

THE FOUR SPECIES



The four species are a collection of different types of vegetation which are brought together during prayer to show our appreciation to G-d for a fruitful harvest.

The four species are the etrog / citron, the lulav / palm branch, the hadas / myrtle branch, and the aravah / willow branch.

On a deeper level, they represent different kinds of Jews from across the spectrum of Jewish knowledge and piety, and are brought together to signify the importance of Jewish unity and peoplehood. Gathering these very different species teaches us a powerful lesson in Jewish unity; we don't unite in spite of our differences, we unite because of them. We don't ignore or look away from the uniqueness of our individuality, we celebrate and highlight the singular contribution that we each bring to the fore.



The arba minim is used throughout the holiday of sukkot with the exception of Shabbat.

Best place for doing this mitzvah is the sukkah, the outdoor holiday booth.

Hold the lulav in your right hand (unless you're a lefty), with its spine facing you. Face east and say:

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the Universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us regarding taking the lulav.

Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-he-nu Me-lech ha-olam a-she-ki-de-sha-nu be-mitz-vo-tav ve-tzi-va-nu al netilat lulav.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי-אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ
הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
צִוְּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת לֻלָב:

Pick up the etrog in your left hand.

[On the first day of Sukkot (or if it is the first time on Sukkot you are doing the mitzvah), at this point say:

Blessed are You, L-rd our G-d, King of the Universe, who has granted us life, sustained us and enabled us to reach this occasion.]

Ba-ruch A-tah Ado-nai E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-olam she-heche-ya-nu ve-ki-yi-ma-nu ve-higi-a-nu liz-man ha-zeh.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֲדֹנָי-אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ
הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ
וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַיָּמָן הַזֶּה:

Bring the lulav and etrog together—you've done the mitzvah!

The custom is to wave the arba minim in all six directions—south, north, east, up, down and west.



The overarching theme of Sukkot is Jewish unity. Sharing the message and beauty of the arba minim is part of what the mitzvah is about. The key to Jewish continuity is Jewish unity, and the key to experiencing the singular contribution of each Jew is by celebrating our unique differences – together as one!