

ABCs of Passover

Contributed by [Lisa Gitelson](#)

Source:

THE ABCs OF PASSOVER

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A is for **April**, when Passover's here!
(Unless it's in some other month of the year.)

B is for **Boils, Beasts, Blackout, and Blood**.
Dinner conversation never had it so good!

C is for **Challah** — egg bread: you can't beat it!
And during this holiday, nor can you eat it.

D is for **Drinking**: four full cups of wine.
Required — a mitzvah! (Or grape juice, it's fine.)

E is for **Egypt**, land the Jews fled.
Then shook the Egyptians in the Sea that is Red.

F is for **Fish**, "gefilte" it's called,
Carp and pike, both thoroughly mauled.

is for **Gathering**, that's what we do!
The more, the moanier, when you're a Jew.

H is for **Hebrew**, language Semitic.
"I'm saying it wrong? Everybody's a critic!"

I is for **Israel**, the land we hold dear.
But no rush to go; there's always next year!

J is for **Jewish** — that is, not a goy.
You know, like that nice Star-of-Bethlehem boy.

is for **Kosher**, fit for consumption.
Or, put another way: "okay to eat," according to basic laws derived from two of the five books of the Torah — Leviticus and Deuteronomy; but the details and practical applications of those laws were transmitted over centuries through oral law (eventually codified in the Mishnah and Talmud) and later elaborated upon in rabbinical literature... and the rationale for most of which is nowhere to be found.

L is for **Lamb**, star meat of the meal.
So tender! So juicy! Oh, wait... no — that's veal.

M is for **Matzo**, a crispy delight.
(Yet fifty-one weeks of the year: out of sight.)

N is for **Neighbors**, like-minded feasters.
Unless they're the kind who celebrate Easters.

O's for Oppression, cruel subjugation.
Was that any way to treat God's Chosen Nation?

P is for **Pharaohs**, harsh ancient rulers,
Who nearly deprived mankind of wholesale jewelers.

Q is for **Questions**, of which there are four:
"Why us?"
"Is it over?"
"When's dinner?"
"There's more?!"

R's for the holiday highlight: the **reading**.
I'm kidding! We're Jews. It's all about eating.

S is for **Seder**, from Hebrew for "order."
Each one takes as long as the journey to Mordor.

T's for **Tradition**. (I'm sure that you knew it!)
"Because your great-grandmother did it," you do it.

U's for **Unleavened**, describing the food,
But also, in consequence, everyone's mood.

V is for **Visitors**. Pull up a chair!
Thinking of slipping out early? Don't you dare.

W: Wisdom, the words of the sages.
But seriously, guys. How many more pages?

X as in **Exodus**, book of the Torah.
But turn back for saucy reports from Gomorrah.

Y is for **Yeast**, fungus forbidden!
How fast can you find where the Wonder Bread's hidden?

Z is for **Zzzzz**, but no one is snoring.
The story's not new, but it's never boring.

So there it is: Passover, letter by letter.
(And not even Moses himself could do better.)
