

Halachos for Shofar Blowing at Home

- Though the horns of other kosher animals may be used, ideally the shofar should be a ram's horn.
- One should inspect the shofar to make sure there are no cracks or holes anywhere on the surface. If one does find a crack or hole, a rabbi should be consulted.
- Men or women may be yotzay by listening to the shofar blowing of an adult male. Though women may be yotzay with the blowing of a woman, men would not be yotzay, being that it is a positive time-bound mitzvah.
- The ideal time to blow shofar is before one davens mussaf. One may be yotzay with shofar blowing at any point between sunrise and sunset on Rosh Hashanah. We do not blow the shofar when Rosh Hashanah is on Shabbos.
- If one is hearing shofar separate from one's davening, or during davening without a minyan, there is no need to hear more than 30 shofar blasts. The order of 30 shofar blasts is the first set of shofar blows which precedes mussaf in the standard machzor. It involves blowing each of the following sets three times:
 - *tekiah shevarim teruah tekiah*
 - *tekiah shevarim tekiah*
 - *tekiah teruah tekiah*
- Before blowing shofar, one makes the two brachos, as found in the machzor. The brachos are normally recited by the one blowing the shofar. If he has already personally fulfilled the mitzvah, whether through blowing the shofar or hearing another's blows, the brachos should ideally be recited by a person who is fulfilling the mitzvah with this blowing. If men and women are present the brachos should be recited by a man. If those listening to the shofar blows do not feel comfortable making the brachos the blower may make the brachos, as long as there is at least one man present currently fulfilling the mitzvah.
- There should be no conversation from the time the brachos are made through the completion of the blows, unless it directly pertains to the shofar blowing.
- The *tekiah* blow is supposed to be uninterrupted. It should last the amount of time necessary to blow 9 "toots" of the *teruah*. This is normally estimated at 1.5 seconds. The *tekios* of the *tekiah shevarim teruah tekiah* sets should last for double that time, or approximately 3 seconds. Though technically there is no maximum length for a *tekiah*, the longer one blows the greater the possibility of interruption in the blow, which might render it invalid.
- The *shevarim* blow is three blows, each one should be the amount of time necessary to blow three *teruah* "toots." It should be that length, and not longer.
- The *teruah* blow is nine short "toots." One may do more than nine.
- Though the halachos can not be captured in detail in this brief review, the general rule regarding invalid blows is that if a blow sounded like a blow different than the one that was supposed to be blown, one should return to the beginning of that line (e.g., if one was in the second *tekiah shevarim tekiah* set, and blew a *teruah* instead of a *shevarim* one would return to the *tekiah* at the beginning of the second *tekiah shevarim tekiah* set). If one is concerned the blow was invalid, but didn't sound like another type of blow, it is only necessary to repeat the blow in question.

Please feel free to contact Rabbi Rosenbaum with any halachic questions regarding shofar blowing.

Craig Simon has kindly prepared an instructional video to assist those preparing to blow for the first time.

The video is available at <https://www.yise.org/shofar> Anyone who would like further assistance is welcome to contact Craig at Califcraig@yahoo.com or 818-406-4953.