

Rosh Hashanah Dinner

By Custom & Craft



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

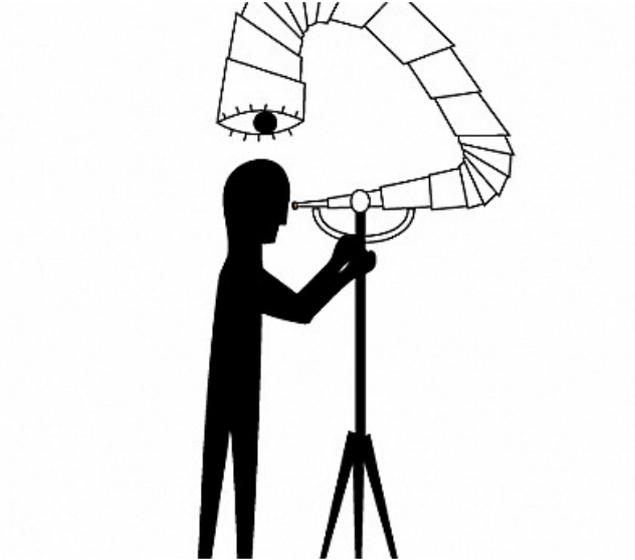
Happy New Year! Traditionally, the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah, is a time of introspection and reflection. How did we do in the past year? What are we hoping to change in the coming year? During this meal we will rejoice in being together, and think backwards on the year that was, and forward to the year that will be. Plus delicious food, puns, and casting off some bad karma. To a sweet new year!

INTRODUCTION

Introspection

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: by Tesily Diehl for Custom & Craft



From "Time to Reflect: A High Holidays-Inspired Workbook (for Grown-Ups)

<http://www.customandcraft.org/content/high-holidays-inspired-workbook>

Inviting Your Full Self to the High Holidays

Contributed by [Jewish Meditation Center of Brooklyn](#)

Source: JMC Brooklyn

The *Yamim Noraim* (Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur) are here. We're tasked with reflecting on our lives and practicing *teshuvah* (returning). Through *teshuvah* we examine our actions over the past year, seek forgiveness from ourselves, others, and the Divine and dedicate ourselves to do better next year. These sacred days provide an opportunity to ask ourselves the hardest questions and explore all the nooks and crannies of our thoughts, words, and actions over the past year. What's beautiful about this process is we're given the awesome opportunity to meet ourselves exactly where we are and practice being accountable. *Teshuvah* is about living a reflective life and taking responsibility for how we treat ourselves and interact with our family, friends, loved ones, colleagues, and even strangers.

Practice Instructions: Let's invite our full selves to this practice. Right now in the present, look back over your past year's journey, while visioning out the potential in the year to come. Before working with the three simple steps below close your eyes for a moment and take a few deep breaths. Bring your awareness to this moment in time, check in with your breath and your body. Feel the seat beneath you. Now return to your breath. Notice how you fill with breath and then how this same breath is released back to the world. As thoughts arise, notice if and where they reside in your body. Notice where you feel tension, and observe your reactions and responses. Use the questions below to guide your *teshuvah* practice. Spend time with each question and invite yourself to write your most honest answers. This is your practice, your life, and your opportunity to bring your entire self to the process. Whenever your mind inevitably wanders or wavers (which is what minds do), bring yourself back to this work and this paper in your hands. See the holiness in the task at hand, your role in creating the life you want to live and the capacity that you hold at every moment. With every breath, you can use the practice of *teshuvah* to return, reflect, forgive, and move forward.

1. Reflect

Over the past year, did I fully live my values? Did I treat other people how I would want to be treated? What do I most regret? What am I most proud of?

2. Seek Forgiveness

From whom must I ask forgiveness? To whom must I offer my forgiveness (regardless of outcome)?

3. Letting Go & Moving Forward

How can I release myself from any residue of the past year? What do I want to practice, seek, or commit myself to this year?

