

WHERE TO PRAY

WHERE TO PRAY: SET PLACE

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

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

NOTE If you have a regular seat/makom kavvu'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 kavvu'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 kavvu'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 minyan 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 anida 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](#).