

What Does Your Sukkah Stand For?

Edible Sukkah Making

It is a mitzvah to shake the lulav and etrog during Sukkot. The lulav and etrog are also a reminder to us to take action:

- Citron/Etrog/אֶתְרוֹג: We open our **heart** to others
- Myrtle/Hadas/הָדָס: We must use our **lips** to share positive and powerful words
- Willow/Aravah/עֲרָבָה: Our **eyes** are open to the injustice in our community
- Palm/Lulav/לוּלָב: We stand our **spine** straight up tall with our Jewish values.



The sukkah remains open at all times so we can welcome in the ushpizin (אֲשֻׁפִּיזִין - the guest) and so that we can be connected to our community.

Edible Sukkah Making

Today, we will each be creating our own edible sukkah. As the sukkah becomes a temporary home during Sukkot, the sukkah is often filled with decorations, art, and photos/memories of ancestors. As you create your sukkah today, we will ask, “what Tikkun Olam topic does your sukkah stand for?” Keep your answer in mind as you create your delicious sukkah and find ways to represent your answer in your creation. Be prepared to share your answers. If needed, explore some of the possible answers and texts below, look up local organizations who are dedicated to the same thing your sukkah will stand for, learn how this topic is affecting your local community, find action steps that can be taken, etc.

What makes a sukkah kosher:

- Roof – Must have more shade than sun. Must be able to see the stars. Made with things from the earth (s’chach - סִכָּךְ)
- Walls – At least 2 full walls, and no more than 3 walls

What Tikkun Olam topic does your sukkah house stand for?

Some possible answers:

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|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| ● Immigration Rights | ● Housing Justice |
| ● Racial Justice | ● Supporting My Community |
| ● Education for All | ● Volunteering Alongside Neighbors |
| ● An End to Hunger | ● Something Else |

Guiding Questions:

- What does your gingerbread house stand for?
- Why did you choose to dedicate your house to that?
- How did you represent your answer in your creation?
- In what ways is your local community connected to your answer? Your national community? Global community?
- What actions can we as individuals take to support your *theme*? The community? The world?
- Do any Jewish values or texts support your house's dedication *theme*?

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Immigration Rights

- Leviticus/*Vayikra* 19:33-34
Should an alien reside with you in your land, do not wrong them. Just like one of your citizens shall the alien be with you, and you shall love them as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am Adonai your God.

Racial Justice

- Babylonian Talmud, Tractate *Ta'anit* 11a
When the community is in trouble do not say, "I will go home and eat and drink and all will be well with me." ...Rather, involve yourself in the community's distress... Anyone who shares a community's distress will be rewarded and will witness the community's consolation.

Education for All

- *Sefer HaChinuch, Mitzvah* 419
This is what they said (Baba Batra 21a): Communities everywhere have an obligation to appoint teachers for their children. A city without school children will be destroyed. Twenty-five children should be taught by one teacher.

An End to Hunger

- Exodus/*Shemot* 23:10-11
A Sabbath for the Land, a Sabbath for God. And six years you shall sow your land, and you shall gather in its produce. And the seventh year you shall release it from work and abandon it, and the poor among your people will eat.
- Deuteronomy/*Devarim* 15:7-8
If, however, there is a needy person among you, one of your kinsmen in any of your settlements in the land that the Adonai your God is giving you, do not harden your heart and shut your hand against your needy kinsman. Rather, you must open your hand and lend him sufficient for whatever he needs.

Housing Justice

- Leviticus 23:42-43
You shall live in booths [*sukkot*] seven days; all citizens in Israel shall live in booths, in order that future generations may know that I made the Israelite people live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I am Adonai your God.
 - Rabbi Jill Jacobs writes, "From this discussion of the *sukkah*, we can infer that permanent housing should allow a person to live a full and dignified life year-round, and not only for a week."
- Ethics of our Ancestors/*Pirkei Avot* 2:15
Rabbi Eliezer says: Let other people's dignity be as precious to you as your own.

Supporting My Community

- Ethics of our Ancestors/*Pirkei Avot* 4:5
Do not separate yourself from the community. Do not believe in yourself until the day you die. Do not judge your fellow until you have stood in his place.

Volunteering Alongside Neighbors

- The Kotzker Rebbe teaches that if we are cold, we can warm ourselves either by putting on a coat or by lighting a fire. The difference is that when we kindle a fire, those around us also feel its warmth.