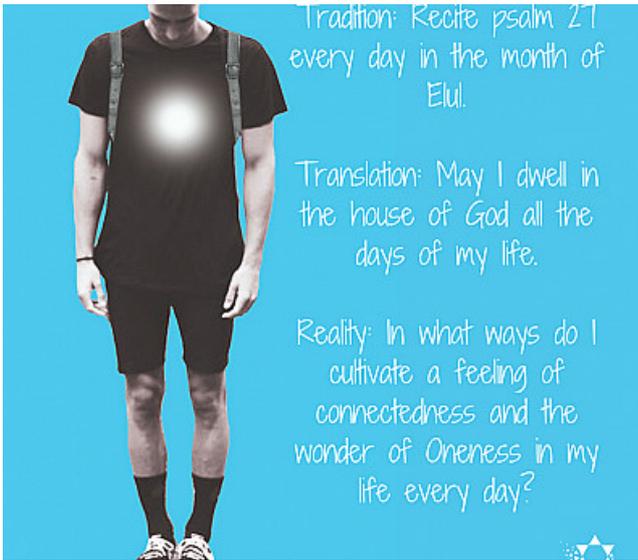
May we all be blessed with a sweet & meaningful New Year.

INTRODUCTION

Tradition, Translation, Reality: Psalm 27

Contributed by [Open Temple](#)

Source: The Open Temple



Candlelighting for Rosh Hashanah

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

Nearly all Jewish holiday begin with lighting candles, and so this one will, too. After we light the candles we wave our hands in three big horizontal circles to symbolically bring the light closer to us, and then cover our eyes while we say the blessing. When the blessing is over take a moment of silent reflection with your eyes covered, and then open your eyes and enjoy the beauty of candlelight, bringing you into the new year.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שְׁלִימוֹסָבוּב

*Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam
asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel yom tov.*

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe,
who has sanctified us with commandments, and commanded us to light festival candles.

WINE

Kiddush for Rosh Hashanah

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

Wine or grape juice are also standards of nearly every Jewish holiday. Before we eat we take a moment to say a blessing over a glass of wine. In this special version Rosh Hashanah is called Yom HaZikaron, the Day of Remembering, and Yom Truah, the Day of Calling Out. Tonight during our meal we will do some remembering, and some calling out. We will also focus on the gratitude we feel for the past year, and all of the blessings that it contained. L'chaim!

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam borei peri hagafen.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

WINE

Kiddush

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

BOREI P'REE
HAGAFEN



CUSTOM & CRAFT

Shehechyanu

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

The shehechyanu blessing thanks the creator for giving us life, sustaining us, and allowing us to reach this day. This blessing is said at momentous occasions, and tonight counts because it is the night when we can finally look back on the whole previous year. We made it! Whether bitter or sweet, difficult or fun, tonight we celebrate and feel grateful for making it to today, and to this table to reflect with people we care about.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שְׁהַחֲיֵנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהַגִּיעְנוּ לַזְּמַן הַזֶּה

Barukh ata adonai elohenu melekh ha'olam, shehecheyanu, v'kiymanu, v'higiyanu la'z'man ha'zeh

Blessed are You Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe who has given us life, sustained us, and allowed us to reach this day.

CHALLAH

Blessing for Challah

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

Finally, time to begin eating! Challah is a yummy egg bread eaten on most Jewish holidays. On Rosh Hashanah the challah is in the shape of a circle, to symbolize the circle of time, and the fullness of the year that is coming. Many people eat raisin challah on Rosh Hashanah, and drizzle honey on top of it, for extra sweetness. Yum!

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
הַמּוֹצֵיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ

*Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam,
hamotzi lechem min ha-aretz.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe,
Who brings forth bread from the earth.

CHALLAH

Ha Motzi

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

HA MOTZI
LECHEM MIN
HA'ARETZ

CUSTOM & CRAFT

Blessings for A Sweet New Year

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

The quintessential Rosh Hashanah treat is apples and honey. Take a sweet, crisp, apple and dip it in some honey. Before eating we say a mini-blessing, hoping that the year to come will be *tova umetukah*, good and sweet!

