

## APPENDIX A: Wedding Rituals Checklist

Following is a list of ritual options for your *kiddushin*. Items in bold represent core parts of the ceremony. Check those things you would like to consider. Then use this checklist when you speak to your rabbi.

*We wish to call our ceremony:* \_\_\_\_\_

### *Ceremony Rituals*

- Chuppah  
Preferred interpretation(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Arriving at the chuppah (or place of ceremony)  
Participants: \_\_\_\_\_  
Order: \_\_\_\_\_
- Circling  
Who circles? \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of circles: \_\_\_\_\_  
Preferred interpretation(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Welcome  
Hebrew blessings:    chanted                    recited  
English translation:  chanted                    recited
- English greetings
- Explanatory information about ceremony
- First cup of wine  
Blessing in Hebrew:  chanted                    recited  
Blessing in English:  chanted                    recited  
Blessing of betrothal:  traditional Hebrew    egalitarian  
                                  English translation  
Preferred interpretation(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Ketubah*  
Written in:  Aramaic    Hebrew    English    Other  
Text:  traditional    modern preprinted    personalized:  
Signing:    before ceremony    during ceremony  
Reading:    before ceremony (when it is signed)  
                  during the ceremony  
Preferred interpretation(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Vows

- Hebrew:  traditional formula  other: \_\_\_\_\_
- English:  literal translation of Hebrew  other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Rings or other tokens  
 one ring  double ring  other token: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Preferred interpretation(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Include “partnership pouch”
- Wedding address  
 Given by: \_\_\_\_\_  
 To include/avoid: \_\_\_\_\_
- Wedding blessings  
 Seven blessings/*Sheva B'rachot*:  traditional Hebrew  
 modified Hebrew  
 Translation:  literal  interpretive
- Creative blessings prepared by:  
 Blessings:  chanted  recited  
 Blessings offered by:  rabbi  friends  family  
 Preferred interpretation(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Breaking a glass  
 Number of glasses:  one  two  
 Preferred interpretation(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other object/ritual: \_\_\_\_\_
- Pronouncement  
 Preferred wording: \_\_\_\_\_
- Additional blessings  
 *Shehecheyanu*  
 When:  as part of welcome  after first cup of wine  
 with rings and vows  toward conclusion  
 Blessing:  chanted  recited  
 Offered by:  rabbi  friends  family  other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Priestly Blessing / *Birkat Kohanim*  
 When:  as part of welcome  after wedding address  
 prior to pronouncement  
 Blessing:  chanted  recited  
 Offered by:  rabbi  cantor  other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Vow or blessing from family and friends

Vow: \_\_\_\_\_

Blessing: \_\_\_\_\_

Placement in service: \_\_\_\_\_

- Additional readings or songs

Selections: \_\_\_\_\_

Invited participants: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Pre- and Post-Ceremony Rituals*

### *DAY OF THE WEDDING*

- Tisch*

Gathering:  separate for each member of the couple

one large gathering

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Place(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Content/Focus: \_\_\_\_\_

Invitees: \_\_\_\_\_

- B'deken*

Veiling:  placing veil  lifting veil

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred interpretation(s): \_\_\_\_\_

- Yichud*

Attendees will be informed via:  rabbi's words

wedding booklet

## *In Weeks or Months prior to Wedding*

### *COMMUNAL*

- Aufruf*:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Invitees: \_\_\_\_\_

Refreshments: \_\_\_\_\_

- Blessing at Synagogue

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Invitees: \_\_\_\_\_

Refreshments: \_\_\_\_\_

- T'nai-im* ceremony

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Invitees: \_\_\_\_\_

Refreshments: \_\_\_\_\_

- Other

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Invitees: \_\_\_\_\_

Refreshments: \_\_\_\_\_

*FRIENDS AND FAMILY*

- Henna

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Participants: \_\_\_\_\_

- Meals and Parties:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Invitees: \_\_\_\_\_

- Other

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Participants: \_\_\_\_\_

*PERSONAL/SPIRITUAL*

- Mikveh*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Participants: \_\_\_\_\_

- Visiting the Cemetery

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_

- Fasting

When:  day of the wedding  other date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: Planning Timeline

### *6–12 Months (in high season)*

*or 4–6 Months (not in high season) prior to Your Kiddushin*

#### DETERMINE:

- The size of your wedding—how many guests you anticipate
- The degree of formality you desire
- Your budget

#### SELECT:

- A date
- A rabbi
- A location for your ceremony
- A location for your reception
- A caterer
- A photographer/videographer
- A band/DJ

#### SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT:

- To be tested for Tay-Sachs and other Jewish genetic diseases, especially if you are of East European Jewish descent and are planning to have children. You can get more information at: <http://www.jewishgeneticdiseases.org/>

### *4–6 Months prior to Your Kiddushin*

#### KETUBAH/JEWISH WEDDING CONTRACT (if you will have one)

- Look at available designs and texts
- Design and write your own
- Hire a calligrapher or artist to prepare it

#### RINGS OR OTHER TOKENS TO BE EXCHANGED

- Find and buy the rings or tokens you want
- Have them sized or altered, if necessary
- If they will be engraved, select the text and leave ample time for the engraving

#### CLOTHING

- Select and order clothing with time for alterations and fittings for full wedding party

#### INVITATIONS

- Pick a style
- Determine the text
- Decide who is sending the invitations and in whose names the invitations are being extended—yours or your parents
- If you feel it is necessary, send “save the date” notifications

#### KIPPOT (YARMULKES)

- Pick a style
- Determine what, if anything, you want to print on the inside

#### BENSCHERS

- Research options  
(see “Further Reading” in Appendix H for one option)
- Decide which option you want, if any

