

What is Shavuot?

Shavuot (literally 'weeks') is a Jewish festival that celebrates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai and marks the end of a seven-week journey that begins with Passover.

It is one of the three biblical pilgrimage festivals, originally tied to the first grain harvest and the bringing of "first fruits" to the Temple, which is why it is also called the Feast of Weeks. The name "Shavuot" literally means "weeks," because it falls seven weeks (50 days) after the start of Passover, completing the period known as counting the Omer.

In Jewish tradition, Shavuot is described as the time of the giving of the Torah, when the Israelites moved from being freed slaves to becoming a covenantal people with a shared law and purpose.

How is Shavuot celebrated?

Shavuot is marked by synagogue services, hearing the Ten Commandments, late night Torah study, eating dairy foods like cheesecake, ice cream and blintzes, reading the Book of Ruth, and decorating homes or synagogues with flowers and greenery.

When is Shavuot?

Shavuot falls on the Hebrew date of 5th Sivan, ending on the 7th of Sivan. In 2026 Shavuot begins in the evening of the 21st May, concluding in the evening of the 23rd May. In Israel, Shavuot is only observed for one day.

Will my Jewish colleagues be available during the festival?

For many observant Jews, typical labor is not performed over the holiday and they will avoid travel and use of electronics (and be completely offline between sundown and sunset during this time).

What greeting can I give Jewish colleagues?

During Shavuot, you can say "Chag Sameach" which literally means "Happy Festival".

Where can I learn more?

- [PJ Library Shavuot Hub](#)
- [Jewish Virtual Library](#)
- [7 Shavuot Foods from Around the World](#)
- [Why kids love Shavuot \(and you will too!\)](#)
- [\(Video\) What is Shavuot?](#)



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