

ALL ABOUT SUKKOT



What is Sukkot?

Sukkot is the fall harvest festival, a time to give thanks, as well as to commemorate the 40 years the children of Israel wandered in the desert after the Exodus from Egypt. In Hebrew, *sukkot* means “booths” or “huts,” and a replica of the shelters Jews lived in while harvesting and during their exile in the desert is at the heart of this joyous celebration.

The *sukkah* is a temporary shelter built for the holiday. Building and decorating the *sukkah* can be a fun family project. The commandment to “live in” the *sukkah* during the holiday can be satisfied by eating meals in it though, if weather and circumstances allow, families can sleep in it as well.

Though the *sukkah* can be framed with modern materials, such as PVC pipe, the roof must be covered in natural materials, such as cornstalks, bamboo or branches.

When is it?

Sukkot begins five days after *Yom Kippur*, on the eve of the 15th day of *Tishrei*, the seventh month in the Jewish calendar, and lasts for seven days. It falls in September-October. It is customary to begin building the *sukkah* on the day after *Yom Kippur*.

What do I need to celebrate Sukkot?

Sukkot typically is celebrated with several rituals:

Lulav is a bundle of branches made from three species of tree (myrtle, palm and willow). *Etrog* is a citrus fruit, similar to a lemon. Together, the *lulav* and *etrog* are known as the Four Species. The two are held together and shaken in six directions to symbolize that God is everywhere.

Ushpizin is the Aramaic word for “guests” and refers to the custom of inviting biblical guests into the *sukkah* to teach spiritual lessons. It’s also customary to invite friends and family to celebrate and share a meal in the *sukkah*.

Building the *sukkah* is a *mitzvah*, or commandment, and any *mitzvah* can be enhanced by beautifying the objects used to fulfill it. The *sukkah* is a place of celebration and can be decorated using paper chains, gourds, strings of uncooked pasta and colored pictures. And the crafts can be reused every year. Visit jHUB’s [Pinterest board](#) for ideas.

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Additional resources

Books for children:

The Big Sukkah by Peninnah Schram
Sammy Spider's First Sukkot by Sylvia A. Rouss

Books for adults:

Jewish Living by Mark Washofsky
The Jewish Festivals by Hayyim Schauss

Still have questions?

For more information about *Sukkot*, jHUB and interfaith programs or Jewish culture, contact Rabbi Melinda Mersack, Director, at mmersack@jecc.org, 216-371-0446 x232 or Danya Shapiro, Program Associate, at dshapiro@jecc.org, 216-371-0446 x207.

SUKKOT BLESSINGS



Blessings for Dwelling in the Sukkah

TO BE SAID WHEN EATING OR DRINKING IN THE SUKKAH

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לֵישֵׁב בְּסֻכָּה.

*Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam,
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu leishev basukkah.*

Blessed are you Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has made us holy through God's commandments, and commands us to dwell in the sukkah.

Blessing for the Lulav and Etrog

TO BE SAID BEFORE SHAKING THE LULAV IN 6 DIRECTIONS AND SMELLING THE ETROG

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת לולָב.

*Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam,
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu al n'tilat lulav.*

Blessed are you Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has made us holy through God's commandments, and commands us to take up the lulav.

Shehekiyanu

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיָּנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.

*Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam,
shehekiyanu v'kiymanu, v'higianu laz'man hazeh.*

Blessed are you Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, for giving us life, for sustaining us and for enabling us to reach this season.

PVC SUKKAH DIRECTIONS



Step one

Decide how big you want your *sukkah* to be. Length x Width x Depth. (We recommend not getting larger than 8x8x8)

Take desired length measurements and subtract 2 feet for **Length A**

Take desired width measurements and subtract 2 feet for **Length B**

Decide on desired height. This is **Length C**

Step two

Get your materials at a home supply store, 1 ¼ inch PVC pipe and connectors. You will need:

4 pieces of PVC pipe of **Length A**

4 pieces of PVC pipe of **Length B**

8 pieces of PVC pipe of **Length C**

16 pieces of PVC **1 foot long**

8 PVC connectors **90° elbows**

16 PVC connectors **T-shaped**

1 tube of super glue or a stronger colorless glue if you prefer

1 pipe cutter (many home improvement stores will make the cuts for you)

1 rubber mallet to tap the pipes and connectors together.

Step three

1. Glue **T-shaped connectors** on both ends of all your **Length A** and **Length B** pieces. Make sure that the T's line up.

2. Glue **1 foot pieces** onto either end of the **90° elbow connectors**.

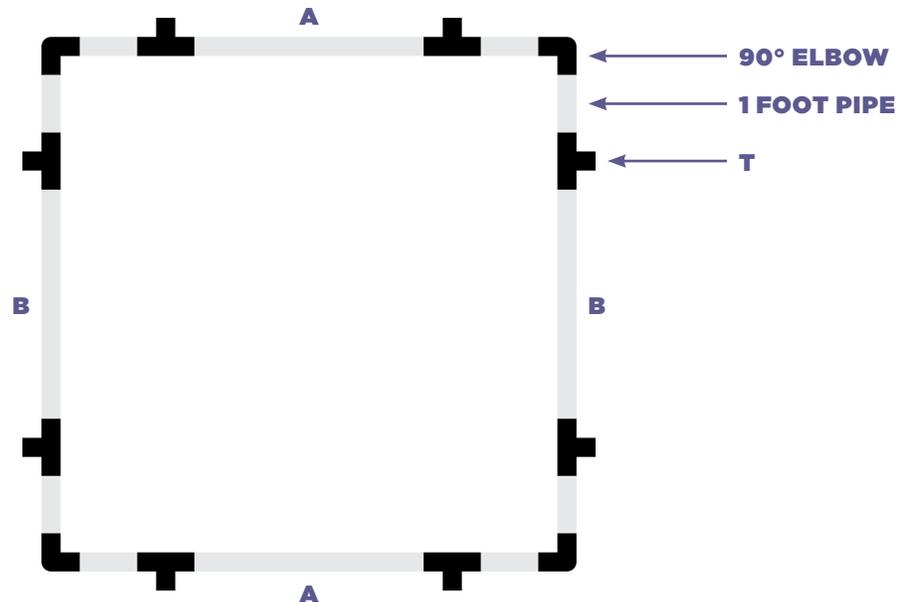


PVC SUKKAH DIRECTIONS



Step four

Assemble the base according to the diagram. Make sure all T's face upwards. Repeat base assembly identical for roof assembly.



Step five

Place **Length C** pipes upright in all the upturned T's of the base. There are two **Length C** pipes at each corner.

Step six

Place the roof on top of all the **Length C** pipes. You will need at least two people for this.

Step seven

Use lattice work or fabric for the sides. The material used on the roof of a *sukkah* is called *skhakh*. It can be branches and leaves from the trees in your yard, corn stalks from the local garden store/market, bamboo mates or any natural material. The *skhakh* can be held by placing wood boards or string across the top of the *sukkah*.

Step eight

Decorate your *sukkah* and enjoy!