the blessing while looking to the side of the Torah, or
- Roll the Torah together before you say the blessing.

How Loud To Say Torah Blessings

Say the blessings over the Torah loudly enough for everyone to hear and respond "amen."

TORAH READING: WHAT TO DO WHILE ON BIMA

Torah Reading: What To Do While on Bima

The oleh (person who gets the aliya) should lightly hold on to the handle of the Torah.

The oleh should read the Torah quietly along with the reader (ba'al koreh).

TORAH READING: ALIYA DONATION

Donation after Aliya

If you receive an *aliya* to the *Torah* on *Shabbat* and *Jewish festival* mornings, it is customary give a donation to the *synagogue*, but you are not required to do so by *halacha* (and you may not give the donation ON *Shabbat!*).

NOTE A *synagogue* may request a donation on *Shabbat* or *Jewish festivals* from someone who has received an *aliya* on *Shabbat* and may give that person a card to mail in after *Shabbat* has ended.

NOTE There is no expectation of giving a donation for *aliyot* on weekdays or at *mincha* on *Shabbat*.

MOURNER'S KADDISH

Responding to Mourner's Kaddish

When answering mourner's *kaddish*, respond after the person who you hear first.

Late in Joining Mourner's Kaddish

SITUATION All mourners should say *kaddish* in unison. You are a mourner. When you go to *minyan*, the other mourners are already saying mourner's *kaddish*.

WHAT TO DO You may join in as long as the other mourners have not yet said *Yihei shmei*. But you should join the other mourners wherever they are in the *kaddish* and not start from the beginning on your own.

More on Mourner's Kaddish

See Mourner's *Kaddish*.

U'VA L'TZION

Kadosh in U'Va L'Tzion with the Minyan

Say *kadosh* three times in *u'va l'tzion* together with the *minyan* in order to mimic the angels who say *kadosh* together with other angels.

NOTE You should interrupt what you are saying as long as it is permissible to do so, such as before *baruch she'amar* or after you have finished your *amida*.

HALLEL

Saying Hallel with a Minyan

When saying half- and full *Hallel*:

- It is preferable to say half-*hallel* with a *minyan*.
- You do not need to say full *hallel* with a *minyan*.

Order of Prayers with Hallel

To say *hallel* on *Shabbat* and *Jewish festivals*:

- You do not need to say full *hallel* immediately after *shacharit*.
- You may say *musaf* and/or *hallel* after *mincha*.
- Once it is time for *mincha*, you must say *mincha* before saying *musaf* or *hallel* (if you have not said *musaf* or *hallel* yet).

Timing of Hallel and Musaf

You may say *hallel* and *musaf* until sunset.

Hodu in Hallel

In hallel, the congregation repeats the line “*Hodu...*” after each of the four lines that the prayer leader says. Then the congregation says the next line before the prayer leader says it.

NOTE The congregation does not say the line “*Hodu...*” before the leader first says it.

BIRKAT HACHODESH

Announcing the New Month

Each month (except before Rosh Hashana), we say the blessing over the new month (birkat ha'chodesh). On Shabbat morning preceding the new moon, at the end of Torah reading, we announce the coming of the new month (Rosh Chodesh), including:

- The name of the month.
- The day and time the new moon will appear in Jerusalem.
- The day of the week that begins the new month (and sometimes the last day of the previous month).

We say some prayers that ask for good health, prosperity, and other good things.

Announcing Two-Day Rosh Chodesh Starting Shabbat

If Rosh Chodesh will be two days starting next Shabbat, say “Yihiyeh b'yom Shabbat kodesh ul'macharato b'yom rishon.”

TACHANUN

Shacharit: Tachanun: How To Say

See the Tachanun Section in How To Pray in Synagogue.

Shacharit: Tachanun: When Not To Say

Tachanun is related to judgment. Tachanun is NOT said at times of *din*/judgment:

- At night,
- On Tish'a B'Av,
- In a house of mourning, and
- Yom Kippur.

