

# Yom Kippur

Yom Kippur is the most important day of the year for Jewish people. This festival takes place in September or October, 10 days after Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year). Between the first and tenth day of the new year, Jews say sorry for any bad things they have done and ask for forgiveness from those they have upset. Jewish people believe that if they do this, they will be forgiven by God.

Adults and older children 'fast' (don't eat or drink) from sunset the night before Yom Kippur, until nightfall the following day. A feast is served the day before to make fasting easier. Children under 9 do not have to fast and neither do women expecting a baby or people who are ill. Children aged between 9 and 12 eat and drink less than usual.

## Here is a list of other things that Jewish people are not allowed to do on Yom Kippur:

- No leather shoes can be worn.
- No washing (e.g. no baths or showers).
- No perfumes or lotions can be used.



During Yom Kippur, families spend most of the day praying in the synagogue. Those who are married are supposed to wear a special robe called a kittel. Many Jews wear white clothing on the day. At the end of Yom Kippur, the priest blows the shofar (ram's horn) to let everyone know it is the end of the festival.

# Yom Kippur Questions

1. What is the most important day of the year for Jewish people?

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2. In which months of the year might this special day be celebrated?

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3. What happens in the 10 days between Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish new year, and Yom Kippur?

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4. What do adults and older children have to start doing at sunset the night before Yom Kippur, until nightfall the following day?

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- Give an example of someone who doesn't have to do this.

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5. Where can most Jewish families be found on Yom Kippur?

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- What will they be doing there?

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6. List two different things that Jewish people aren't allowed to do on Yom Kippur.

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7. What is a shofar?

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# Yom Kippur Answers

1. What is the most important day of the year for Jewish people?

**Yom Kippur is the most important day of the year for Jewish people.**

2. In which months of the year might this special day be celebrated?

**This special day is usually celebrated in either September or October.**

3. What happens in the 10 days between Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish new year, and Yom Kippur?

**In the 10 days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, Jews say sorry for bad things they have done and ask for forgiveness from those they have upset.**

4. What do adults and older children have to start doing at sunset the night before Yom Kippur, until nightfall the following day?

**Adults and older children have to fast during this time. This means that they're not allowed to eat or drink anything.**

- Give an example of someone who doesn't have to do this.

**Example answers include: A child under the age of 9, a woman expecting a baby or someone who is ill. If you are aged between 9 and 12, you eat and drink less than usual.**

5. Where can most Jewish families be found on Yom Kippur?

**Most Jewish families can be found in the synagogue.**

- What will they be doing there?

**They will be praying in the synagogue.**

6. List two different things that Jewish people aren't allowed to do on Yom Kippur.

**Example answers include: Jewish people aren't allowed to wear leather shoes, they are not allowed to have a wash and they're not allowed to wear perfume or lotions.**

7. What is a shofar?

**A shofar is a ram's horn. It can be blown to make a sound.**

# Yom Kippur

Also known as the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur is one of the most important days of the Hebrew year. Yom Kippur falls in September or October on the eve of the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the Jewish New Year. The first day of the New Year is Rosh Hashanah. According to the Jewish faith, this is the day when God decides each person's fate. Between the first and tenth day of the year, Jews confess their guilt and ask friends and enemies for forgiveness. Jews also ask God for forgiveness.

During the 25 hours of Yom Kippur, Jewish families spend most of the day praying in the synagogue. Adults 'fast' from sunset the night before Yom Kippur, until nightfall the following day. A large feast is served the day before. This makes fasting easier. Children under 9 do not have to fast and neither do pregnant women or people with illnesses. Children between 9 and 12 eat and drink less than usual. Besides not eating and drinking, Jews are not allowed to wear leather shoes, bathe or wear perfumes or lotions on Yom Kippur. In Israel, where Judaism is the main religion, there is no TV, no radio and no public transportation in use on this day. Most Jews also don't work or drive that day.



Jewish people look forward to this holiday every year. Yom Kippur is an annual opportunity to make peace with God. After following the rituals, Jews feel a sense of peace and optimism. Married Jews are supposed to wear a special robe on Yom Kippur called a kittel. This is also the robe that Jews are buried in. Some Jews just wear white clothing on Yom Kippur. White is symbolic of angels. Jews who have confessed their guilt are like angels in heaven.

According to the Jewish faith, every Jew is responsible for the sins of others in the Jewish family. When they pray for forgiveness and confess their sins, Jewish people use "we" instead of "I". The Yom Kippur prayer service includes a prayer of thanks for blessings, followed by a promise to observe the rituals of Yom Kippur, and finally a confession of sins. Stories of God's forgiveness are shared and the Ark in the synagogue is opened. The Ark symbolises the gates of heaven being open for the Jewish people.

## Did you know?

Refraining from drinking caffeine is recommended before fasting. A caffeine withdrawal can cause headaches and make it more difficult to observe the fast.