#### PERSONAL, FAMILIAL, AND COMMUNAL PREPARATION

- Schedule dates and times for any rituals or gatherings you plan to have
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- Arrange accommodations for out-of-town guests

### *3 Months prior to Your Kiddushin*

#### INVITATIONS

- Finalize your guest list
- If you will have formal engraved invitations, order them
- Proofread invitation text (particularly engraved invitations), and ask a meticulous third person to review it as well
- Address the outer envelopes, if they will not be printed

#### FLOWERS

- Make arrangements with a florist for:
  - Bride’s bouquet
  - Wedding part flowers
  - Reception centerpieces
  - Chuppah
  - Walkway to chuppah

## GIFTS

- Decide whether you will use a gift registry, and select the items you would like
- Choose gifts for each other and/or for members of your wedding party, if you will be giving them

## HONEYMOON PLANS

### *Decide:*

- Where you want to go
- How soon after the ceremony you want to leave
- How long you want to be away
- How much you want to spend

### *Arrange/Reserve:*

- Vacation time
- Accommodations
- Transportation

## LEGAL MATTERS

### *Make appointments with:*

- Your lawyer(s) to prepare or change:
  - Titles
  - Mortgages (consider joint ownership and other options)
  - Prenuptial Agreement
  - Wills
  - Advance directives
  - Living wills
  - Powers of attorney
  - Other

*For couples whose ceremonies will not carry legal standing, see information in “The Role of Clergy in Civil and Legal Matters” on page 60.*

- Contact your HR representative to discuss:
  - Insurance and beneficiary
  - Retirement and beneficiary
  - Other

*If either or both of you will be changing your name(s), start notifying appropriate people and institutions:*

- Social Security

- Department of Motor Vehicles
- Credit cards
- Banks
- Voter registration

*FINANCIAL MATTERS*

*Contact:*

- Financial institutions if you will be making changes to any of your accounts
- Brokers—insurance, investment

*2 Months prior to Your Kiddushin*

*DEALING WITH THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES*

*Get the following information from the city or town clerk where the ceremony will be held:*

- The city or town clerk's office hours
- What paperwork can be done electronically
- When you must pick up your marriage license/domestic partnership documentation
- The type of identification you must bring with you
- Whether you need blood tests to get a license

*Make the following appointments and put them on your calendar once you have the above information:*

- City or town clerk to pick up license
- Doctors' appointments, if necessary

*PRE-CEREMONY CELEBRATIONS*

*If you will be having parties or gatherings prior to the day of the ceremony:*

- Send out invitations
- Book the facility or make other necessary arrangements

*If you will be having a t'nai-im celebration:*

- Work out the details of the ceremony
- Send out invitations
- Book the facility or make other necessary arrangements



## 4–6 Weeks prior to Your Kiddushin

### INVITATIONS

- Send out invitations
- Keep a running list of responses

### PRE-CEREMONY SYNAGOGUE RITUALS

- If you will be having an *aufruf*, practice the blessings
- If there will be a blessing at a service, make arrangements and set a date with the rabbi

### HONEYMOON PLANS

- Decide what you need to take with you

### OTHER

- Make appointments for hair, makeup, etc., for your wedding
- Select a person to take care of the logistics on the day of your wedding:

Flow of guests

Setup

Getting marriage license to the ceremony

Bringing pens for signing civil and Jewish documents

Getting rings or tokens to the ceremony

Order Jewish ritual items for wedding:

- Kippot*
- Benschers*
- Kiddush cup(s)
- Wine glass to break

Review plans with service providers:

- Caterer—menus and schedule
- Band/DJ—make your musical selections and provide music for any special pieces you want
- Florist
- Photographer/videographer

### TRANSPORTATION

- Make arrangements for transportation to and from the ceremony and reception for yourselves, your families, and your wedding party

## *2 Weeks prior to Your Kiddushin*

### *AUFRUF (IF THERE WILL BE ONE)*

- Invite people
- Invite others to participate, and provide them with texts for their parts

### *NEWSPAPER ANNOUNCEMENT (IF THERE WILL BE ONE)*

- Send text to newspaper

## *Last Week prior to Your Kiddushin*

### *WEDDING PLANS*

Finalize details for:

- Guest count
- Food and drinks
- Flowers
- Music
- Transportation
- Map out the day of your wedding, leaving what seems to be too much time to:
  - ⋆ Sleep, at least a little
  - ⋆ Get dressed (including hair, makeup, jewelry, etc.)
  - ⋆ Get to the place of the ceremony
  - ⋆ Take pictures
  - ⋆ Meet with the rabbi
  - ⋆ Sign the *ketubah*, if it will be signed prior to the ceremony

### *HONEYMOON PLANS*

- Confirm reservations, including transportation
- Pack, including tickets

### *MARRIAGE LICENSE / DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP DOCUMENTATION*

- Pick up from the city or town clerk

### *ITEMS FOR THE WEDDING DAY*

- Prepare the things you will be taking with you on your wedding day:
  - Clothes for the ceremony and reception
  - Civil marriage license

- Tallit
- Kiddush cup(s)
- Wine glass to break
- Ketubah*, if you will have one
- Rings or other tokens
- Text of vows
- Gifts for members of wedding party
- Remuneration for the rabbi

*ITEMS FOR THE HONEYMOON*

If you will be leaving directly for your honeymoon:

- Take clothes to travel in
- Take your suitcases
- Take tickets, money, passports, etc.

*The Day of Your Kiddushin*

Enjoy yourselves!