

Navigating the Passover Holiday

Passover, one of the most widely celebrated holidays in the Jewish calendar commemorates the exodus from Egypt, the journey toward redemption, and our personal paths as we move toward freedom.

Celebrated with the Passover Seder, an organized meal, we tell the story of the exodus, the trials and tribulations of the people, the rabbinic interpretations of the text, and seek to find ourselves amidst the story.

In 2024, the first night of Passover begins Monday evening, April 22nd, and concludes on Tuesday night, April 30th. While the holiday itself lasts 8 days, below we have broken down the elements of the holiday into the three distinct portions that will impact students the most.

There is a famous Yiddish proverb that goes, “for every two Jews there are three opinions.” Judaism is not a monolith and while the practices listed here are often regarded as normative or typical, they are by no means comprehensive. If something is confusing or different than expectations, **do not hesitate to reach out.**

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First two days of Passover (begins sundown Monday, April 22; ends sunset, Wednesday, April 24)

At Rutgers, many students go home to celebrate with their families and may miss class. For many, this may be their first time away from home for the holiday.

- Many students will observe a cessation from work, technology, and focus on spirituality and prayer during this holiday

Intermediate days of Passover (begins sundown Wednesday, April 24; ends sunset, Sunday, April 28)

In Hebrew known as “Chol Ha-Moed” this is a semi-holiday time, when Jews continue to eat kosher for Passover food.

- There are different opinions on how to observe this time period. Some students will remain home for the entire week. Others will go to class. Some won't do schoolwork at all during this time. Some students will need accommodation for missed class and/or schoolwork.

Shabbat during Passover (begins prior to sundown Friday, April 26; ends after sunset, Saturday, April 27)

Shabbat, the Jewish Sabbath, is a holiday that Jews celebrate every week as a “day of rest.” Because it falls during Passover, many students who usually stay on campus for the weekend might choose to go home for Shabbat.

- Many students will observe a cessation from work, technology, and focus on spirituality and prayer during this holiday.

Last two days of Passover (begins sundown Sunday, April 28; ends sunset, Tuesday, April 30)

Like the first two days, this is a time when students might choose to go home and might miss class.

- Many students will observe a cessation from work, technology, and focus on spirituality and prayer during this holiday
- Students who have final papers due on the last day of classes or on the first reading day will need special accommodation. Some students who don't travel on the holiday might not be able to attend an in-person class on these days.