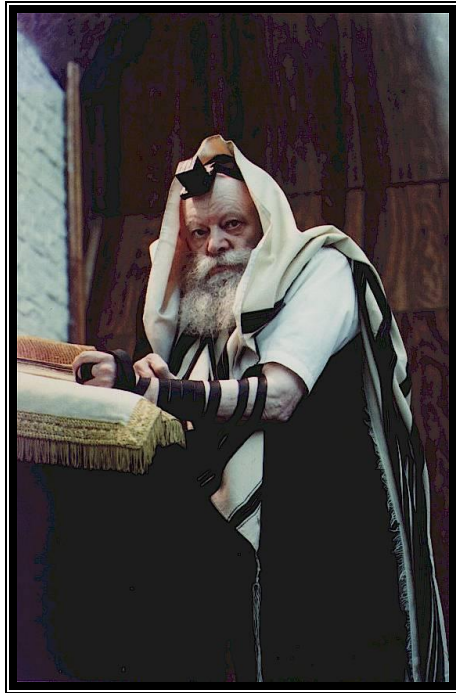


# Items or articles of clothing worn by the Jews



## Tefillin



Hebrew  
תחלין

Tefillin comes from the Hebrew word 'tefillah' meaning 'prayer'.

The Tefillin is one of the most important Mitzvot (covenants) of the Torah. Tefillin consists of two small leather boxes attached to leather straps. The two boxes each contain four sections of the Torah inscribed on parchment. These passages cite:

- The Shema (Deut. 6:4-9)
- The Vehayah (Deut. 11:13-21)
- The Kadesh (Exodus 13:1-10)
- The Vehayah (Exodus 13:11-16)

One of the boxes (the "Hand Tefillin" or "shel yad") is placed upon the left arm so that it rests against the heart, and the suspended leather strap is wound around the left hand, and around the middle finger of that hand. The other box (the "Head Tefillin" or "shel rosh") is placed upon the head, above the forehead, so as to rest upon the cerebrum.

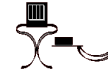
In this manner, ones attention is directed to the head, heart and hand. It teaches dedication in all that we think, feel and do. The Mitzvah of Tefillin and its practice reminds the individual to follow God with all heart and mind, intellect and emotion.

### Some Laws of Tefillin

A Jewish boy, upon reaching his thirteenth birthday, is regarded as a full-fledged Jew. He then becomes a "Bar Mitzvah" (son of the Covenant), meaning that he is obliged to keep and perform all the laws and customs of the Jewish people. One of these laws commanded in the Torah is Tefillin.

Tefillin are hand-written by a duly qualified Scribe (Sofer), on special, consecrated parchment. The boxes are produced in a highly specialized process from the leather of a Kosher hide, which are consecrated. The boxes must be perfectly squared. The straps and boxes must be dyed black with special dye. The head Tefillin has four compartments. Each contains one of the four scrolls upon which one of the four different sections of the Torah. The hand Tefillin has only one compartment, and contains all these four sections of the Torah inscribed on one scroll. Tefillin should be donned on weekdays only (Sunday through Friday). On Sabbath and festivals, Tefillin are not to be put on.

## Tefillin continued



Tefillin are also referred to as frontlets, derived from the Akkadian word 'ribbon'

The letter "Shin" שׁ

The letter "dalet" ד

The letter "yud" י

The word שדי means 'Almighty' pronounced 'shaddai'

Tefillin are worn during the morning prayers. However, if, for some reason it was impossible to do so in the morning, Tefillin may still be put on later in the day, but not after sunset.

### Procedure for putting on Tefillin

- The person should be standing. He takes out the "Hand Tefillin" first, and places it upon the biceps of the left arm, adjusted so as to rest against the heart.
- Care should be taken that the leather loop through which the strap is drawn is above the box. Before tightening the strap he recites the blessing "L'ho-niach Tefillin." Then he fastens the strap, winding the two coils over the leather extension of the Hand-Tefillin and his arm (this forms the letter "Shin") proceeding to make seven coils on his forearm. The rest of the strap he winds around his palm.

- Immediately afterwards he takes out the "Head" Tefillin and places it on his head so the box rests above the forehead, and the knot rests just above the neck (the knot forms the letter "dalet"). Ensuring the box of the Head-Tefillin is placed properly above the forehead so that the lower edge of the box should not fall below the hair roots, and that it is centered at a point midway between the eyes. Having so adjusted the Head-Tefillin, he now unwinds the strap from his palm in order to make three coils on the middle finger, the first on the lower phalanx (near the palm), the second on the middle phalanx, and the third, back again on the lower phalanx. The remainder of the strap is then wound around the palm (the end of the strap form the letter "yud"). In some communities it is customary to make the blessing "Al Mitz-vas Tefillin" over the Head-Tefillin before adjusting it, followed by – "Boruch Shem Kiv-od Malchuso L'Olam Vo-ed."

- The straps, both of the Hand and Head Tefillin must always be placed black side up.

