

**Judaism: How does the festival of Sukkot teach Jewish people about kindness and community?**

**Key Facts/Beliefs**

Judaism is the oldest of the world's four biggest monotheistic religions (religions with only one god). It is also the smallest, with only about 12 million followers around the world.

Jewish history begins with the covenant established between God and Abraham around 1812 BC (over 3800 years ago), during the Bronze Age in the Middle East.

There are large Jewish populations in Israel and the U.S.

Jews believe that there is a single God who not only created the universe, but with whom every Jew can have an individual and personal relationship.

Abraham is the father of the Jewish people. Jews see Abraham as a symbol of trusting and obeying God. Abraham is also important to followers of Christianity and Islam.

**Key Celebration: Sukkot**

Sukkot commemorates the years that the Jews spent in the desert on their way to the Promised Land. Some lived in tents, whilst others built huts out of leaves and branches. These huts were called sukkah.

During the festival, some Jews build their own sukkah in the garden or at the Synagogue. Jews eat their meals in the sukkah for eight or nine days of the festival.

There are rules to making a sukkah. Each sukkah must have at least three walls. The roof of the sukkah must be made of material referred to as sekhakh, which means covering. The covering must be something that was grown in the ground and cut off. The roof covering should be sparse so that the stars can be seen.

There is a special Sukkot service in the synagogue. Everyone holds branches from three trees in their hands and a citron fruit in their right. They walk around the synagogue seven times, waving

**Important Jewish festivals**

Jews celebrate the important events of Jewish history throughout the year. Some festivals celebrated by Jewish people include Passover, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah.

**Artefacts and symbols for worship in the Synagogue**

<b>Synagogue</b>	Jewish people worship in Synagogues. Men and women usually sit separately. Men are required to cover their heads. In most cases, worship takes place in Hebrew.
<b>Magen David</b>	The symbol of the Jewish people, also known as the Star of David.
<b>Torah</b>	The primary document of Judaism was given to the Jews by the prophet Moses. No one is allowed to touch the Torah so a special pointer called a yad is used to follow words when reading it. It is stored in the Ark.
<b>Menorah</b>	The Menorah is one of the oldest symbols of the Jewish faith. It is a candelabrum with seven candle holders, displayed in Jewish synagogues.
<b>Rabbi</b>	Jewish spiritual leaders are called Rabbis. Unlike leaders in many other faiths, a rabbi is not a priest and has no special religious status.
<b>Tallit</b>	A prayer shawl. Before beginning to worship or pray, a Jew will put on a tallit. The fringes on the shawl remind him of the many commandments of the Torah.
<b>Sefer Torah</b>	A handwritten copy of the Torah.
<b>The bimah</b>	A raised platform with a reading desk.
<b>Ner Tamid</b>	The eternal light. A lamp that burns in the synagogue.
<b>Mezuzah</b>	A mezuzah is found on door posts in Jewish homes. It is a little case, containing a tiny scroll. The writing on the scroll is from the bible. It says that Jewish people should love God and keep his rules.
<b>Tefillin</b>	A set of small black leather boxes containing scrolls inscribed with verses of the Torah.
<b>Moses</b>	Moses is the leader who freed Jews from slavery in Egypt.

**Artefacts and symbols during Sukkot**

<b>Sukkot</b>	A time of giving thanks for God's love, care and protection. Jewish families build a temporary shelter at Sukkot using branches and foliage in its construction.
<b>sukkah</b>	Huts made out of leaves and branches, used by Jews in the desert on the way to the Promised Land.
<b>lulav</b>	A closed front of the date palm tree. It is one of the Four Species used during the Jewish holiday of Sukkot. It is like a backbone so a Jew should be brave.
<b>etrog</b>	Citrus medica used by Jews during the holiday of Sukkot. It is heart-shaped so a Jew should have a good heart.
<b>mitzvah</b>	A good deed done from religious duty.
<b>exodus</b>	The departure of the Israelites from Egypt.