Pick up a slice of apple, dip it in honey, and say:

Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha'olam borei pri ha-eitz.

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the tree.

Yehi ratzon lifanecha, Adonai Eloheinu, v'Elohai avoteinu, she'te'hadash aleinu shanah tovah u'metukah.

May it be Your will, Eternal our God, that this be a good and sweet year for us.

Eat the apple dipped in honey.

Blessing for Apples

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft



ASL Blessing for Apples (Rosh Hashanah)

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft



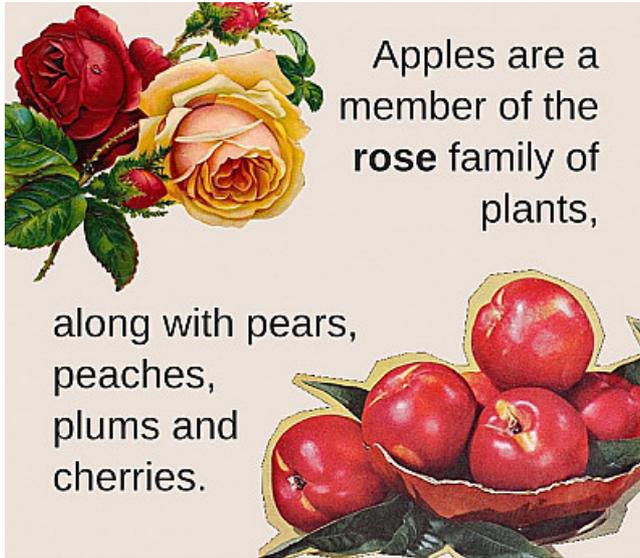
<https://www.youtube.com/embed/hdnfJ8haFek>

Our intern Sydney helped us translate the traditional blessing over the apples for Rosh Hashanah. Try it at home!

Did you know?

Contributed by [SIJCC](#)

Source: SIJCC



Apples are a member of the **rose** family of plants,

along with pears, peaches, plums and cherries.

Sephardic New Year Traditions & Food Puns

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

Maximum Pun Time. There are some traditional Jewish puns for the tabletop—do you wish that you will be the head and not the tail this year? Put a fish head on the table! Want to pare away your sins in the coming year? Eat a pear! Put a raisin with a stalk of celery if you're hoping for "a raise in salary." This is your time to be as creative as you'd like. Go craisin-y!

Rosh HaShanah Food Traditions: What's on the Table?

Contributed by [Sara Shapiro-Plevan](#)

Source:

The Rosh Hashanah Seder finds its earliest written source in a peculiar menu whose symbolic significance is not revealed...and your dinner menu can include many of these items that can draw on our earliest history and connect us to our hopes and dreams for our present and our future.

"For a good omen on Rosh HaShanah one should make it a habit to eat squash [like pumpkin], legumes [like string beans], kartei (leeks), spinach and dates."

Talmud BT Keritot 6a

Tunisian Jews often "publish" a French and Arabic menu called the "Honey Page" for it lists all the special foods to be eaten and to be used to symbolize New Year's wishes and of course it is headed by the word "Devash – honey." Then the list often continues with figs, dates, pomegranates, apples, and the head of a ram or a fish. Jews from other lands add carrots and beets, but obviously any food will do as long as you have a creatively corny sense of humor and a willingness to share your greatest fears and hopes.

Many families add a conversation following each of these meditations. Prompts are shared below.

Apples and Honey

Y'hi ratzon milfanech, shetichadesh aleinu shana tova u'metukah.

May it be God's will we will be renewed for a sweet new year.

With this blessing, we also recite the blessing over apples:

Baruch Ata, Adonai, Eloheinu Melech haolam, borei pri haetz.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has created the fruit of the tree.

