

Resources about Judaism

Apisdorf, Shimon. *Judaism in a Nutshell: Holidays.* Pikesville, MD: Leviathan Press, 2001. ISBN: 1881927229

This book presents the major holidays in a broad, holistic framework and explains the history of the Jewish people. See also: *Judaism in a Nutshell: God.*

Artson, Bradley Shavit. *It's a Mitzvah! Step-by-Step to Jewish Living.* New York: Rabbinical Assembly, 1995. ISBN: 0874415853

A guide to Jewish living, this book is the starting point for everyone who wants to increase his or her level of Jewish commitment, but doesn't know where or how to begin. From lighting candles on Shabbat to spending a night in a homeless shelter, this book identifies hundreds of opportunities to transform daily living into Jewish living.

Blatner, David and Rabbi Ted Falcon. *Judaism for Dummies.* New York: Hungry Minds Inc., 2001. ISBN: 0764552996

A fascinating look at what being Jewish is all about. With a dose of warmth and humor, you'll discover key Jewish beliefs and traditions, understand the importance of Jewish history, and learn about Jewish holiday celebrations.

Broner, E.M. *Bringing Home the Light: A Jewish Woman's Handbook of Rituals.* San Francisco: Council Oak Books, 1999. ISBN: 157178084X

An accessible handbook for bringing ritual and ceremony back into your life, whether celebrating the high holy days or creating a sacred, empowering ritual around an important passage in your life as a woman.

Burghardt, Linda. *Jewish Holiday Traditions: Joyful Celebrations from Rosh Hashanah to Shavuot.* New York: Citadel Press, 2001. ISBN: 0806522062

This resource shows how to blend art, grace, culinary skill, and religious knowledge with tradition and innovation so that you can host the Jewish holidays in your home with confidence and panache.

Cardin, Nina Beth. *The Tapestry of Jewish Time: A Spiritual Guide to Holidays and Life Cycle Events.* Springfield, NJ: Behrman House, 2000. ISBN: 0874416450

This guide provides detailed information about the spiritual and historical roots of Jewish holidays and life cycle events.

Cox, Harvey Gallagher. *Common Prayers: Faith, Family, and a Christian's Journey through the Jewish Year.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001. ISBN: 0618067434

A Christian theologian married to a Jewish woman reflects on the essence of Judaism, its complex relationship to Christianity, and the personal, historical, and spiritual significance of Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah, Chanukah, and other Jewish holidays.

De Lange, Nicholas. *An Introduction to Judaism*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2000. ISBN: 0521466245

Beginning with the question "Who is a Jew?" this book proceeds to offer a lucid account of Judaism and the Jewish people.

Diamant, Anita and Howard Cooper. *Living a Jewish Life: A Guide for Starting, Learning, Celebrating, and Parenting*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1991. ISBN: 0062715089

The authors discuss how the customs of modern Judaism may be incorporated into everyday life and describe the Jewish holidays, traditions, rituals, and life-cycle ceremonies central to Judaism.

Donin, Hayim. *To Be A Jew: A Guide to Jewish Observance in Contemporary Life*. New York: BasicBooks, 1991. ISBN: 0465086241

This unique treasury of practical information and daily inspiration has long been acknowledged as the classic guide to the traditional Jewish laws and customs as they apply to contemporary Jewish daily life.

Dosick, Wayne D. *Living Judaism: The Complete Guide to Jewish Belief, Tradition, and Practice*. San Francisco: HarperSan Francisco, 1995. ISBN: 0060621796

Writing in short, accessible chapters that cover Jewish beliefs, people, literature, holidays, worship, and living Rabbi Wayne Dosick captures the essence of Judaism. Includes a timeline of Jewish history and thought-provoking essays on the Jewish idea of God, good and evil, the messiah, the Bible, prayer, right and wrong, the Holocaust, Israel, and more.

