

HaMavdil Ben Kodesh L'Chol: A Havdalah Activity

An Activity from [Hebrew at the Center](#)

Havdalah is a Jewish ceremony that marks the end of Shabbat and the start of a new week. The word Havdalah is Hebrew for "separation". The ceremony involves:

- **Lighting a candle:** A special candle with multiple wicks is lit to symbolize how people come together on Shabbat.
- **Blessing wine:** A cup of wine or grape juice is blessed to symbolize the joy of Shabbat.
- **Smelling spices:** A spice box is passed around to symbolize the sweetness of Shabbat.
- **Extinguishing the candle:** The candle is extinguished in the wine to say goodbye to Shabbat.
- **Singing:** The songs Shavua Tov and Eliyahu haNavi are sung to wish each other a good week.



Havdalah can be performed in a home, synagogue, or in a group. The ritual should take place after nightfall, when three stars are visible in the sky.

First, teach the common prayers associated with Havdalah (they can be found [here](#).) If you have been following Hebrew at the Center's 10-part series, this is lesson #6 and teaches the letter Nun Sofet. Encourage students to look for the Nun Sofet in this activity. Some other key words to pick out and teach when learning the prayers are יהודים אורה שבויע טוב.

Second, below are a list of common Jewish items for Havdalah and other Jewish rituals, along with 2 games that encourage students to discuss and debate the separation between holy and profane while simultaneously practicing their Hebrew reading and vocabulary.

1. **List Ranking:** Teachers (or students) cut the words on the list into strips and students must rank the objects on a scale of holiness by putting the words in an order from holiest to most profane, or separate them into piles of holy vs. profane.
2. **Barometer:** Students stand in the middle of the room. The teacher indicates that one side of the room is "holy" and the other side of the room is "profane." The teacher calls out each word one at a time, and students can stand anywhere on the spectrum of the room between holy and profane to show how holy they think the item is.
 - a. Note: to make this game easy, call out the words in English, for an added level of challenge, call out the words only in Hebrew and if the students are unsure, try acting out the actions of what you might do with the item before giving them hints in English.

Hamavdil Ben Kodesh L'Chol: Are these items holy or profane?

Source for list: Chabad.org

Bentschers	בְּרִכּוֹנִים
Challah board	מַגֵּשׁ חֲלָה
Dreidel	סְבִיבּוֹן
Havdalah candle	נֵר הַבְּדֻלָּה
Havdalah spices	בְּסַמִּים
Ketubah	כְּתוּבָה
Kiddush cup	כּוֹס קִדּוּשׁ
Kippah	כִּפָּה
Lulav and etrog	לוּלָב וְאֶתְרוֹג
Megillah	מִגֵּלָה
Menorah	מְנַפֵּיָה
Mezuzah	מְזוּזָה
Seder plate	צִלְחַת הַסֵּדֶר
Shabbat candles	נֵרוֹת שַׁבָּת
Shofar	שׁוֹפָר
Siddur	סִדּוּר
Tallit	טְלִית
Tefillin	תְּפִלִּין
Torah	תּוֹרָה
Tzedakah Box	קַפֵּת צְדָקָה
Washing Cup	נְטִלָּה
Wine	יַיִן