What is new about you, for you, with you in this new year? We ask that God will "renew" us. How might you imagine being renewed in this coming year? How might you help this to happen? This is the most commonly known symbol and food for Rosh HaShanah. Why do you think it has become so popular? What might you substitute in its place if you were to reinvent the ritual?

Challah

For dipping challah (into honey) we might use this Hassidic wish:

May God create yeast in your soul, causing you to ferment, and mature, to rise, elevate, to your highest possibilities, to reach your highest self.

How have you matured or "fermented" this year? What is something that you have accomplished that you can celebrate with us? What are your hopes for "fermentation" for this coming year? What is something you hope to accomplish?

A Head

Traditionally the head of a lamb or a carp is the occasion for a blessing (though vegetarians might perhaps substitute a head of cabbage or a head of lettuce):

Y'hi ratzon sheh- ni-hi-yeh l'Rosh v'lo l'zanav

May it be God's will that we will be a head and not a tail.

What does this mean? How might you interpret the blessing? Would you rather be a head or a tail? Why? How might this food be connected to the Jewish calendar?

Spinach or beets

In Hebrew, spinach or beets are traditionally called *seleck*, which can also mean "to remove decisively." They elicit this New Year's wish:

Y'hi ratzon sheh- yis-talku soneinu.

May it be God's will that our enemies be removed from our presence.

When this was written, who do you think it could have referred to? What are different ways we can understand "enemies"? Who might it refer to today? Tell a story from our Jewish past that illustrates how our enemies were "removed decisively."

Pomegranate

Pomegranates, filled with numerous sweet seeds, traditionally recall the 613 commandments or mitzvot found in the Torah. The blessing is:

Y'hi ratzon sheh-ni-hi-yeh malei mitzvot ka-rimon

May it be God's will that our lives may be as full of mitzvot as the pomegranate is filled with seeds.

What is a mitzvah that you hope to fulfill this year? Here, seeds symbolize mitzvot. What else might they symbolize? What does the performance of a mitzvah do for you, the one who performs the mitzvah? How does it feel? What inspires us to do mitzvot?

Carrots and Squash

These root vegetables or nightshades, which are called respectively, Gezer (decree) or Kara (tear up or read) are used for:

Yehi ratzon milfanecha she-yikara roa gezar dinneinu, v'yikaru lfanecha zakiyoteinu

May it be God's will that the evil decrees against us be torn up and our good merits be read out before You.

To yourself: If you could choose one thing that would be wiped from your memory this year, what would it be? To yourself: What is something that you wished you'd done differently this year? If you could do it all over again, would you do it the same, or different? What is a "good merit" about you that perhaps no one knows about?

The Power of the Pun: Inventing Your Own Seder Rosh HaShanah

Let us suggest some contemporary "green grocer" wishes punning in English on the shape, name or color of these fruits and vegetables:

Dates: May it be God's will that all my single friends have many dates this year.

Tomatoes or Hot Peppers: May it be God's will that this be a juicy/red-hot New Year.

Rabbi Yitz Greenberg (CLAL 1977) suggested:

Peaches – May we have a "peachy" year! Brussels or other sprouts– May our good fortune "sprout"!

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includes some excerpts from Noam Zion, *The Rosh HaShanah Seder*

