

Hilchos Sefiras Haomer

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Aveilus of sefira

- The minhag in klal yisroel has been to keep a form of Mourning for thirty three days between Pesach and Shavuos for the students of R' Akiva
- There are two basic minhagim: 1) aveilus starts on the second day of pesach and ends on Lag Beomer. 2) aveilus starts on Rosh Chodesh Iyar and ends on the third day of Sivan
- There are slight variations to the above opinions
- One can change customs from year to year
- There are no restrictions on buying new clothes
- There are no restrictions on cutting nails
- Some have a minhag not to buy anything that would require the bracha of Shechayanu

Haircuts

- Haircuts are not allowed for men or for women
- Shaving and trimming beards are not allowed
- Electrolysis, waxing, etc. for women is allowed
- If one is going to take a financial loss then shaving/haircuts are allowed
- Mustache that prevents you from eating can be cut
- Wigs can be cut because it's not hair

Music

- No music or dancing even at a seudas mitzva. Singing is fine
- Music tapes are not allowed
- Music lessons are allowed
- If necessary, slow inspirational or classical music is fine
- Music for exercise is allowed
- Music to keep you up while you drive is allowed
- Accepela is not preferred but it's allowed.
- Anything is better than listening to the radio

Counting the Omer

- Sefira should be counted as early in the night as possible but one shouldn't say it early if it means not counting with a minyan
- Although sefira can be counted starting after sunset, it's preferable to wait until nightfall
- Nightfall for counting Sefira preferably is forty minutes after shkiah
- If you counted before nightfall, it's best to count again after nightfall without a bracha
- Sefira can be counted the entire night
- If you forgot to count at night then you can count during the day without a bracha
- If you miss counting at night and also forgot to count during the day then you can no longer count with a bracha. However you're still required to

count every night even though it's without a bracha

- In this situation, it's best to have someone that counts with a bracha to say the bracha out loud and have you in mind
- If you remembered to count the previous nights' counting during bein hashmashos then you can continue to count with a bracha
- If you're not sure if you counted the previous night at all or if you're not sure if you counted correctly, you can continue counting with a bracha
- You have to understand what you're counting and if you don't then you're not yotzei. Therefore you can count in any language
- Sefira should be said standing up. If it was said sitting down then it's acceptable
- After the first week, both days and weeks are counted
- If days were counted and not weeks then it's fine.
- If weeks were counted and not days then it's not good and you can't continue to count with a bracha
- After the bracha "yhi ratzon" is said
- Before counting sefira at night with a bracha, don't say "tonight is....." because then you've already counted and therefore you can no longer make a bracha that night
- This applies to counting in any language
- If all you said was a number then that's not considered counting and you can still count that night with a bracha. For ex. If you're asked what night is tonight? You can answer for ex. "3" and that's not called counting and you'd still be able to count that night with a bracha
- Asking someone as a question is not considered counting. Ex. Asking "is tonight the third night?"
- If you feel that you have to spell out the exact night of sefira and you haven't yet counted with a bracha then you can say the exact counting but have in your mind that you're not being yotzi with what you're saying
- Since the earlier counting wasn't done intentionally, even if you can no longer count that night with a bracha, you still have to count that night without a bracha
- Make sure to know the correct night before starting the bracha
- you're not allowed allowed to start eating from a half hour before the proper time to count, unless you appoint someone to remind you
- If you have a set time to daven maariv then you're allowed to start eating even though you haven't yet counted