



The material below is intended to serve a basic overview of Daled Minim, and is not a comprehensive review of the halachos. As always, consult your Rav.

Esrog

An esrog must come with a *hechsher* to verify that it is not grafted, or *orlah*, etc. This *hechsher* also certifies that, when applicable, *shemitta* was not violated. The shape should not be round like a ball; rather, it should be broad at its lower half and slope inward as it rises. Additional *hiddurim* (beautifications) include: the upper portion being completely free of blemishes, the *pitum* (upper projection) and *uketz* (stem) being perfectly aligned, and a surface containing bumps and ridges.

DISCOLORATION. According to the Mishnah Berurah, in the area from where the esrog begins to slope inward until the very top, the smallest color change of the rind (that is noticeable without scrutiny) is problematic. Problematic colors include white, black, dark green and dark red. White or black dots are generally insect or pesticide residue, and are kosher, though according to some, they must be removed. A color change that comes from rough handling before Yom Tov is problematic. If the color change occurred during regular mitzvah use on Yom Tov it remains kosher. More than one discolored spot on the lower area may be problematic depending on the size of the area between the spots.

CHASEIR - Incomplete. An esrog has three layers protecting the fruit: an outer membrane, yellow or green rind, and white, soft tissue. If only the membrane is peeled away, it is kosher, despite any brown spots which may form. If the rind is missing to the extent that the white tissue is exposed, it is not kosher, unless the spot retains the yellow/green color. A *bletel*, small brown discoloration, is generally not an issue, as it is not raised.

THE PITUM. If the *pitum* fell off due to natural causes while on the tree, the esrog is kosher. A *pitum* of which part broke off after it was detached from the tree is kosher, although some are stringent. When the *pitum* is missing, and it is unknown when or how the *pitum* fell off, we are generally lenient.

THE UKETZ. If the *uketz* breaks off, exposing the rind, the esrog is not kosher.

Lulav

SHEDRA & TEYOMES. The *shedra* (spine) culminates with a middle leaf known as the *teyomes*. Like most lulav leaves, the *teyomes* is a tightly attached double leaf. If this leaf is a single leaf, the lulav is not Kosher. If one of the doubled leaves does not cover a majority of the *width* of its pair, it is not Kosher. It

is not necessary for the double leaves to extend to the identical heights. Ideally the two leaves of this double leaf should be tightly connected and “fully closed” at the tip. If the tip is split less than a *tefach* (3.54 inches) it is kosher according to all opinions. According to the Mishnah Berurah if a majority of the *teyomes* leaf is split it is not Kosher. This applies to the first days of Yom Tov only. [The Shulchan Aruch only disqualifies a lulav if a majority of all the leaves are split.] A “*Hemnik*” or “fork-like” split where the twin leaves are spread vastly apart and appear as if they are two separate leaves, renders a lulav not kosher.

A lulav whose brown covering (*kara*) holds the two leaves together is kosher.

SHIUR. The lulav, measured from the bottom until the top of the *shedra*, not including the *teyomes* extension, should be a minimum of 4 *tefachim* (12.6 -15.4 inches) tall. In addition, the *shedra* of the lulav should be a *tefach* taller than the hadassim.

NIKTAM ROSHO. If the lulav top is cut off, the lulav is *pasul*. According to most opinions this refers to the *teyomes* leaf. A leaf which ends with a needle-like point is kosher even if this point breaks off.

YAVEISH. If just the *teyomes* is withered (white from dryness) the Chazon Ish rules the lulav to be kosher while the Mishna Berurah says it is not kosher. If most of the leaves are withered it is *pasul*.

KAFUF & AKUM. A lulav which is bent back towards the *shedra* is Kosher (*akum*). However, if it bends forward exceedingly like a sickle it is not kosher (*kafuf*). Many disqualify a lulav that is bent to one side. If just the tip of the *teyomes* leaf is bent, the custom is to permit it (unless it is excessively bent). If most of the leaf tips are bent, it is preferable not to use it.

Hadassim

ETZ AVOS - MESHULASH. The stems’ leaves should sprout all around in sets of three, all at the same level. The Chazon Ish ruled that the bases need not be perfectly level; rather the bases of all 3 stems should meet at some level.

The hadas should preferably be *meshulash* throughout. The custom is to permit if a majority is *meshulash*, even if this majority is not consecutive.

It is preferable that the leaves rest one level upon the next so that the branch is fully covered. Regardless, the hadas is kosher without this.

The leaves should be small, preferably not larger than the width of a thumbnail (.89 of an inch). Others say the *shiur* is the width of two thumbnails.

SHIUR. The hadas branch (not including top leaves) should be a minimum of 3 (or b'dieved 2.5) *tefachim* long (between 9.5-11.5 inches).

NIKTAM ROSHO. The top of the actual branch should be intact. Some permit the use of a hadas whose leaves cover a visible break in the branch.

YAVEISH. A hadas which is dried out to the extent that the leaves whitened and crumble under a fingernail, is *pasul*. Leaves which are partially blackened are kosher.

Aravos

The willow species kosher for aravos contains these signs: 1) Red or brown stems. Many allow green stems on the assumption that sunlight will turn them red. 2) Leaves with smooth edges, as opposed to serrated saw-like edges. Many permit edges which are only slightly serrated. 3) Oblong shaped leaves which are narrow and long

SHIUR. The aravos should be 3 (or b'dieved 2.5) *tefachim* long (between 9.5-11.5 inches). Only the stem, not the leaves which extend above it, are incident in this measurement.

NIKTAM ROSHO. The top of the actual branch (not the uppermost leaf) must be completely intact. A *lavluv*, a small young leaf at the top, signifies that the top has not been compromised and is thus preferable to some.

YAVEISH. If a majority of the 3 *tefachim* length is withered, it is not kosher. If most of the leaves are dry enough to crumble when broken by a fingernail, it should not be used.

NIFRITZU ALEHA. Missing leaves. If most of the leaves in the 3 *tefachim* length fall off, the aravos are not kosher. A broken leaf is considered intact if most of the leaf remains. It is preferable to use aravos that are not missing any leaves (Mishnah Berurah). One should take care not to detach leaves when inserting hadassim and aravos into the *keishekel* (woven holder).

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