



A Very Virtual Holiday

HOW TO PLAY DREIDEL

A GAME PLAYED DURING THE JEWISH FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS, MEANING “TURN AROUND”

MATERIALS NEEDED

To play you’ll need a special top, called a dreidel, as well as several game pieces which can be poker chips, chocolate pieces, pennies or anything else you would like to use. Here is a link you can follow for how to make a dreidel at home using a sheet of paper and a pencil: <https://youtu.be/TheEkZetsRI>

WHAT DO THE LETTERS ON THE DREIDEL STAND FOR?

Each Hebrew letter on the dreidel stands for a word in the phrase “nes gadol haya sham,” meaning “a great miracle happened there.” This refers to the miracle of one day’s worth of oil lasting for eight days, which is why we celebrate Hanukkah today. If you find yourself playing dreidel in Israel you’ll notice that one letter is different, as “a great miracle happened here.” Below is a quick guide to each letter on the dreidel.

Letter	Name	Dreidel Word	Game Action
נ	Nun	Nes “miracle”	Nothing happens
ג	Gimmel	Gadol “great”	Get everything in pot
ה	Hey	Haya “happened”	Half of pot is yours (if odd number take $\frac{1}{2}+1$)
ש	Shin	Sham “there”	Shame! You must put I back into the pot.

HOW TO PLAY

- To start the game, everyone gets 20 game pieces (feel free to change the amount depending on how long you want to play).
- Each player puts 4 game pieces into the middle to create the pot.
- Each player takes turns spinning the dreidel. How the dreidel lands determines each player’s action (see above).
- If a player runs out of game pieces they are either “out” or can ask for a loan.
- Once one player has all the game pieces they win!
- To make the game last longer, have each player put 2 game pieces into the middle every time there are less than 2 pieces in the pot.