

Rosh Hashana First Day Guide

#	Prayer	What is it?	Background	Action and Explanation	Page												
1	Brachot	Thanking Hashem for our daily blessings, such as sight and movement.	Just as we acknowledge and thank Hashem before eating, drinking, or smelling a fragrance, we thank Hashem each day for the blessings He bestows upon us daily.	Second Temple Era	184												
2	Anim Zmirot	Song of praise to the glory of Hashem Custom	This is a song praising the wisdom, beauty and strength of Hashem. It is recited on Shabbat and Yom Tov.	1200 CE	Since the Ark is open, we stand out of respect for the Torah.	166											
3	Psalm of the Day	A different Psalm for each day of the week	In Temple Times, the Levites would sing a particular song for each day. In this sense, the Psalm of the Day is the most ancient prayer service we have.	First Temple Era	170-178												
4	LeDavid Hashem Ori	Psalm 27: Joy in Hashem's help.	It is customary to say this prayer from the beginning of the month of Elul until Simchat Torah.	Late Middle Ages	178												
5	Mizmor Shir Chanukat	Psalm 30: Thanks for Hashem's healing and forgiveness	This prayer acknowledges that Hashem gives us second chances and declares that we will eternally sing to Hashem, and was therefore chosen as the introduction to our prayers.	Middle Ages	220												
6	Psukei DeZimra	Praises of Hashem	Beginning with Baruch SheAmar and concluding with Yishtabach, this section praises Hashem for the miracles that are present with us every day, as well as reflecting on His greatness, and the ways in which he has saved us in history.	Middle Ages	There are several prayers in this section for which it is praiseworthy to stand. They are indicated in the Machzor.	222-264											
7	HaMelech	Declaration of the sovereignty of Hashem	The main section of the Shacharit opens with the poetic imagery that the heavenly King sits on a high, exalted throne to judge His world.	Middle Ages	262												
8	Barchu	Communal blessing of Hashem	Rabbinic obligation to utilise the opportunity of a community coming together to publically sanctify Hashem, affirming that He is the source of all blessing.	Second Temple Era	Stand: Public Sanctification of Hashem's Name Bow: Submitting ourselves to Hashem, or because this is considered the beginning of the process of the Amida.	266											
9	Brachot Before the Shma	Blessings of Hashem's control of light and dark, and His love for us	Rabbinic obligation to say blessings before the Shma so that we will truly understand and feel the Oneness of Hashem and Love for Hashem we say in the Shma.	Second Temple Era	We sit to settle our minds in preparation for the Amida, and Kabbalistic reasons	266-290											
10	Shma	Accepting Hashem as our God, reward and punishment, and Mitzvot	Torah obligation to say the first two paragraphs each day morning and evening, and to speak of the Exodus from Egypt (third paragraph) each day.	1312 BCE	We gather the Tzitzit of our Tallitot in our left hands for the entire Shma. We hold the Tzitzit close to our hearts: Mitzvot should be "on our hearts".	290-292											
					We cover our eyes with our right hands and say Shma in a loud voice, in order to block out all distractions.												
11	Brachot after the Shma	Blessings of redemption and protection	Rabbinic obligation to say blessings after the Shma acknowledging Hashem's redemption throughout history and asking for His protection from all harm.	Second Temple Era	We sit to settle our minds in preparation for the Amida, and Kabbalistic reasons	292-296											
12	Personal Shacharit Amida	Intimate conversation with Hashem - consists of praise, request and thanks	<p>It is a Torah obligation to stand before Hashem in prayer once per day. Amida was formulated by the Rabbis, who obliged us to pray Shacharit and Mincha. Men are obligated in Maariv also by custom. The Rosh Hashana Shacharit Amida is composed of 7 blessings in 3 sections:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Praise</td> <td>Avot: Hashem is all-loving</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gevurot: Hashem is all-powerful</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Request</td> <td>Kedusha: Hashem is all-holy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kingship: May Hashem be revealed as King</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Thanks</td> <td>Avodah: Temple Service</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Modim: Thanks for daily miracles</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Shalom: Peace</td> </tr> </table>	Praise	Avot: Hashem is all-loving	Gevurot: Hashem is all-powerful	Request	Kedusha: Hashem is all-holy	Kingship: May Hashem be revealed as King	Thanks	Avodah: Temple Service	Modim: Thanks for daily miracles	Shalom: Peace		Prayer is as old as humanity, the formal Amida is from the Second Temple Era	Take steps back and forth at the beginning and end. Three steps forward at the beginning to enter through three "passages" to Hashem (as Moshe did). Three steps back at the end to withdraw. Other steps for space.	296-304
					Praise	Avot: Hashem is all-loving											
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Stand with our legs together: As angels do in Heaven, and to show that we don't want to go anywhere else.																	
Whisper our prayer: So that those confessing their sins to Hashem will not be embarrassed, and because Hashem hears even a whisper. On Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, however, you may pray at a normal speaking volume.																	
