

Rabbi Hannah Goldstein and Cantor Laura Croen's 18 Zeder Tips 2020

1. Seder means order: Start with a brief orientation to the technology- make sure people know how to mute/unmute themselves. If you have a large group, encourage people to keep themselves on mute. Let people know that there are different settings that determine how many people you can see at a time: Gallery view v. speaker view. The visual and the tech will differ if you're using different devices. (Ipads, phones, computers are all slightly different- they all work but you can't always see everyone at the same time.)
2. Singing/reading together over multiple devices doesn't sound great, maybe sometimes it's worth it because it's sweet, but it may not be your best year for a rousing communal Dayeinu!
3. The same idea goes for reading together so avoid reading in unison! (You may want to lead piece by piece divided by household- kids in one house can sing 4 questions together, another household can do the readings about the seder plate, etc.)
4. Practice! If you're responsible for the technology- run through the parts that you're worried about. Also, give others who are less familiar with the technology a chance to try it out before the big night.
5. "Zoom Bombing"- the 11th plague! Some people have taken advantage of this surge in Zoom use to enter, uninvited, into Zoom meetings and create rude disruptions. There are some great articles you can read about how to avoid this- but being careful about how public you make the link to your event and disabling screen sharing for participants are two key ways you can avoid unwanted guests. You may also want to enable the waiting room so that you can make sure that everyone who arrives at your seder belongs there. (Just make sure to let Elijah in!)
6. Tech person! If you have someone who is comfortable with the technology, it may be helpful to ask them ahead of time to play a dedicated role wherein they help people who need tech help or follow the chat, and handle any screen sharing.
7. Don't forget the chat box! This is a way for people to ask questions (very important on Passover!), offer commentary on the seder experience, or just say hello to each other as the seder is going on. Make sure to check on the setting ahead of time- you can allow people to chat with each other, or just with the hosts.
8. What do you do about a haggadah? Is it a haggadah if there are no wine stains or stale matzah crumbs? There are lots of options. We have a resource page on our website with lots of online options. If there are special images you want to use, or you want to use a powerpoint or a "flipbook", screenshare is a great option.
9. If you're using an online resource for your haggadah like a PDF- encourage people to print it out ahead of time or to use a second device (it's like dipping twice!).
10. Find a spot with good lighting so people can see you. Be aware of glare from windows in the day, and having enough light at night...don't fall victim to the plague of darkness.

11. If you are “going around” while reading from the haggadah, the leader needs to be directive. People’s images appear in different places on different screens.
12. Be creative with your symbols on your seder plate, maybe you use images instead of objects, or you take a more “interpretive” approach to the symbols this year. (Some caterers will deliver a fully-loaded seder plate if you’re a traditionalist.)
13. Dress in your seder best! Even though you’re not leaving your house, set the table, put on some pants, and make it feel special and different from other nights.
14. If you’re doing a standard seder, it may make sense to skip the festival meal (you should eat snacks throughout the seder...even under normal circumstances) and go straight through the Haggadah, and then eat after. (That’s what we’re doing for the Sinai second seder).
15. Get creative with the afikomen- send out a word search in advance, play a trivia game, winner/winners could get gift cards as their prize.
16. This is meant to be a joyous holiday- a chance to turn off the noise and immerse yourself in something different. So be kind to yourself!
17. If doing a seder feels totally overwhelming and impossible, do something else. Have a cocktail with your family and/or friends on Zoom, or just tell the story of Passover, watch the Rugrats Passover special or Prince of Egypt or just check in with people you care about.
18. You’re all invited to the Second Night Seder with us at Sinai! Bring your family and friends!