Reflecting on the Past Year

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

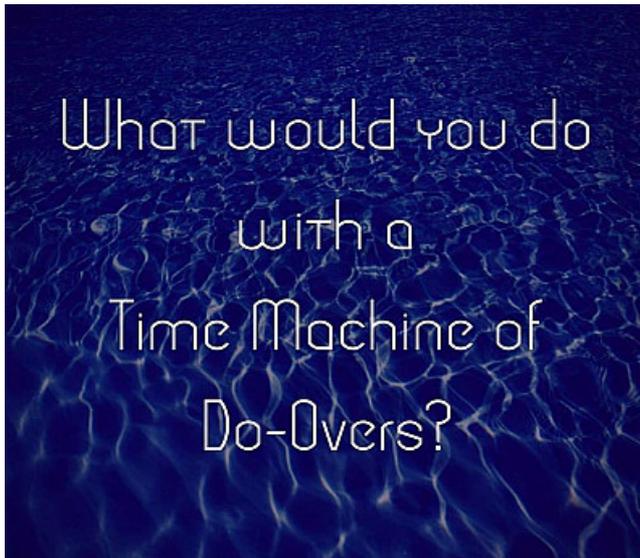
Source: Custom & Craft

We all have thoughts and feelings from the past year that we'd like to get rid of or forget. During tashlich, we take some breadcrumbs and sprinkle them into a body of water, symbolically ridding ourselves of the sins and bad feelings that have been weighing us down. Now we can go into the new year with a clean slate.

Imagine a Time Machine of Do-Overs

Contributed by [SIJCC](#)

Source: SIJCC



High Holidays Writing Exercise

Contributed by [David Wolkin](#)

Source: Original

This is adapted from an original post that I wrote in 2010.

The 10 Days of Repentance represent the window of time in between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, during which time we are meant to repent on the sins of the past year. I've always found it tough to focus on this and properly bring it down to earth, so I developed this writing exercise to help me through it. It can work for anyone, irrespective of faith. Read on...

Imagine if you had to spend 10 days in a room confronted with all of your sins/mistakes/wrongdoings of the past year:

1. What would that room look like? How big would it be?
2. Who or what would be in this room? Would there mostly be people in that room? Actions? Thoughts? Decisions? Ideas?
3. What would you say to them/what would they say to you?
4. What would it feel like to spend 10 days in there? Could you handle it?
5. What would you do with the time that you had in there? What would you address first, last?

At the end of those 10 days, whatever you do, it's time for you to leave that room and close the door for the next year. But don't close it all the way. Leave it just a little bit ajar. You may have done all you can, but accept the fact that come next year, you might re-enter that room and be confronted with some of the same things. And Yom Kippur comes along, you can be the one closing the gates, writing the book. You don't have to let God make all of the decisions, since at the end of the day, so much of it is completely in your own hands.

Happy new year, everybody!

The Past Got in My Eyes

Contributed by [JewBelong](#)

Source: JewBelong, Rosh Haggadah



There is a Peanuts cartoon that poses food for thought for the High Holy Days. In the cartoon, Lucy walks toward Charlie Brown, who is standing on the pitching mound. She tosses him the baseball and says, "Sorry, I missed that easy fly ball. I thought I had it, but suddenly I remembered all the others I've missed. The past got in my eyes!"

The purpose of the High Holy Days is to acknowledge the past, deal with it and ask for forgiveness for our failures. The hope is that we leave it behind and begin our new year with a clean slate. This cartoon reminds us that if we choose to allow it, the past can continue to influence our present and, in turn, our future.

To what avail, we might ask? Are we to let our past misdeeds be the sole determinant of what happens to our future? Or perhaps, if we enter the New Year with a new image, one in which the past does not get in our eyes, this time we may catch on to the importance of taking a renewed look at dealing with life.

Download the full Rosh Haggadah here: <http://www.jewbelong.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/RoshHaggadah.pdf>

LOOKING FORWARD

Thinking About The New Year

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

We've done lots of looking backward, but now is the time to think forward. What are we hoping to accomplish in the coming year? What are we afraid of, and what are we excited about? What is one thing we hope to have accomplished by next Rosh Hashanah? Go around the table and lay out some goals for the year to come.

LOOKING FORWARD

Fill in the Blank...

Contributed by [SIJCC](#)

Source: East Side Jews / SIJCC



Kick-Ass Rosh Hashanah: Important Questions

Contributed by [JewBelong](#)

Source: JewBelong, adapted from Rabbi Shimon Apisdorf

ASK YOURSELF IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

Like a mini-spiritual workout! You don't have to answer every question, but tackling a few is impactful.