Bow during Bracha of "Avot" and "Modim": Correct behaviour to bow to the King when we approach Him and when we begin to take leave																	

					Some people “Shokel”, rock back and forth, based on the verse: “All my bones will say ‘Hashem, who is like You?’”	
					Bow left, right, and forward and the conclusion of our Amida. The specific nature of the bowing shows that we truly believe that we are in the presence of Hashem. We begin with our left - Hashem’s “right” which represents His kindness, and then our right, His “left”, the attribute of justice.	
13	Repetition of the Shacharit Amida	Chazzan’s Repetition of the Amida with many added <i>Piyutim</i> (songs)	The Chazzan’s repetition, originally instituted for those who were unable to pray, was expanded to include many <i>Piyutim</i> that capture and depict the holiness of the day.	Second Temple Era	Some stand throughout the repetition as it can be considered like the Amida. We all make an effort to stand when the Ark is open, out of respect for the Torah.	306
14	Atta Hu	<i>Piyut</i> (song) praising Hashem in alphabetical order.	The <i>Piyut</i> is focussed on the attributes of Hashem as they are manifest in creation.	Middle Ages	Since the Ark is open, we stand out of respect for the Torah.	314
15	Hashem Melech	<i>Piyut</i> (song) in verses of three about Hashem’s Kingship.	Each section speaks about holy creations who proclaim Hashem as King, alternating between the angels and the Jewish people.	Middle Ages	Since the Ark is open, we stand out of respect for the Torah.	328
16	L’Kel Orech Din	<i>Piyut</i> (song) about Hashem’s justice and compassion.	This <i>Piyut</i> is in sets of two, listing what Hashem does “on the day of judgement” and “in judgement”.	Middle Ages	Since the Ark is open, we stand out of respect for the Torah.	330
17	Kedusha	Communal Praise of Hashem modelled after the angels	We declare that we will bless Hashem just as the angels in Isaiah and Ezekiel’s visions do. We use their words and our prayers are as beloved to Hashem as theirs are.	Second Temple Era	We stand since this is a public sanctification of Hashem’s name. We rise up on our toes for the responses like the angels that “fly” in their praises of Hashem.	332
18	Avinu Malkeinu	44 Prayers for a wide range of human needs, all in the form of “Our Father, Our King”	Rabbi Akiva composed the original Avinu Malkeinu prayer on a fast day in time of drought. Extra verses were added over the centuries to give expression to the yearning for Divine blessing whenever the future seemed in doubt.	100 CE	Since the Ark is open, we stand out of respect for the Torah.	384-388
19	Taking Out Torah	The ceremony to begin Torah reading	We recall the travelling of the Ark in the desert, invoke Hashem’s 13 attributes of compassion, and say the Shma together.		We stand out of respect for the Torah.	390
20	Torah Reading	Communal Torah study	The Torah reading (Bereishit/Genesis 21) describes the birth of Yitzchak, as well as the exile of Hagar and Yishmael and Avraham’s treaty with the Philistines.	1312 BCE	Some stand for the Brachot themselves, because they are a public sanctification of Hashem’s Name. Some stand for the reading of the Torah, because it is a recreation of the Giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai. Many sit.	402
21	Haftarah	Communal study of the Prophets	The Haftarah was instituted during a time when Torah reading was forbidden. We read from the prophets instead. Today’s Haftarah (I Samuel 1:1-2:10) is about another miraculous birth – the Prophet Samuel, who led and taught the Jewish people during the life of King Saul and King David.	Talmudic Era		416
22	Yekum Purkan	Prayer for Torah scholars and community	This is one of the few prayers (apart from Kaddish) written in Aramaic. It was originally composed to ask for Hashem’s care and protection for the Jewish communities of Babylonia.	800 CE		428
23	Shofar Blowing	Torah Mitzva to hear the Shofar blasts	Hashem commanded us to hear the Shofar on this day. We blow combinations of Tekia (a single joyous blast) and Shevarim and Trua (broken, mournful blasts). We begin and end with Torah verses.	1312 BCE	We stand for this special Mitzva	432-438
24	Return Torah	The ceremony to conclude Torah reading	We recall the travelling of the Ark in the desert.		We stand out of respect for the Torah.	440
25	Chazzan’s Prayer	Chazzan’s personal prayer before Mussaf	Since the Chazzan will be representing the Jewish people before Hashem, he asks that his personal inadequacies not reflect badly upon the community.			444

26	Personal Mussaf Amida	Intimate conversation with Hashem - consists of praise, request and thanks	<p>The Rosh Hashana Mussaf Amida is composed of 9 blessings in 3 sections:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Praise</td> <td>Avot: Hashem is all-loving</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Gevurot: Hashem is all-powerful</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="2">Request</td> <td>Kedusha: Hashem is all-holy</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kingship: Shofar</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">Thanks</td> <td>Remembrance</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Avodah: Temple Service</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Modim: Thanks for daily miracles</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Shalom: Peace</td> </tr> </table>	Praise	Avot: Hashem is all-loving	Gevurot: Hashem is all-powerful	Request	Kedusha: Hashem is all-holy	Kingship: Shofar	Thanks	Remembrance	Avodah: Temple Service	Modim: Thanks for daily miracles		Shalom: Peace	Prayer is as old as humanity, the formal Amida is from the Second Temple Era	As in the Shacharit Amida, we: Take steps back and forth at the beginning and end. Stand with our legs together. Bow during Bracha of "Avot" and "Modim" Bow left, right, and forward and the conclusion of our Amida.	448