# Yom Kippur Questions

1. What is another name for Yom Kippur?

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2. When is Rosh Hashanah?

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3. Which Jews are exempt from fasting (they do not have to fast) for Yom Kippur?

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4. Name three things that Jewish people are not allowed to do on Yom Kippur?

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5. In which country is Judaism the main religion?

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6. How do Jewish people generally feel about Yom Kippur?

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7. Why do Jewish people wear white for Yom Kippur?

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8. What is the significance of the Ark?

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9. What should be avoided when fasting?

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10. When Jews pray for forgiveness, what words do they use?

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11. How long is Yom Kippur?

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12. Where do Jewish people spend most of Yom Kippur?

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# Yom Kippur Answers

1. What is another name for Yom Kippur?

**Day of Atonement**

2. When is Rosh Hashanah?

**The first day of the Jewish New Year.**

3. Which Jews are exempt from fasting (they do not have to fast) for Yom Kippur?

**Children under 9 do not have to fast and neither do pregnant women or people with illnesses.**

4. Name three things that Jewish people are not allowed to do on Yom Kippur?

**On Yom Kippur, Jewish people are not allowed to wear leather shoes, bathe or wear perfume or lotions.**

5. In which country is Judaism the main religion?

**Judaism is the main religion in Israel.**

6. How do Jewish people generally feel about Yom Kippur?

**Jewish people look forward to Yom Kippur.**

7. Why do Jewish people wear white for Yom Kippur?

**Jewish people wear white for Yom Kippur as it is symbolic of angels.**

8. What is the significance of the Ark?

**The Ark symbolizes the gates of heaven being open for the Jewish people.**

9. What should be avoided when fasting?

**Caffeine should be avoided when fasting.**

10. When Jews pray for forgiveness, what words do they use?

**When Jews pray for forgiveness they use the word "we" instead of "I".**

11. How long is Yom Kippur?

**Yom Kippur is 25 hours long.**

12. Where do Jewish people spend most of Yom Kippur?

**Jewish people spend most of Yom Kippur in the synagogue.**

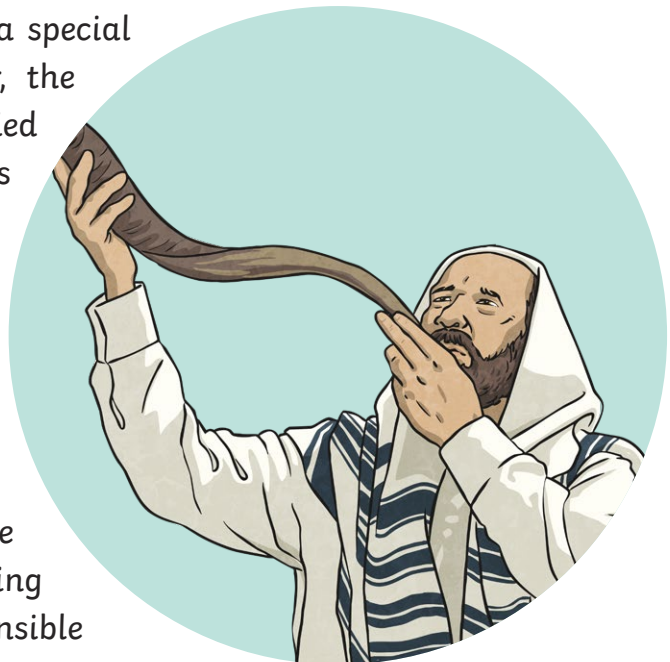
# Yom Kippur

Also known as the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur is the most sacred and solemn day of the Hebrew year. This festival falls in September or October, on the eve of the tenth day of the Jewish new year. The first day of the new year is Rosh Hashanah. Jews believe that at this time, God looks at each individual to see what they have done, good and bad, in the previous year. Between the first and tenth day of the Jewish new year, Jews confess their guilt and ask for forgiveness from anyone they have upset. This important period of time is known as the Days of Repentance or Days of Awe. If the individual has tried hard to be a good person and made friends with people they've wronged, Jewish people believe that they will be forgiven by God on Yom Kippur. Jewish people look forward to this holiday as it is an annual opportunity to make peace. After following the rituals, Jews feel a sense of optimism for the new year ahead.

Adults and older children fast from sunset the night before Yom Kippur, until nightfall the following day. A large feast is served the day before to make fasting easier. Children under 9 do not have to 'fast' and neither do pregnant women or people with illnesses. Children aged between 9 and 12 eat and drink less than usual. Besides not eating and drinking, Jews are not allowed to wear leather shoes, bathe or wear perfumes or lotions on Yom Kippur. Jewish people follow these strict rules to show God that they are truly sorry for any wrongdoing in the last year. In Israel, where the majority of people are Jewish, there is no TV, no radio and no public transport in use. In addition to this, Jews don't work or drive on this special day.

