

The Joys of Owning Your Own Lulav and Etrog



It is considered a mitzvah to have one's own lulav and etrog for the holiday of Sukkot and many Jews purchase their own set. It is a wonderful way to be more personally involved in the celebration of the harvest festival.

You may bring your lulav and etrog to synagogue to join the rabbis in the blessings over the arba minim (see our [glossary](#) of terms). You may also say the blessings daily in your home sukkah. If you invite guests to dine with you in your sukkah, everyone can take a turn holding the lulav and etrog, shaking them in all directions as is customary, and saying the blessings. Children in particular become very involved in this ritual.

After the holiday ends, you may simply dispose of the lulav and etrog. There are some possible uses for them, however. See the recipe for [Etrog Marmalade in the ShalomBoston.com recipe files](#) for a tasty way to dispose of your etrog. Joan Nathan, in *The Jewish Holiday Kitchen* (Schocken Books, 1979), says you may add the etrog to grapefruit and orange peel to make citrus preserves. The skin can also be pickled or candied. Another wonderful use of the etrog, although time-consuming, is to "embalm" it with cloves and use it instead of the spice box for Havdalah. (Ms. Nathan provides embalming instructions in her book.)

If you save the lulav, it will become quite brittle. Some Jews have the tradition of connecting Sukkot to the holiday of Passover through the lulav. They use the dried lulav as kindling when burning the last chametz (bread crumbs) found before Passover begins.

To purchase a lulav and etrog, contact your rabbi or synagogue office or call The Israel Book Shop in Brookline and Randolph. It is a good idea to order your set in advance.

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