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27	Repetition of the Mussaf Amida	Chazzan's Repetition of the Amida with many added <i>Piyutim</i> (songs)	The Chazzan's repetition, originally instituted for those who were unable to pray, was expanded to include many Piyutim that capture and depict the holiness of the day.	Second Temple Era	Some stand throughout the repetition as it can be considered like the Amida. We all make an effort to stand when the Ark is open, out of respect for the Torah.	470												
28	Melech Elyon	<i>Piyut</i> (song) of the greatness of Hashem	This song has many verses, each of which has three praises of Hashem as "The Supreme King" who will "Rule forever". This is contrasted unfavourably to the human being.	Middle Ages	Since the Ark is open, we stand out of respect for the Torah.	478												
29	Unetaneh Tokef	Description of the awesome nature of judgement.	Although there is some discussion as to the origin of the prayer, it focusses on the idea that on Rosh Hashana our very lives are in judgement and we are passing before Hashem.	Middle Ages	Since the Ark is open, we stand out of respect for the Torah.	480												
30	Kedusha	Communal Praise of Hashem modelled after the angels	We declare that we will bless Hashem just as the angels in Isaiah and Ezekiel's visions do. We use their words and our prayers are as beloved to Hashem as theirs are.	Second Temple Era	We stand since this is a public sanctification of Hashem's name. We rise up on our toes for the responses like the angels that "fly" in their praises of Hashem.	486												
31	Vchol Ma'aminim	<i>Piyut</i> (Song) of our belief in Hashem as Ultimate Judge	This Piyut affirms our faith in the power and in the goodness of Hashem.	800 CE	Since the Ark is open, we stand out of respect for the Torah.	490												
32	Vaye'atayu	The entire world will recognise Hashem	Prayer for all of creation to acknowledge Hashem as the Supreme King.	Middle Ages	We usually dance festively around the Shul at this point in anticipation of this future realisation.	494												
33	Aleinu	Praising Hashem, longing for perfection of the world	The words "Korim Umishtachavim" actually mean to lie down prostrate on the floor, as was done in the Temple. Although we do not usually do this today, we do so over Yamim Noraim.	Middle Ages	As we reach the words "Korim Umishtachavim – we bow down" we place something on the floor upon which to lie so that we do not bow directly upon the ground.	500												
34	Shofar Blasts	Torah Mitzva to hear the Shofar blasts	Although we began the Mitzva of blowing the Shofar before we began the Amida, some Rabbis assert that the true Mitzva of listening to the Shofar is here, during Mussaf. Therefore we blow the Shofar again throughout the repetition.	1312 BCE	We stand for this special Mitzva	514												
35	Birkat Kohanim	"Duchening" in which the Kohanim proclaim Hashem's blessings.	The Kohanim are commanded in the Torah to act as Hashem's agents to bless the Jewish people. In return, Hashem Himself will bless them.	1312 BCE	We stand for this special Mitzva	524												
36	Hayom	Asking for Hashem's acceptance of our prayers	As we conclude the Mussaf service, we ask Hashem that it be accepted with favour.		Since the Ark is open, we stand out of respect for the Torah.	532												
37	Full Kaddish	Prayer for Hashem's greatness to be revealed	Full Kaddish, which includes a request that our prayers be accepted, is said after a communal Amida prayer.	Middle Ages	We stand for Kaddish because this is a public sanctification of Hashem's Name. The person saying Kaddish takes three steps back and bows at the end. See the Amida for the explanation.	584												
38	Final Shofar Blasts	Third set of Shofar blasts	It is customary to blow the Shofar 100 times on Rosh Hashana. This final set completes that amount.			584												
39	Ein K'Elokeinu	Song praising Hashem, "There is none like Him"	This song is a declaration that there is none like Hashem, and that we should thank and bless Him.	800 CE		586												
40	Aleinu	Praising Hashem, longing for perfection of the world	This prayer, originally composed for the Rosh Hashana Mussaf Amida, was adopted by Jewish communities around the world to be said at the conclusion of every prayer service.	Middle Ages	We stand to give weight to the great praises of Hashem that we say in this prayer and we bow at "Korim Umishtachavim" to fulfil the declaration: "And we bow... before the King of Kings..."	590												
41	Mourner's Kaddish	Prayer for Hashem's greatness to be revealed	This Kaddish, said at the transition point from LeDavid Hashem Ori to the end of the service, was given to Mourners to sanctify Hashem's name.	Middle Ages	We stand for Kaddish because this is a public sanctification of Hashem's Name. The person saying Kaddish takes three steps back and bows at the end. See the Amida for the explanation.	592												