

Hanukkah Fact Sheet

- 🕯 Hanukkah is a holiday remembering the rededication of the Holy Temple (the Second Temple) in Jerusalem.
- 🕯 Hanukkah is observed for eight nights and days beginning on the 25th of Kislev, or in the evening on Saturday, December 24, 2016.
- 🕯 Hanukkah is also called the “Festival of Lights” or the “Feast of Dedication.”
- 🕯 The story of Hanukkah is preserved in the First and Second books of Maccabees which are not part of the Tanach (Hebrew Bible).
- 🕯 Except in times of danger, the Hanukkah lights are to be placed either outside or in a window closest to the street so everyone knows about the miracle of Hanukkah.
- 🕯 During the eight days of Chanukah, the entire Hallel (psalms of praise) is said and the passage “Al Hanissim”, expressing thanks to God for the miracles of Chanukah, is inserted into the prayers.
- 🕯 Fried foods (such as latkes and **sufganiyot**) are eaten to remember the importance of oil during the celebration of Hanukkah.

How to Play Dreidel

The dreidel, or *sevivon*, which means “to turn around” in Hebrew, has a Hebrew letter on each of its four sides. The letters are *nun*, *gimmel*, *hay* and *shin*, and stand for the saying, “*Nes Gadol Hayah Sham*,” which translates to “a great miracle occurred there.” “There” referring to Israel, and “the great miracle” referring to the miracle of Hanukkah.

All you need besides the dreidel itself is some sort of game piece. You can use pennies, nuts, jelly beans, or to stick within the Hanukkah vein, chocolate gelt. Whatever you choose, you’ll need about 10-15 pieces per player, and there is no limit to the number of players!

1. At the beginning of each round, every participant puts one game piece into the center “pot.” In addition, every time the pot is empty or has only one game piece left, every player should put one in the pot.
2. Every time it’s your turn, spin the dreidel once. Depending on the outcome, you give or get game pieces from the pot:

🕯 *Nun* means “*nisht*” or “nothing” in Yiddish. The player does nothing.

🕯 *Gimmel* means “*gantz*” or “everything” in Yiddish. The player gets everything in the pot.

🕯 *Hay* means “*halb*” or “half” in Yiddish. The player gets half of the pot. (If there is an odd number of pieces in the pot, the player takes half of the total plus one.)

🕯 *Shin* means “*shtet*” or “put in” in Yiddish. The player adds a game piece to the pot.

3. If you find that you have no game pieces left, you are either “out” or may ask a fellow player for a “loan.”
4. When one person has won everything, that round of the game is over!