Tachanun is also NOT said at times of *simcha*/happiness:

At mincha before (and certainly not on):

- Shabbat,
- Jewish festivals,
- Rosh Hashana, and
- Rosh Chodesh.

At any prayer service on:

- Isru chag (the day after each of the Jewish festivals),
- Entire month of Nisan.

REASON Nisan has more than 15 days that we omit tachanun, and once we omit it for most of the month, we don't say it at all.

- All of Chanuka, Purim, Shushan Purim, Tu B'Shvat, Rosh Chodesh, and from Rosh Chodesh Sivan until the day after Shavuot.
- Tishrei from shacharit before Yom Kippur until after Simchat Torah (Shmini Atzeret in Eretz Yisrael). Resume saying tachanun:

- Second day of Cheshvan, or
- Day after isru chag of Simchat Torah (this is the more prevalent custom among Ashkenazim). Each person should follow his or her family or community custom.

Any time these people are present in your minyan (or in any other minyan in the building) either before a circumcision or while still involved in the brit or meal:

- Mohel,
- Sandak, or
- Father of a boy having his circumcision.

NOTE This even applies to mincha if the brit will take place after mincha.

Any time a groom is present during the first week after marriage.

PSALM OF THE DAY/SHIR SHEL YOM

Shacharit: Psalm of the Day/Shir Shel Yom: Daytime

You may fulfill your requirement of saying Psalm of the Day (shir shel yom) only during the daytime.

PSALM 27/L'DAVID ADONAI ORI V'YISH'I

When To Say Psalm 27/L'David Adonai Ori V'Yish'i

Begin saying L'David Adonai ori v'yish'i (Psalm 27) on the first day (at night) of Elul, not the first day of Rosh Chodesh Elul (the 30th of Av). The last day to say this Psalm is 22nd of Tishrei (Shmini Atzeret). This Psalm is recited twice daily, in shacharit after shir shel yom and in ma'ariv after alenu, including on Shabbat and Jewish festivals.

ALENU

Who Should Say Alenu

Any Jew who happens to be in a synagogue should say alenu with the minyan, even if he is not joining the minyan for that prayer service.

When To Say Alenu

There is no time limit on when alenu may be said. Alenu should be said after each prayer service.

PSALMS/TEHILIM

Value of Saying Tehilim

The main value of saying tehilim is not in saying the tehilim themselves, but in the prayer said AFTER saying the tehilim (for someone to get well, for employment, etc.). The saying of tehilim strengthens the prayer enormously.

Concluding Tehilim with Yehi Ratzon of Refa'einu

If you say Psalms/tehilim for a sick person, you should conclude with the yehi ratzon that is sometimes added in shemoneh esrei in refa'einu.

Tehilim Additions to Regular Prayers

Rabbis may have their congregations add Psalms/tehilim or other prayers to standard services.

When To Say Tehilim

Both genders may say tehilim at night without restriction on which tehilim may be said; they may be said all night (or day).

SET PRAYERS: MINCHA

Mincha: Tzidkatecha

Girls and women never need to say *tzidkatecha* on Saturday *mincha*.

Mincha: Tachanun

If the *minyán* gets to *tachanun* after sunset, say *tachanun* until up to 8 minutes after sunset but do not put down your head for the first section.

SET PRAYERS: MA'ARIV

Shir HaMa'alot Hinei Bar'chu

Saying *shir ha'ma'alot hinei bar'chu*... before *ma'ariv* is a custom of some people, but it is not necessary.

Bar'chu at End of Ma'ariv

In *Eretz Yisrael*, it is customary to say *bar'chu* again at the end of *ma'ariv*.

NOTE This is not the custom outside of *Eretz Yisrael*, but if someone does say *bar'chu* again, the other people may respond.

When To Respond to Bar'chu

Wait until the leader has finished saying the line, “*Bar'chu et Adonai ha'mevorach*” before responding with “*Baruch Adonai ha'mevorach l'olam va'ed*.”

