

Tallit

The tallit is also commonly known as a “prayer shawl.” It derives from the commandment in the Torah to place fringes on the corners of your garments (which comes at the end of the Shema prayer). The original commandment included the instruction to place a blue thread (*tekhelet*) on the corners as well. Some people still do this today as well.

There are two types of tallit:

- Tallit Gadol- a “large tallit” worn during prayer services. Some have the custom of wearing a tallit gadol only after getting married.
- Tallit Katan- a “small tallit” worn under one’s clothing all day long.

In some communities, only men wear a tallit. In some communities, people of all genders wear a tallit.

דִּבֶּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם וְעָשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל־כֹּנָפֵי בְגָדֵיהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם וְנָתַנּוּ עַל־צִיצִית הַכֹּנֶף פִּתְּלֵי תְּכֵלֶת: וְהָיָה לָכֶם לְצִיצִית וּרְאִיתֶם אֹתוֹ וְזָכַרְתֶּם אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹת ה' וְעָשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם וְלֹא־תִתְּרוּ אַחֲרַי לַבְּבֻכָם וְאַחֲרַי עֵינֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־אַתֶּם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם: לְמַעַן תִּזְכְּרוּ וְעָשִׂיתֶם אֶת־כָּל־מִצְוֹתַי וְהִייתֶם קְדוֹשִׁים לֹא־לְקִיכֶם: אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם לִהְיוֹת לָכֶם לֹא־לְקִי אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

Speak to the Israelite people and instruct them to make for themselves fringes on the corners of their garments for all time; let them attach a cord of blue to the fringe at each corner. That shall be your fringe; look at it and recall all the commandments of God and observe them, so that you do not follow your heart and eyes in your impulsive urge. Thus you shall be reminded to observe all My commandments and to be holy to your God. I the Lord am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God: I, the Lord your God.- [Numbers, 15:37-41]

Try on this object or reflect on it. Write below in 1-5 words, what power, ability, or awareness it brings up for you?

Tefillin

Tefillin, or phylacteries, are leather boxes that are wrapped around one's arm and head when praying on weekday mornings. They are a reference to a commandment in the Torah and in the Shema to place "these words" (of God's commandments) on our hands and foreheads.

Inside each box are tiny scrolls containing the words of the passages in the Torah that reference the commandment above. In some communities, only men put on tefillin. In some communities, people of all genders put on tefillin.

וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ: וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְנֶךָ הַיּוֹם עַל-לִבְּךָ: וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם לְבָיְיֶךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלַכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְבְךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ: וְקִשְׂרָתָם לְאוֹת עַל-יָדְךָ וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ: וְכָתַבְתָּם עַל-מְזוּזֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבִשְׁעָרֶיךָ:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Take to heart these instructions with which I charge you this day. Teach them to your children. Recite them when you stay at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. **Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them serve as a symbol on your forehead.** inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:5-9)

Brief overview of the 4 core texts found in t'ffilin:

- I. [Exodus](#) 13:1–10: *Kadesh Li*—the duty of the Jewish people to remember the redemption from Egyptian bondage
- II. [Exodus](#) 13:11–16: *Ve-haya Ki Yeviakha*— the obligation of every Jew to inform his or her children on these matters.
- III. [Deuteronomy](#) 6:4–9: *Shema*— pronouncing the Unity of the One God.
- IV. [Deuteronomy](#) 11:13–21: *Ve-haya Im Shamo'a* - God's assurance of reward for observance of the Torah's precepts and warning of retribution for disobedience.

*See additional page for all the texts in t'ffilin.

Try on this object or reflect on it. Write below in 1-5 words, what power, ability, or awareness it brings up for you?

Kippah

A Kippah is also known as a skullcap or yarmulke. Many Jews cover their heads when praying, studying, and (reciting blessings before and after) eating. Others wear a kippah at all times, because it is always possible to be engaged in a Jewish act. Over time, the kippah has emerged both as a headcovering and as a cultural symbol. Different Jewish communities have developed different styles of kippot (plural for kippah) through the years.

In some communities, only men wear kippot. In other communities, people of all genders wear kippot.

Try on this object or reflect on it. Write below in 1-5 words, what power, ability, or awareness it brings up for you?

Headbands and Scarves

In some Jewish communities, married women have a custom of covering their hair. Some do so with a scarf, others with a hat, others with a wig.

Additionally, some women wear the sorts of head coverings on this table as their “kippah” (ie for the same reason someone might wear a kippah).

Try on this object or reflect on it. Write below in 1-5 words, what power, ability, or awareness it brings up for you?

Mask

For centuries, Jews have dressed up in costume on the holiday of Purim. This comes both from themes of hiddenness (this is the only book of the Bible in which God's name is not mentioned), and a day that is topsy-turvy (*nahafoch hu*- flipped upside down). On this day, many Jews express their inner selves, their aspirational selves, or even their silly selves through costume, and through hiding their true identity.

Try on this object or reflect on it. Write below in 1-5 words, what power, ability, or awareness it brings up for you?

Kittel

A kittel is an all-white garment that has traditionally been worn by Jewish men at weddings and for burial, two times of life when we hope to be considered especially pure.

