

LULAV: HOLD, BLESS, SHAKE

Lulav: Hold, Bless, Shake

To fulfill the commandment of lulav and etrog, you must hold them together the way they grow: stems down. But since you fulfill the commandment as soon as you hold the Four Species together this way, you must first pick up the etrog inverted (stem up) and then say the blessing, as follows:

- Hold the lulav with the spine facing you and the myrtle on the right, willows on the left, and the etrog with the pitom (opposite the stem) down;
- Say the blessings for the lulav;
- Turn the etrog right side up (stem-side down) and hold the lulav and etrog together; and
- Shake the Four Species together.

NOTE Waving (or shaking) the lulav is a universally accepted custom with the force of halacha. We show that God is present in all directions by waving the lulav in the four compass directions, plus up and down. There are various customs of the sequence in which to wave the lulav. One common sequence is east; south; west; north; up; down. Wave the Four Species three times in each direction.

NOTE Although the lulav's spine should face you as you hold it, you have still fulfilled the requirement of lulav if the spine was facing away or if the willows and myrtles are on the incorrect sides of the lulav.

Lulav: Hallel at Home or in Synagogue

Ideally, take your lulav and etrog to synagogue and say hallel with the minyan. B'di'avad, it is OK to say hallel and the blessings and wave the lulav at home.

Lulav: How To Wave During Hallel

Wave the lulav in all six directions each time when saying Hodu l'Adonai... and, later, Ana Adonai... and again in the final Hodu in Hallel:

- Hold together the lulav and etrog during the entire procedure, pitom up, etrog in left hand.
- At each word in Hodu l'Adonai... and at each syllable in Ana Adonai, shake the lulav/etrog together three times, advancing through the sequence of east, south, west, north, up, down.

For Hodu l'Adonai:

- At Hodu, shake three times to the east;
- At l'Adonai, don't shake but hold the lulav and etrog up while standing straight;
- At ki, shake three times to the south, etc..

For Ana Adonai,

- At “A,” shake three times to the east;
- At “na, shake three times to the south;
- At Adonai, stand straight and hold the lulav and etrog up;
- At “ho,” shake three times to the west;
- At “shi,” shake three times to the north, etc.