Saying HaMelech BiChvodo with Prayer Leader

As with the blessing *ga'al yisrael* in *shacharit*, the prayer leader should say out loud the blessing preceding the *ma'ariv amida*: *ha'melech bi'chvodo*. If you:

- Are up to where he is in the prayers, you may say the last blessing with him.
- Pray slowly and will not be able to join the *minyán* for saying the *amida*, you should start earlier than the *minyán* and catch up at *ha'melech bi'chvodo*.

Halachot of Ma'ariv Amida

See [What To Pray: Set Prayers: Amida](#).

When To Say Ma'ariv Psalm 27

Say Psalm 27 after *alenu* during *Elul* and most of *Tishrei*. For more about Psalm 27, see [When To Say Psalm 27/L'David Adonai Ori V'Yish'i](#).

BEDTIME SHEMA

HAMAPIL

HaMapil and Shema: Halacha, Not Custom

Saying “*ha'mapil*” and *shema* before going to sleep is *halacha*, not custom.

When To Say HaMapil

Ha'mapil may only be said at night, even if you normally stay awake all night (such as if you work a night shift).

NOTE The latest time you may say the *ha'mapil* prayer is daybreak (*alot ha'shachar*).

HaMapil When You May Not Fall Asleep

Do not say the *ha'mapil* prayer if you are flying through the night but are not certain that you will be able to sleep.

NOTE This also applies to anytime when you might not fall asleep at night.

If You Cannot Fall Asleep after HaMapil

If you cannot fall asleep after having said *ha'mapil* at night, you may talk, eat, say blessings, etc., but do not say the *ha'mapil* prayer again when you go back to bed.

SELICHOT

Selichot

You may say *selichot* by yourself.

NOTE You may only say the paragraph with God's 13 Attributes/Midot (beginning with *El melech...*) if you are praying with a minyan.

SIDDUR GUIDE: HOW TO PRAY IN SYNAGOGUE

Introduction to How To Pray in Synagogue

The synagogue (*shul*) prayer service may confuse the unfamiliar. Here is a brief guide to following the congregational prayers.

NOTE This Guide may be printed and given to people who are unfamiliar with the prayer services (or to people who are not yet completely comfortable in following the prayer services). It may be particularly useful for people who do not normally attend weekday minyans, especially people who are saying kaddish!

A printed copy may also be useful as a guide to a specific siddur. Before the prayer service takes place, the actual page numbers may be copied from the siddur onto the pages of the Guide for quick reference during the service. (This could be done by the user or by someone who is more familiar with the prayer services, as an aid to help the user follow what is going on.)

General Rules in Following/Answering the Leader

Ends/Beginnings of Paragraphs

Each individual says most of the prayers, but the leader sets the pace. He says out loud the last line or two of many paragraphs (and sometimes the next paragraph's first few words), to help others find where he is in the prayers.

Hint If you get lost, listen to the leader and try to find those words at the beginning or end of one of the paragraphs near where you think you should be!

Saying Amen

When the prayer leader/chazan says a blessing (Baruch ata adonai...) and finishes the final word, everyone usually replies amen.

Baruch Hu U'Varuch Shemo

It is common (but not required) to say baruch hu u'varuch shemo after hearing God's name (Adonai) when it is said in a blessing.

EXCEPTION No one should say baruch hu u'varuch shemo between bar'chu and the beginning of the amida.

NOTE Some people say the phrase very loudly and slowly (pretentiously), but this wrong practice may prevent themselves and others from hearing the blessing's end and knowing when to say amen.

Praying Shacharit

This list mainly includes the parts of the prayer service that are said together or when in synagogue, not those said individually or at home.

NOTE If you need to use the toilet between *baruch she'amar* and *yishtabach*, say *asher yatzar* after saying *yishtabach* and before saying *yotzeir or*.

