Precedence of Mitzvot

A frequently performed commandment generally takes precedence over a less frequently performed commandment, but ONLY:

- Regarding the order in which they are to be performed, and
- If there is no specific reason to do the less frequent one.

If you are only able to do one of several commandments, do the most important one.

EXAMPLE If you can only put on either *talit* or *tefilin*, you would put on the *tefilin* since that is the more important commandment, even though putting on a *talit* is the more frequently performed one.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE Friday before sunset when *Chanuka* will be on *Shabbat*--lighting *Shabbat* candles is done more frequently, but we light the *Chanuka* candles first since if we lit the *Shabbat* candles first, it would already be *Shabbat* and we could not light the *Chanuka* candles at all.

© Copyright 2026 Richard B. Aiken | www.practicalhalacha.com