Einstein, Stephen J. and Lydia Kukoff. *Every Person's Guide to Judaism*. New York: UAHC Press, 1989. ISBN: 0807404349

This is a straightforward introduction to Judaism, its customs, ceremonies, and theology for daily living. Chapters include the Sabbath, festivals, life-cycle events, aspects of faith, the Jewish home and more. See also *Introduction to Judaism: A Course Outline* edited by Stephen J. Einstein and Lydia Kukoff.

Eisenberg, Ronald L. *The JPS Guide to Jewish Traditions*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2004. ISBN: 0827607601

This single volume provides thousands of insights into the origins, history, and current interpretations of a wealth of Jewish traditions and customs. Divided into four sections - Synagogue and Prayers, Sabbaths and Festivals, Life-Cycle Events, and Miscellaneous (a large section that includes such diverse topics as Jewish literature, food, and plants and animals) - this latest title in the *JPS Desk Reference Series* is an encyclopedic reference for anyone who wants easily accessible, accurate information about all things Jewish.

Geffen, Rela M. *Celebration & Renewal: Rites of Passage in Judaism*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1993. ISBN: 082760422X

The author explains such life-cycle events as birth, marriage, midlife, sickness, religious conversion, and adoption, as viewed, experienced, and treated from a Jewish perspective.

Goldman, Ari L. *Being Jewish: The Spiritual and Cultural Practice of Judaism Today*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000. ISBN: 0684823896

Incorporating elements of memoir, history, theology, and cultural criticism, this is a guide for the rediscovery of Judaism's essential traditions, organized in three sections that correspond to cycles of Jewish life: The Jewish Life, The Jewish Year and The Jewish Day.

Himelstein, Shmuel. *The Jewish Primer: Questions and Answers on Jewish Faith and Culture*. New York: Facts on File, 1990. ISBN: 0816023220

This primer offers a sensitive and thorough understanding of all facets of Judaism, imparted through an easy-to-understand question-and-answer format.

Jacobs, Sidney J. and Betty J. Jacobs. *Clues about Jews*. Culver City, CA: Jacobs Ladder Publications, 1985. ISBN: 093364700X

This concise guide answers basic questions about Judaism.

Klagsbrun, Francine and Mark H. Podwal. *Jewish Days: A Book of Jewish Life and Culture Around the Year*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1996. ISBN: 0374179239

The pairing of Francine Klagsbrun's unique tour through the Hebrew calendar with Mark Podwal's striking illustrations makes *Jewish Days* a powerful reference that will both attract people first learning about Jewish culture and thought and challenge those who are more knowledgeable.

Kolatch, Alfred J. *The Jewish Book of Why*. Middle Village, NY: J. David Publisher, 1995. ISBN: 0824602560

The author explains the reasons for Jewish customs concerning marriage, mourning, diet, prayer, worship, and the celebration of religious holidays.

Kolatch, Alfred J. *The Second Jewish Book of Why*. Middle Village, NY: J. David Publishers, 1985. ISBN: 0824603052

This is a sequel to *The Jewish Book of Why* dealing with more complex, and far-ranging subjects. The introduction explains the origins of Jewish law from biblical times to the present.

Kolatch, Alfred J. *The Jewish Home Advisor*. Middle Village, NY: Jonathan David Publishers, 1990. ISBN: 0824603443

The author discusses the approaches of the various branches of Judaism towards birth, adulthood, conversion, marriage, death, keeping kosher, everyday and Sabbath rituals, and the holidays, including both Ashkenazic and Sephardic customs.

Kosofsky, Scott-Martin. *The Book of Customs*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2004. ISBN: 0060524375

The Book of Customs is an updated guide to the rituals, liturgies, and texts of the entire Jewish year—from the days of the week and the Sabbath to all the months with their festivals, as well as the major life-cycle events of wedding, birth, bar and bat mitzvah, and death.

Maslin, Simeon J. *Gates of Mitzvah: A Guide to the Jewish Cycle*. New York: CCAR, 1979. ISBN: 0916694372

This comprehensive guide to Jewish observance throughout the life cycle is the best introduction to Reform Jewish practice available.