NOTE If you need to speak during the early part of *shacharit*, it is best to speak after *yishtabach* but before *bar'chu*. You should not speak during *psukei d'zimra* unless it is urgent or about the *shacharit* service.

Initial Blessings/Asher Natan

The initial blessings beginning with *asher natan...* through the end of *ven brit* may be said at home.

Ma Tov

Upon arriving in *synagogue* in the morning, say *Ma tovu...*

Talit

Married men (and also those with a tradition to wear a *talit* from *bar mitzva* age) normally put on their *talit gadol* on all days (except *Tish'a b'Av* morning).

For more details, see *Talit (Gadol)*.

Tefilin

On weekdays, all men put on *tefilin*. They do not interrupt putting on *tefilin* to respond to other's prayers, not even to say *amen*.

For more details, see *Tefilin*.

Birchat HaShachar/Initial Blessings

If you have not yet said the initial blessings beginning with *asher natan...* through the end of *ven brit*, say them once you are in *synagogue* and after you have put on *talit/tefilin* (if relevant).

Everyone stands while the prayer leader reads the initial blessings aloud. They say *amen* after each one.

NOTE Individuals should not intend to fulfill their personal requirement to say those blessings by answering *amen*, since everyone should say the blessings for him/herself.

L'Olam Yehei Adam/Shema

L'olam yehei adam is said quietly, with everyone saying the *shema* line together.

Order of the Sacrifices

Some read (quietly) the order of the sacrifices.

13 Principles of Talmud Explanation/Kaddish

- The 13 principles of how the *Talmud* is explained are read quietly.
- *Kaddish* is said by any mourners.
- Everyone says, *amen, yihei shmei raba...*

NOTE Everyone, not just mourners, stands for *kaddish*; this is the custom for all kaddishes and for all services.

Mizmor Shir/Kaddish

- *Mizmor shir* is read quietly.
- Another *kaddish* is said by the mourners.

Baruch SheAmar

Baruch she'amar is said by everyone, standing. The leader says the final blessing out loud.

Verses (Psukim)

The following several pages are verses (psukim) from various sources, said by everyone quietly.

NOTE The leader says several intermediary lines aloud due to their importance and so that everyone else knows where he is.

Mizmor L'Toda/Yehi Chevod

- Everyone stands to say mizmor l'toda quietly (just for this paragraph).
- The next paragraph (yehi chevod) is read quietly.

NOTE Don't say mizmor l'toda the day before or during *Passover* (the Thanksgiving offering Toda was chametz), or before Yom Kippur.

Ashrei and 5 Psalms

Ashrei and the following five psalms (#146 to 150) are said quietly by everyone; the leader says the final line or two out loud.

Baruch Adonai L'Olam Amen v'Amen

Baruch adonai... is said by the leader.

VaYevarech David

The next section (from va'yevarech David until after bar'chu) is said quietly by everyone while standing.

Shirat HaYam

Shirat ha'yam is read quietly by everyone.

Yishtabach/Kaddish

Yishtabach is said quietly by everyone together. The leader says the final line of *yishtabach* out loud and then kaddish.

Bar'chu

- The leader says Bar'chu et Adonai ha'mevorach.
- Everyone bows from the waist and replies (aloud), Baruch Adonai ha'mevorach l'olam va'ed (which is then repeated by the leader).
- Everyone says the blessing's ending ...u'vorei et ha'kol.

Shema and Its Blessings

The next paragraphs lead up to the shema:

- Leader says, "Et shem ha'el..."
- Everyone says aloud, together: Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh... and Baruch kevod Adonai mi'mkomo.
- Leader says the final line or two of La'el baruch ne'imot... and everyone responds amen.
- Everyone says ahavat olam quietly.
- Leader reads the final lines aloud.

NOTE It is the custom to not say amen to the blessing before shema.

- Everyone says the first line of the shema together and aloud, but Baruch shem... silently.

