

Halachos of taking the 4 minim

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- The 4 minim don't have to be tied together, but it's still a mitzvah to tie them with a double knot that would potentially be assur to tie on Shabbos.
- The koshekel (the piece that the hadasim and aravos go into) is considered a knot
- It can be tied with anything and it's not considered like adding onto the 4 minim
- If it wasn't knotted before Yom tov, it can't be knotted on Yom tov. It should just be a simple tie
- The hadasim should be higher than the aravos
- There should be at least three inches of the Shedra (backbone) of the Lulav sticking out from on top of the hadasim and aravos
- Many are mistaken that the above Halacha is to just make sure that there's three inches of lulav above the the hadasim and aravos. It needs to be three inches of shedra
- The hadasim and aravos should be tied together with the lulav
- Three knots should be made in the lulav. Some say it's three knots excluding the knot around the hadasim and aravos, for a total of four
- Hadasim go on the right of the lulav, aravos go on the left. Lefties too
- Lulav is held in the right hand and esrog in the left hand
- A lefty should take it both ways because it's a machlokes which way to hold them
- The 4 minim should be held the way they grow, with the tops facing up and the bottoms facing down
- The 4 minim should be held with 2 hands, not 1
- Proper way to make the Brachos: The brachos should be made before picking up the four minim. Either turn the esrog over so the top is facing down, make the Bracha and then turn it back over or pick them up with the express intent not to do the mitzva
- The Bracha is made while standing
- If the Bracha was forgotten then make it afterwards before shaking them at Hallel
- Only one Bracha per day is made even though it will be taken later
- The Bracha of shechyanu is made when it's taken and not when it's assembled
- If one forgets to make shechyanu then it can be made until the last day of Sukkos
- Rings on the fingers or tefilin shouldn't be on the hand when taking the 4 minim
- We shake the lulav after making the Bracha and during hallel etc.
- They should be shaken back and forth three times in each direction (sfardim do a little differently)
- No shaking the lulav when saying Hashems name
- During הודו shake by every word except for Hashems name and by אנא twice per word.
- Some say to stand towards east for all shaking
- One who is davening by himself just shakes by the first hodu
- The esrog needs to be touching the lulav while shaking them
- Whichever direction the shaking is done is fine bidieved
- The lulav and Esrog should be held until after the Kaddish that's said after Hoshanos
- Extra hadasim and aravos are allowed but most don't do it. Taking more because you're afraid that some are pasul then it's definitely allowed
- The zman is the entire day but morning is best because of זריזים מקדימים and הלל is the main time to take it
- The earliest time is from sunrise but if necessary from alos is allowed (similar to davening)
- No eating before shaking the lulav. Tasting food is also not allowed. Unless you're desperate.
- Hadasim which are used for their smell are not allowed to be smelled for all seven days
- Esrog, that's normally used for eating, is allowed but since there's a question wether a Bracha can be made it's better not to smell it
- On shabbos it can be smelled
- The lulav can be returned to water on Yom tov and water can be added too
- It's a mitzvah to switch hadasim/aravos during chol hamoed so they stay fresh
- Some have the minhag to use new aravos daily
- It's a good minhag to to put the lulav into water
- The 4 minim should be paid for before sukkos
- On Hoshana Raba, take of the knots that are on the lulav off before starting Hallel