

The Step – by – Step Pesach Seder – Part 1:

Kadesh – Recite the Kiddush:

1. The actual Kiddush should be made as soon as it is nightfall. The preferred time for nightfall for this year of 5770 is 8:31 PM. One can be lenient and begin at 8:23 PM. **One should not make Kiddush earlier than that time.** If the late start will cause Shalom Bayis issues, please contact your Rabbi for practical suggestions. All preliminary activities may begin earlier. [such as singing the Kadesh, Urchatz...song]
2. The Matzos should be covered during the Kiddush. The rule throughout the Seder is that the Matzos should be uncovered except when the wine is held.
3. The leader of the Seder should not pour his own cup, but another person should pour for him. Some have the custom that no one pours his own cup.
4. There are different customs as to who recites the Kiddush:
 - The leader of the Seder recites the Kiddush and the others listen.
 - Each head of the household recites the Kiddush and their family members listen.
 - Everyone recites the Kiddush together, including the women and children.
5. All the participants should have their own cup of wine, hold it during Kiddush, whether they are listening or reciting it.
6. It is preferable to use red wine. If there is a white wine of a better quality, one may use it; but it is preferable to mix it with a little red wine to give it a red color. In that case one should preferably pour the white wine into the red wine when mixing on Yom Tov.
7. Sparkling wine is acceptable if it tastes like wine.
8. If one can not tolerate even weak wine, one may use grape juice.
9. The Kiddush cup must be able to contain at least three fluid ounces. On a Friday night, the first cup must contain at least 4 ½ fluid ounces.
10. When reciting the Kiddush, one should have in mind to fulfill two Mitzvos: The Mitzvah of Kiddush and the Mitzvah of drinking the first of the four cups of wine.
11. When saying the “Shehechyanu” blessing one should have in mind that it applies to the Holiday and all the Mitzvos of the Seder.
12. Ideally, one should drink the entire cup. If this is not possible, it is sufficient to drink the majority of the cup. It is better to use a small cup containing the minimum quantity that can be finished, than a large cup that can not be finished.
13. Ideally the cup should be drunk without pausing. If this is not possible, one may stop once for a short pause during the drinking. If this too is not possible, one fulfills his obligation if he drinks the required quantity within four minutes.
14. Men must recline on their left side when drinking the wine. [The same is true for a left-handed person.]
15. If one did not recline while drinking the first cup, and realized after its completion, he should not drink it again.
16. One is permitted to drink on-alcoholic beverages between the first and second cups.

Urchatz – Wash the Hands:

1. All the participants should wash their hands in the same manner as is done before eating bread or Matzo, except that no blessing is made.
2. Some have the custom that the leader of the Seder has his hands washed at his seat by the table by one of the children.
3. Care should be taken not to speak after the washing until the Karpas is eaten, unless the talking is related to the performance of the Mitzvah.

Karpas – Eat the Vegetable:

1. Karpas is a vegetable, preferably one that is eaten raw. The most commonly used are celery, sweet radish, cabbage, and parsley. [make sure to inspect for insects before Yom Tov where necessary] Some use potato. Lettuce should not be used, since one may not use a vegetable that qualifies as Maror.
2. Each person at the Seder is given a piece less than 30cc.
3. The Karpas should be held with one’s fingers.
4. The Karpas is dipped in salt water.
5. Each person recites the blessing “Borei P’ri Hoadama.”
6. When reciting the blessing, one should have in mind that this blessing should include the Maror that will be eaten later in the Seder.
7. One is not obligated to recline when eating the Karpas, but one may do so if he wishes. The prevalent custom is to eat it without reclining.
8. The remaining Karpas may be removed from the table. Some have a custom to leave a piece of Karpas on the Seder plate until the meal. The salt water may be removed.

Yachatz – Break the Middle Matzo:

1. The middle Matzo is broken into two uneven pieces.
2. The smaller piece is returned to the Seder plate or Matzo cover, and the larger one is wrapped in a cloth and put aside to use as the Afikoman.
3. The smaller piece should be at least the size of 25 grams, and it is therefore advisable to select a large Matzo for the middle Matzo.
4. It is a custom for the children to take the Afikoman and hide it when the leader of the Seder is not watching.

Maggid – Relate the Story of the Haggadah:

1. Before beginning the narrative of the Haggadah one should have in mind to fulfill the obligation to relate the story of the Exodus from Egypt.
2. The Mitzvah is not fulfilled by mere recital of the Haggadah if the words are not understood. Those who are not familiar with Hebrew are strongly advised to spend time studying the Haggadah, in order to turn the Seder night into a deep and meaningful experience.
3. It is better to read the Haggadah in a language that you understand than to read it in Hebrew and not understand it at all.
4. The leader must ensure that everyone understands at least the most essential sections of the narrative.
5. The most important sections of the narrative are the ten plagues and from the section that begins "Rabbi Gamliel used to say" until the second cup is drunk.
6. Everyone can either recite the Haggadah or listen to the leader read it, as long as one understands what is being said. Most people follow the custom to recite the Haggadah if they are fluent in Hebrew.
7. The leader of the Seder should hold the broken middle Matzo while saying "Ha Lachma Anya."
8. The Seder plate containing the Matzos should be removed from the table, or at least moved away from the leader, after saying "Ha Lachma Anya." The second cup is filled.
9. The custom is for the youngest child capable of asking the "Ma Nishtana." If the child is hesitant, his father or mother may assist him. If there are no children present, the wife or any of the participants should ask the four questions.
10. After the "Ma Nishtana" the Seder plate containing the Matzos should be returned to their place in front of the leader of the Seder and left uncovered during the narrative. The story of the slavery and exodus is now related in detail.
11. One should not recline during the narrative – one should sit upright with awe and respect.
12. A total of 16 drops of wine are spilled out when enumerating the ten plagues and the surrounding text, as indicated in the Haggadah.
13. One should use the index finger to spill out the one. If a person is too sensitive to use his finger, he should spill out the drops by tilting the cup.
14. If necessary the cups should be refilled before saying "Rabbi Gamliel etc."
15. The leader should hold up the broken middle Matzo when saying "This Matzo etc."
16. The leader should hold up the Maror when saying "This Maror etc."
17. The leader should **not** hold up the shank bone when saying "This Korban Pesach etc." However, the custom is to look at the shank bone.
18. You drink the second cup of wine [while reclining] at the conclusion of the Maggid. If a man forgot to recline he should immediately drink another cup without a blessing.

Rochtza – Wash the Hands:

1. Wash your hands like you normally would do for the eating of Matzo. You do recite the blessing of "Al Netilas Yodayim."
2. The leader of the Seder should announce that one may not speak after washing the hands until after "Korech," unless it concerns the Mitzvos.
3. He should inform everyone about the next few steps of the Seder, and tell them the relevant laws.
4. Each person should be given a piece of Matzo weighing at least 25 grams in preparation for the Mitzvah of eating Matzo. Children may be given 10 grams each.
5. The steps "Rochtza, Motzi, and Matzo" should be announced.
6. Some have the custom that the leader of the Seder has his hands washed at his seat by the table by one of the children.