- Everyone reads the shema individually, and the leader repeats out loud Adonai eloheichem emet.
- Everyone reads the next paragraphs, through ezrat avoteinu, together, quietly.

Mi Chamocha

Stand for Mi chamocha until after the amida.

Adonai Yimloch

Everyone reads together and aloud: Adonai yimloch... until the final blessing before the amida.

NOTE At some time before completing that blessing, step back far enough (one large step is fine) so that you can take three small steps forward to begin the amida. If there is no room to step back, you may pray the amida without stepping forward.

The Amida

Amida: Details and Direction

For more details on saying the amida, see [What To Pray: Set Prayers: Amida](#)

For where to face during the amida, see [Amida: Location: Where To Face](#)

Stepping To Begin the Amida

After saying ga'al Yisrael, symbolically approach God by taking three steps forward (any size of steps is fine):

- Step forward with your right foot,
- Step forward with your left foot, and
- Step forward with your right foot.
- Bring your left foot to meet the right one, so that both feet are touching at the heels and at the balls (so that you are standing as if you had one leg, like the angels!)

Bowing in the Amida

Next, with your feet still together, do knee-bowing at the start and end of the first paragraph. You will also be bowing at:

- Beginning of modim (waist-bowing).
- End of modim (knee-bowing at Baruch ata Adonai of the blessing ending u'lecha na'eh l'hodot).

NOTE For how to do knee-bowing and waist-bowing, see [Amida: Actions: Bowing](#).

Slach Lanu

In slach lanu, when saying ki chatanu and ki fashanu, hit your chest over your heart with your fist. Reason We are saying that we sinned, so we strike our heart for leading us astray.

Ending the Amida

Symbolically take leave of God by taking three steps back after Adonai tzuri v'go'ali:

- Step back on your left foot,
- Step back on your right foot,
- Step back on your left foot (and then place your right foot next to your left foot).
- Bow to the left while saying Oseh shalom bi'mromav...,
- Bow to the right while saying Hu ya'aseh shalom alenu, and
- Bow to the middle (straight in front of you) while saying Ve'al kol yisrael v'imru amen.

Then pause for at least three seconds before walking forward or sitting down.

Reader's Repetition of Amida

At kedusha, everyone stands (even if they were sitting so far for the amida's repetition) with their feet together, again imitating the angels who only have one leg.

- The leader says nekadeish (in some places, everyone says nekadeish).
- Everyone says the next line together (kadosh, kadosh, kadosh...).

NOTE When saying kadosh each of the three times, rise up on the balls of your feet and return to “feet flat” so you will be able to rise up three times total. Some people also rise on their feet when they say the next line (baruch kevod), but it is neither required nor a universal practice.

- After the leader says Halleluya, everyone else may move their feet (or sit down, if that is their custom).
- On fast days, the leader says an extra paragraph in shacharit (other paragraphs in mincha are said by everyone).

NOTE These extra paragraphs usually appear in small--or tiny!--print in siddurs near where they get said. Look for asterisks to show where to insert them. It might be helpful before beginning shacharit to ask someone to point out exactly what to say and when.

Tachanun

When To Say Tachanun

Tachanun is usually said on weekdays.

How To Say Tachanun

Tachanun is said differently, depending on if there is a Torah scroll in the room, as follows:

Tachanun If Torah Scroll Present

Tachanun with Torah Scroll: Sun., Tues., Wed., Fri.

To say tachanun on Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, when a Torah scroll is present:

- Say Va'yomer David sitting down, while resting your head on your left arm (unless you are wearing tefilin on your left arm, in which case lean onto your right arm).

NOTE Rest your head on your left arm even if you are left-handed. Some type of cloth should separate your face and your arm when doing this, but if your arm is bare and you don't have a talit or other garment with which to cover your arm, you do not need to put your head down at all. There is no problem with not being permitted to put your face on your bare arm, just that there is no point in doing so.