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shall love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by this way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)



## Tefillin continued



The Greek form of 'Tefillin' is 'phylacteries'

- During the act of putting on Tefillin, it is prohibited to interrupt the procedure by conversation or gesture. The only interruption permitted is to answer Amen when hearing someone else making the blessing over Tefillin. If an unauthorized interruption was made, the blessing "Al Mitz-vas Tefillin" should be recited when putting on the Head Tefillin.
- A person who is left-handed (whether one is deemed left-handed in this case should be ascertained from an orthodox Rabbi) puts on the Hand Tefillin on his right arm.
- The Tefillin must be placed on the bare arm and head, without anything intervening.
- If for some reason it is impossible to put the Hand-Tefillin on, the Head-Tefillin must be put on nevertheless, and vice versa. In each case the respective blessing is recited.
- It is required that the person be constantly and respectfully aware of the Tefillin while he is wearing them.

It is customary to remove the Tefillin only after the conclusion of the entire morning service. At any rate they must not be removed until after the prayer "Uvo L'Tziyon."

### Procedure for removing the Tefillin

- The person should stand. First the strap around the middle finger is unwound and is rewound around the palm. The Head-Tefillin is then removed from the head with the left hand, the straps rewound, and placed in the bag. It is customary to put the Head-Tefillin on the right side and the Hand-Tefillin on the left side of the bag.
- When a Tallis is worn during the prayer, the Tallis should be put on first and then the Tefillin; but when the prayer is concluded, the Tefillin are removed first, in the manner described above, and then the Tallis.

## Tefillin continued

The Tefillin must be handled with due reverence. Should the Tefillin accidentally fall to the floor, atonement is required by fasting or giving charity. In such a case a Rabbi should be consulted as to how the atonement should be made.

A Jewish Sage said, "He who carefully observes the commandment of Tefillin daily, merits long life and the World to come."

## Kipot or Kippah



Hebrew  
כִּפּוֹת

The word kippah is probably better known by its Yiddish counterpart 'yamulke' meaning skullcap. The bible makes no mention of a requirement to cover one's head; though the High Priest wore a head covering called a 'mitznetef' or mitre and the priest wore one called a 'migbaat'. The priest wore such covering to symbolize a crown of purity and exaltation. It also represented purity of thought. The modern kippah is a descendant of the early linen bonnets worn by the priests. Kippah's typically have an ornamental border symbolizing the ancient crown worn by the High Priests. Such a crown reminded them that they were children of the King of Kings and hence were royalty in their own right. Likewise, the Kippah reminds the wearers that they are children of God. They have a holy birthright, and as children of the most High should show reverence to Him.

## Kittel

Hebrew  
קִיטָל

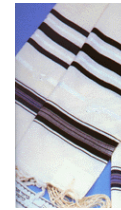
Kittel comes from the Yiddish word meaning 'gown'. Indeed, it is a pure white gown. The ancient High Priest of Israel wore a white gown under his ephod. It symbolized purity and atonement. The modern Jew only wears the Kittel for special occasion, such as Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), Passover, or a Brit.

## Tallis Katan



The Tallis Katan is a white undershirt worn by the Jews. It is closely related to the Tallis in meaning; however, unlike the Tallis it is worn all the time. As such, it is a constant reminder of the symbols associated with it. It is white and symbolizes purity. It has tzitzit's on each corner and symbolizes exactness in keeping God's Laws. Like the Tallis it also represents God's protection. The picture to the left is an ancient Tallis Katan.

## Tallis



Hebrew  
טָלִית

The Tallis was originally a 'cloak' or 'robe'. Some feel that after the destruction of the first temple, the captive Jews changed the cloak or ephod of the temple to appear more like a 'shawl' since they had no temple to worship. The fringes of the Tallis are called 'tzitzit', and the collar is called 'atarah'. The winding of the Tallis is usually done with blue and white thread, though modern tallits have adopted newer colors. The threads are to be woven in the pattern of ten, five, six, five, representing the name "YHVH". The tallis is wrapped around one's shoulders to pray, and placed over one's head when offering a blessing. Covering one's self with the Tallis represents being under God's protection.

## Atarah



Refers to the border on the top edge of the Tallis. It is the crown of the Tallis when worn over the head. The border is usually embroidered, in Hebrew, with a verse or saying. Some say 'Holiness to the Lord', or other quote scripture.

## Tzitzit

Hebrew  
צִיצִית

On each of the four corners of the Tallis and the Tallis Katan one can find eight individual strings tied in a series of knots. The knots are tied in 5 knot increments using all eight strings until a total of 613 knots are formed on each corner. The knots symbolize the binding power of God's covenants and remind the wearer to keep all the commandments of God at all times. Since they are on all four corners they form a square indicating exactness in keeping God's commandments. Anciently, the eighth string was blue. It was woven into the knots in a pattern of ten, five, six, five, representing the name 'YHVH'.

## Shofar



Hebrew  
שׁוֹפָר



The shofar horn is the horn of a ram. The symbol of the ram is associated with the messiah. Hence, the shofar horn has long been associated with messianic redemption. The Jews use the horn to welcome in all holy days. Its loud sound is thought to confuse Satan. The Jews also have a long history of victory associated with the horn. From the walls of Jericho to the 7-day war, the shofar horn has blown.