

If you are in the sanctuary:

Light the candles using the long silver-handled candle lighter.
Dunk the lighter candle in the dish of water, then begin to speak:

“We make three circles to bring all those we love to our hearts, to our minds, to our vision of the future.

Baruch Atah Adonai, eloheinu Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, sovereign of the universe, who hallows us with mitzvot and invites us to kindle the lights of Shabbat.

May we be blessed with Shabbat joy.
May we be blessed with Shabbat peace.
May we be blessed with Shabbat light.”

Background

The mitzvah of lighting Shabbat candles in the home is an early rabbinic practice.
The blessing of Shabbat candle lighting was first recorded in a ninth-century prayerbook.

Lighting candles symbolizes the culmination of the six days of creation into Shabbat, the seventh day of rest, as it draws the warmth and the light inside ourselves.

Candles are lit before sunset, and the time varies according to the time of sunset.

At least two candles should be lit, representing the double commandment in the Book of Exodus to remember, and to keep Shabbat.

Women traditionally light candles, although candle lighting can be done by any Jewish adult.

After lighting, she waves her hands over the candles and toward her face three times, welcoming in Shabbat and the Shabbat Bride.

Then she covers her eyes, so as not to see the candles before reciting the blessing, and recites the blessing below.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם

Blessed are You, Lord, our

אֱשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ
לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שַׁבָּת (אָמֵן)

God, Ruler of the World,
who sanctifies us with his
commandments, and
commands us
to light the candles of Shabbat
(Amen)

The hands are then removed from the eyes, and she looks at the candles, completing the mitzvah of lighting the candles.

Candles and the Significance of Fire in Judaism

In Jewish ceremony, the lighting of candles has great significance. Almost every Jewish festival and celebration incorporates candle lighting at some point.

Fire is a basic element of the world. It is mysterious, frightening, mesmerizing. Its attraction is almost irresistible. In the Kabbalah, (Jewish mysticism), the image of a multicolored flame emanating from a candle is taken as a metaphor for God's relation to the world and man.

The flame is a single entity, yet it appears to be undergoing constant change. The flame adheres to, relies on and appears to emanate from the candle, yet is a distinct and separate entity. The white interior of the flame is constant, but its exterior is always in motion and changes color.

Our tradition of incorporating the lighting of candles into our celebratory cycle (e.g., Shabbat candles, Havdalah candles, Hanukah candles, memorial candles), allows us to recognize the many potentials of fire.

It is for us to rediscover those potentials and allow them to “illumine our eyes.”

On Friday night, we are required to light candles in the house for the sake of *shalom bayit* (harmony in the home) and *oneg Shabbat* (Shabbat joy).

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/shabbat-candles/>

Siddur Mishkan T'filah