Many also wear a kittel on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur (especially when they are leading the community in prayer), considered days of judgment for one's deeds over the past year. In addition, some have the custom to wear it at the Seder table on Passover.

In some communities, people of all genders are now wearing kittels, and are even exploring different styles for what a kittel can look like.

Try on this object or reflect on it. Write below in 1-5 words, what power, ability, or awareness it brings up for you?

Non-leather shoes

On the fast days of Tisha B'Av and Yom Kippur, many Jews have the custom of not wearing shoes with a leather sole, as this is a symbol of comfort and luxury. Tisha B'Av is a day of mourning over the destruction of the Temples that once stood in Jerusalem, and Yom Kippur is a day of fasting and focusing on self-improvement, neither of which is meant to be focused on personal / physical comforts.

Some Jews take this custom as an opportunity to pay more attention to the materials they wear and how that might affect oneself spiritually. There might be some who choose to reflect on animals and how we treat them in general within our own culture as well as within a religious context re: veganism etc.

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Jewish symbols on jewelry

Jews have been wearing symbols on their clothing and jewelry for centuries. For some this is a matter of cultural and religious pride, for others it is perhaps rooted in superstition. If you wear a Jewish symbol, what is your reason?

יחידים Chai- The letters of this word add up to the number 18 in gematria, the practice of assigning numerical values to Hebrew letters, and is considered an auspicious number in Jewish culture. Some people try to use multiples of the number 18 when possible, and others wear “Chai” on their necklaces, bracelets, etc.

Magen David- This symbol, also known as the “Jewish Star” or “Star of David” has been around for nearly 1000 years. It carries mystical significance, and has been used as a symbol to identify the Jewish people (both in good times and in times of oppression) for centuries. It was an obvious choice to place at the center of the flag of the State of Israel.

Hamsa

The hamsa (related to the word “chamesh” which means five) is a symbol of a hand, often with an eye in the middle. While its exact origins are hard to trace, it likely first emerged in Ancient Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq). The hamsa, also known as the Hand of Miriam or the Hand of Fatima, carries meaning for both Jews and Muslims as a talisman and symbol of protection. It also certainly has an element of superstition related to it.

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Four Biblical Texts Found inside T'ffilin

<p>Exodus 13:1–10: <i>Kadesh Li—</i> the duty of the Jewish people to remember the redemption from Egyptian bondage.</p>	<p>And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 'Sanctify to Me all the first-born, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of animal, it is Mine.' And Moses said to the people: 'Remember this day, in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this place; no leavened bread shall be eaten. This day you go forth in the Spring month. And it shall be when the LORD shall bring you into the land of the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Amorite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, which He swore unto your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall keep this service in this month. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and the seventh day shall be a feast to the LORD. Unleavened bread shall be eaten throughout the seven days; and no leavened bread shall be seen with you, neither shall there be leaven seen with you, in all your borders. And so shall you tell your son on that day, saying: It is because of that which the LORD did for me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign for you upon your hand, and as a memorial between your eyes, that the law of the LORD may be in your mouth; for with a strong hand has the LORD brought you out of Egypt. You shalt therefore keep this ordinance in its season from year to year.</p>
<p>Exodus 13:11–16: <i>Ve-haya Ki Yeviakha—</i> the obligation of every Jew to inform his or her children on these matters.</p>	<p>When the LORD brings you into the land of the Canaanite, as He swore unto you and to your fathers, and shall give it to you, you shall set apart to the LORD all that opens the womb; every firstborn animal shall be the LORD'S. Every firstborn donkey you shall redeem with a sheep, and if you will not redeem it, then you shall break its neck; and all the first-born of man among your sons shall you redeem. And when your son asks you in time to come, saying: What is this? say to him: By strength of hand the LORD bring us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage; and when Pharaoh found it hard to let us go the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man, and the first-born of animals; therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all males that open the womb, and redeem all my first-born sons. And it shall be for a sign upon your hand, and as "totafot" between your eyes; for by strength of hand the LORD brought us forth out of Egypt.</p>
<p>Deuteronomy 6:4–9: <i>Shema</i> pronouncing the Unity of the</p>	<p>Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one. And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words, which I command you this day, shall be upon your heart; and teach them thoroughly to your children, and speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk on the road, and when you lie down, and when you get up. And tie them for a sign upon your hand, and let them be "totafot" between your eyes. And write them on the door-posts of your house and on your gates.</p>

<p>One God</p>	
<p>Deuteronomy11:13–21: <i>Ve-haya Im Shamo</i>— God's assurance of reward for observance of the Torah's precepts and warning of retribution for disobedience.</p>	<p>If you listen to My commandments which I command you today, to love the LORD your God, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, then I will give the rain of your land in its season, the early and the late rain, and you will gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil. And I will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied. Take care for yourselves, lest your heart be seduced, and you turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them; and the anger of the LORD be lit against you, and He shut up the heaven, so that there shall be no rain, and the ground not yield her fruit; and you be quickly lost from off the good land which the LORD gives you. Put these words of Mine on your heart and on your soul; tie them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be "totafot" between your eyes. Teach them to your children, to speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk on the road, and when you lie down, and when you rise up. And write them on the door-posts of your house, and upon your gates; so that your days, and those of your children, may be multiplied upon the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of the heavens above the earth.</p>