Married Jews are supposed to wear a special robe called a kittel on Yom Kippur, the robe which Jewish people are buried in. Some Jews wear white clothing as a symbol of purity. White clothing is also symbolic of angels as those who have confessed their guilt are like angels in heaven.

On Yom Kippur, Jewish families spend most of the day praying and meditating in the synagogue where there are five prayer services. According to the Jewish faith, every Jew is responsible



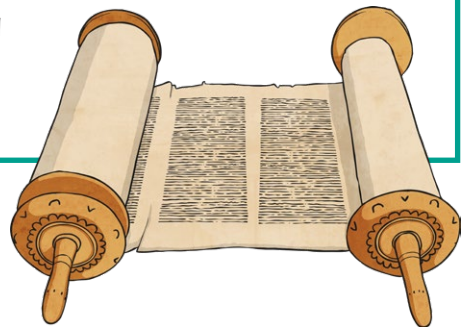


for the sins of others in the Jewish family so when they pray for forgiveness and confess their sins, Jewish people use 'we' instead of 'I'. The Yom Kippur prayer service includes a prayer of thanks for blessings, followed by a promise to observe the rituals of Yom Kippur and finally a confession of sins. Stories of God's forgiveness are shared and the Ark in the synagogue is opened. The Ark symbolises the gates of heaven being open for the Jewish people.

At the end of the day, the whole congregation recites the Shema and a few other verses out loud together, then the shofar (ram's horn) is sounded for one long blast to let everyone know it is the end of the festival.

### Did you know?

- Yom Kippur has been observed for thousands of years by Jewish people. The day is mentioned several times in the Torah and the Bible.
- Refraining from drinking caffeine is recommended before fasting. A caffeine withdrawal can cause headaches and make it more difficult to observe the fast.
- With their mothers, Jewish girls light candles 18 minutes before sunset on the night before Yom Kippur. Blessings are also recited.
- The most common greeting heard at this festival is 'Have an easy fast!'.
- Another ritual involves the family throwing breadcrumbs into a body of water. The breadcrumbs represent their sins.



# Yom Kippur Questions

1. What is Yom Kippur otherwise known as?

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2. What is the ten-day period after Jewish new year known as?

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- What happens during this time?

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3. Why do Jewish people look forward to this festival every year?

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4. Why do you think pregnant women are exempt from fasting?

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5. When does the fasting start?

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6. What happens the day before Yom Kippur to make fasting easier?

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7. Why do Jewish people wear white on Yom Kippur?

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8. Is drinking coffee before fasting a good idea? Why? Why not?

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9. How many prayer services are held at the synagogue on Yom Kippur?

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10. Why is the shofar sounded?

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11. Why is the shofar sounded?

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12. What do breadcrumbs represent?

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13. Why do Jewish people follow these strict rules on Yom Kippur?

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# Yom Kippur Answers

1. What is Yom Kippur otherwise known as?

**Yom Kippur is otherwise known as the Day of Atonement.**

2. What is the ten-day period after Jewish new year known as?

**This ten-day period is known as the Days of Repentance or Days of Awe.**

- What happens during this time?

**During this time, Jews confess their guilt and ask for forgiveness from anyone they have upset.**

3. Why do Jewish people look forward to this festival every year?

**Jewish people look forward to this holiday as it is an annual opportunity to make peace with others, and with God. After following the rituals, Jews feel a sense of optimism for the new year ahead.**

4. Why do you think pregnant women are exempt from fasting?

**Own answers. Example answer: I think pregnant women are exempt from fasting as the baby may be affected if the woman didn't eat or drink.**

5. When does the fasting start?

**Fasting begins at sunset the night before Yom Kippur.**

6. What happens the day before Yom Kippur to make fasting easier?

**The day before Yom Kippur, Jewish people have large feasts.**

7. Why do Jewish people wear white on Yom Kippur?

**Jewish people wear white on Yom Kippur as a symbol of purity. White clothing is also symbolic of angels as those who have confessed their guilt are like angels in heaven.**

8. Is drinking coffee before fasting a good idea? Why? Why not?

**Drinking coffee before fasting is not a good idea because caffeine withdrawal can cause headaches and make it more difficult to observe the fast.**

9. How many prayers services are held at the synagogue on Yom Kippur?

**There are five prayer services held in the synagogue on Yom Kippur.**

10. Why do Jewish people use 'we' instead of 'I' when praying?

**According to the Jewish faith, every Jew is responsible for the sins of others in the Jewish family so when they pray for forgiveness and confess their sins, Jewish people use 'we' instead of 'I'.**

11. Why is the shofar sounded?

**The shofar is sounded to signal the end of Yom Kippur.**

12. What do breadcrumbs represent?

**Breadcrumbs represent the sins of the Jewish people.**

13. Why do Jewish people follow these strict rules on Yom Kippur?

**Jewish people follow these strict rules to show God that they are truly sorry for any wrongdoing in the last year.**