Olitzky, Rabbi Kerry M. and Rabbi Ronald H. Isaacs. *The Complete How to Handbook for Jewish Living*. Jersey City, NJ: KTAV Pub. House, 1993. ISBN: 0881257842

This comprehensive guide answers a multitude of questions on Jewish rituals and customs including visiting the sick, dancing the hora, eating kosher food, observing the Hebrew calendar, choosing a religious school and synagogue, putting up a mezuzah, and more.

Olitzky, Rabbi Kerry M. and Rabbi Daniel Judson. *The Rituals & Practices of a Jewish Life: A Handbook for Personal Spiritual Renewal*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2002. ISBN: 1580231691

This easy-to-use handbook explains the why, what, and how of ten specific areas of Jewish ritual and practice. Each chapter provides guidance and background for exploring Jewish ritual and practice, and offers creative ways to deepen the meaning of Judaism in your daily life.

Orenstein, Debra. *Lifecycles: Jewish Women on Life Passages and Personal Milestones*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1994. ISBN: 1879045141

The first in a landmark three-volume series offers the collaboration of over fifty women for a comprehensive work on the Jewish lifecycle. This volume covers the spectrum of life's passages including ceremonies around childbirth, choosing Judaism, parenting, and aging. See also: *Lifecycles: Jewish Women on Biblical Themes in Contemporary Life*. v.2

Robinson, George. *Essential Judaism: A Complete Guide to Beliefs, Customs and Rituals*. New York: Pocket Books, 2000. ISBN: 0671034804

This is a readable and indispensable guide to the religious traditions, everyday practices, philosophical beliefs, and historical foundations of Judaism.

Rush, Barbara. *The Jewish Year: Celebrating the Holidays*. New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 2001. ISBN: 158479030X

The author provides a guide to the customs, rituals, traditions, and religious significance of all of the Jewish holidays, including the Sabbath.

Segal, Eliezer. *Why Didn't I Learn This in Hebrew School? Excursions through the Jewish Past and Present*. Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1999. ISBN: 0765760762

This volume offers a taste of the Jewish past in a relaxed and popular style, as viewed from the broader perspective of historical and cultural scholarship.

Schoen, Robert. *What I Wish My Christian Friends Knew About Judaism*. Chicago: Loyola Press, 2004. ISBN: 082941777X

This concise and entertaining overview explains the differences and highlights the similarities between Judaism and Christianity. The author covers everything from Jewish ceremonies, holidays, and festivals to religious texts, symbols, and kosher food. It is perfect for Christians who are curious about the faith of their Jewish friends, coworkers, and family members, or for those Jews who want a better understanding of their heritage.

Shenker, Lois Sussman. *Welcome to the Family! Opening Doors to the Jewish Experience*. Ashland, OR: White Cloud Press, 2001. ISBN: 1883991412

This is a practical handbook for those seeking clear explanations about Jews, Jewish events, and Judaism.

Syme, Daniel B. *The Jewish Home: A Guide for Jewish Living.* Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson Inc., 1988. ISBN: 0876688253

This guide explains the how and why of Jewish living in the home today, covers traditional rituals from the birth of a child to death and mourning, and includes chapters on the Jewish wedding, the Jewish divorce, Bar and Bat Mitzvah, and Confirmation, as well as the various holidays of the Jewish year.

Witty, Abraham B. and Rachel J. Witty. *Exploring Jewish Tradition: A Transliterated Guide to Everyday Practice and Observance.* New York: Doubleday, 2001. ISBN: 0385494548

In this comprehensive primer of Jewish precepts and practices, no custom is left unexplained, no term undefined. The eye for detail enriches this easy-to-read reference to the complexities of traditional Jewish observance, with chapters on Torah; the synagogue and its artifacts; prayer and Jewish liturgy; the Jewish calendar; the Sabbath; the holidays; the life cycle; and special words and phrases used in everyday Jewish life.

Wouk, Herman. *This Is My God: The Jewish Way of Life.* Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1988. ISBN: 0316955078

Herman Wouk's famous introduction to Judaism is a miracle of brevity -- it guides readers through the world's oldest practicing religion with all the power, clarity and wit of Wouk's celebrated novels.

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