- When you reach shomer Yisrael, lift your head up and sit normally while saying the paragraphs until v'anachnu lo neida ma na'aseh.
- Before saying “na'aseh,” stand up for the remainder of tachanun.

Tachanun with Torah Scroll: Mon., Thur.

To say tachanun on Mondays and Thursdays, when a Torah scroll is present:

- Say tachanun standing until Va'yomer David... at which time, everyone sits down.
- Follow the directions above for the remainder of tachanun.

Tachanun If No Torah Scroll

Put your head down only if there is a Torah scroll in the room. When you say tachanun in a room in which there is no Torah scroll, sit for the first part (without resting your head on your arm), remaining sitting for

shomer yisrael..., then stand for *va'anachnu lo neida*.

For more about putting your head down for Tachanun, see Tachanun.

Hallel

- When hallel is said, most of the psalms are said quietly by everyone. (In some *synagogues*, several of the psalms are sung in unison.)
- The lines beginning Hodu l'adonai... are read aloud by the leader.
- Everyone else responds aloud, Hodu l'adonai... and reads quietly the next line (which the leader then reads aloud when they finish).
- Similarly, Ana adonai is read responsively by the leader, followed by everyone else.

Kaddish

The leader says kaddish out loud.

Torah Reading (Mondays and Thursdays)

- Everyone reads quietly the phrases va'yehi be'nso'a... and brich shmei.
- The Torah is taken out and carried to the bima.
- As each man (called an oleh) is called up to the Torah:
 - The oleh says Bar'chu...
 - Everyone responds Baruch Adonai....,
 - The oleh repeats that line and says a blessing.
 - Everyone answers amen.
- After each reading, the oleh says one more blessing and everyone replies amen.
- After the third aliya, the Torah is lifted up.
- Everyone says, V'zot haTorah...
- The Torah is rolled and wrapped.
- Meanwhile, the leader reads four paragraphs beginning, Yehi ratzon mi'lifnei avinu...
- The final paragraph, Acheinu kol bet yisrael... is read by everyone aloud.
- The Torah is put back while everyone reads two psalms quietly.

Ashrei/U'va L'Tzion

- Everyone reads ashrei quietly, followed by la'menatzeiach and u'va l'tziyon.
- Everyone together says, Kadosh, kadosh, kadosh and Baruch kevod.

Kaddish

The leader says kaddish.

Alenu

Everyone says alenu together.

Kaddish

Mourners say kaddish.

Psalm for the Day

Psalm for that day is read by everyone.

Kaddish

One more kaddish is said by the mourners.

L'David

- During Elul and into Tishrei, *L'David* is read by everyone.
- One more kaddish is said by the mourners.

Praying Ma'ariv

V'hu Rachum

Everyone reads the two introductory lines of v'hu rachum.

Bar'chu

- Leader says bar'chu.
- Everyone else responds, baruch Adonai....
- The leader repeats that line.
- Everyone reads the next paragraph/blessing.
- The leader says that final line out loud.
- Everyone responds amen.

NOTE Don't say baruch hu u'varuch shemo at all during ma'ariv.

Shema and Its Blessings

- The leader repeats the final two words of the shema and the word *emet*.
- Everyone continues quietly saying the phrases until Mi chamocha.
- Mi chamocha is said by everyone together including by the leader, who then also reads the next line.
- Everyone says Adonai yimloch... together, continuing through the end of the next blessing, which is repeated by the leader.
- Everyone says *hashkiveinu* quietly.
- The leader says the blessing shomer amo Yisrael la'ad out loud.
- Baruch Adonai l'olam... is said through to the end by everyone quietly.
- The leader says the final line and the final blessing out loud.

NOTE Baruch Adonai l'olam is not said in Eretz Yisrael.

Kaddish

The leader says kaddish.

Amida

Everyone says the amida silently and individually.

Kaddish

The leader says kaddish.

Alenu

Everyone says alenu together.

Kaddish

Kaddish is said by any mourners.