- 1) When do I feel that my life is most meaningful?
- 2) What would bring me more happiness than anything else in the world?
- 3) What are my three most significant achievements in the past year?
- 4) What are my biggest mistakes in the past year?
- 5) What project or goal, if left undone, will I most regret a year from now?
- 6) If I knew I couldn't fail, what would I try to accomplish?
- 7) What is the most important decision I need to make this year?
- 8) What important decision did I avoid making last year?
- 9) Over the last year, did my most important relationships become closer and deeper, or was there a sense of stagnation and drifting?
- 10) What can I do to nurture those relationships this year?
- 11) If I could change one thing about myself, what would it be?
- 12) Are there any ideals I'd be willing to die for?
- 13) If I could live my life over, what would I change?
- 14) What do I want written on my tombstone? And how do I begin living that way now?

Adapted from "Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur Survival Kit" by Rabbi Shimon Apisdorf

Download the full PDF here: <http://www.jewbelong.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/PersonalRoadmap-1.pdf>

Blessing Booth

Contributed by [Ritualwell](#)

Source: ritualwell.org

I started giving blessings at High Holiday services at my *shul*. I sat in the lobby and put up a sign on an empty chair offering blessings. Since then I've created a simple format and trained people. The "Blessing Booth" has become part of High Holiday services and many Friday evening services.

Giving a holy blessing is a beautiful thing. Anyone can learn to do it. It is brief, under five minutes. It is not therapy, it is about blessing them with what they want and need now. I enjoy doing it and people love receiving blessings. Go forth and bless.

I sit in a chair facing an empty chair.

Welcome

(Put them at ease.) Hello, welcome, what is your name, how are you, good *Shabbos*, good *yontiff*, have you ever gotten a *bracha* (blessing) before? How was it?

3 Questions

Is there an area of your life in which you want extra divine attention?

Are there any other areas in which you want support?

What name of God are you most comfortable with?

Pause & Connect

Hold hands and breathe for a moment. Use this time to connect, feel this person.

Pray to God for clarity, support, that God help you deliver what this person needs.

Permission

Ask if you can put your hands on the person's head. Most people say yes however they might be more comfortable having you put your hands on their shoulders, hold hands, or just sit beside each other.

Blessing

Speak in first person: I bless you, we bless you, God Bless you, this community blesses you, that..... Go big, speak what their heart really yearns for, give additional blessings for other parts of their lives, their families, friends, etc.

Breathe

Pause and hold the space until they open their eyes and are ready to move on.

Good bye

Thank you

Disconnect

Pause to let go of this person. Put them in G-d's hands. Disconnect. Move to the next person. If you hold on to the people you bless, you will be depleted. We give them our best, and let them go. The rest

is between them and the Creator.

CONCLUSION

Make some noise!

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

The meal is coming to a close. But we're not quite done yet. One of the most important parts of Rosh Hashanah is sounding the shofar. A ram's horn makes a primal cry, and it speaks to something deep in our soul, waking up something inside us that was dormant, or asleep.

If you have a shofar, blow it now! If not, make some noise some other way. Belt out a song or try a primal scream. Do what you need to do to feel jarred, and awoken.

CONCLUSION

How to Blow A Shofar

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft



Tekiah: One blow that lasts 2-3 seconds

Shevarim: A "broken" tekiah, made by sounding three quick blasts

Teruah: The alarm is made up of nine very quick pulses

Tekiah Gedolah: Meaning "Big Tekiah", the Tokea (person who sounds the shofar) blows the shofar for as long as possible, but at least 9 seconds. If more than one Tokea are sounding, they often compete to see who can last longer.

During Rosh Hashanah, a sequence of blows is done. At Yom Kippur, only Tekiah Gedolah is blown.

CONCLUSION

Shana Tova

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft



Shana Tova

(And sorry for all the weird stuff I did.)

CUSTOM & CRAFT

CONCLUSION

Shofar Beats

Contributed by [Custom & Craft](#)

Source: Custom & Craft

