

Rosh Hashanah Facts and Observances

- 👉 Rosh Hashanah means “Head of the Year,” and marks the beginning of a 10-day period of reflection, self-examination, and forgiveness.
- 👉 The Hebrew greeting for Rosh Hashanah is *Shanah Tovah* which translates to “a good year.” Often people will say *Shanah Tovah u’Metukah*, “a good and sweet year.” After Rosh Hashanah ends, the greeting is changed to *G’mar Chatimah Tovah*, “a good, final sealing.”
- 👉 Rosh Hashanah is also known as *Yom T’ruah* - “The Day of Shouting/Blasting.”
- 👉 Rosh Hashanah occurs on the first and second day of the Hebrew month *Tishrei*.
- 👉 A total of 100 shofar blasts are sounded on each day of Rosh Hashanah. There are four different shofar blasts: *tekiah*, *shevarim*, *t’ruah*, and *tekiah gedolah*.
- 👉 *Tekiah* is one long blast. *Tekiah* indicates stability in life.
- 👉 *Shevarim* is three medium length blasts. *Shevarim* represents times of trouble.
- 👉 *T’ruah* is nine short sounds. *Teruah* is a call for accomplishment.
- 👉 *Tekiah gedolah* is one extra-long blast. *Tekiah Gedolah* helps us to gather all our resolutions and go back to the start with a feeling of awe.
- 👉 A popular observance of Rosh Hashanah is eating apples dipped in honey. This symbolizes our wish for a sweet year ahead.
- 👉 Many people choose to eat a round challah at their Rosh Hashanah meals. There are a few reasons for this tradition: 1) It represents the continuing cycle of seasons and years. 2) It looks like a crown, which depicts the image of God as royalty carried through the High Holy Day *Machzor* (prayerbook). This is a reminder of God’s place in our tradition. 3) The opportunity to do *teshuvah*, “turning,” is a soul-searching task that never ends.
- 👉 *Tashlich*, meaning “cast off,” is a Rosh Hashanah observance where we literally cast off our sins by throwing bread crumbs or pocket lint into flowing water. *Tashlich* is observed on Rosh Hashanah afternoon between morning and afternoon services.