



## Play Dreidel (Sevivan)

### What Is a Dreidel?

The classic dreidel is a four-sided spinning top made of wood, plastic, or the proverbial clay. On the four sides of the dreidel appear four letters from the Hebrew alphabet—nun (נ), gimmel (ג), hey (ה), and shin (ש). These four letters are an acronym for "nes gadol hayah sham"—"a great miracle happened there."



In Israel, the actual setting of the Chanukah miracle, the last letter, shin, is substituted with a pey (פ), which stands for "po"—"here."

### Getting Your Dreidel Game Started

- In addition to dreidels, you'll need the currency—nuts, pennies, nickels, chocolate coins, or just about anything else...
- All players sit around the playing area.
- The currency is equally divided amongst all players.
- Everyone takes a turn at spinning the dreidel; the one with the highest spin has first turn. (Nun is highest, then gimmel, hey, and shin.) If there is a tie for highest, those who tied spin again.
- Everyone puts one unit of the currency (penny, nut, etc.) into the pot.
- The one who has first turn is followed in clockwise direction by all the others.



### How to Play Dreidel

*If the dreidel lands on a...*



**Nun** Absolutely nothing happens. Nun stands for the Yiddish word nul, which means zero. It's time for the player to your left to take a spin.



**Gimel** You get to take the whole pot! Gimmel stands for gantz, which means whole. Everyone, including you, now puts another unit into the pot, and the person to your left tries his luck at spinning.



**Hey** You get to take half of the pot. Hey stands for halb, half. If the pot has an odd amount of units, don't try to split that penny, nut, or piece of chocolate in half. Leave the odd item there.



**Shin** You put a unit into the pot. Shin is for shenk; yes, that means "give."

You can speed up the game by upping the ante, raising shin and post-gimmel contributions to two, three or even four units.

Any player that cannot contribute after landing on a shin or after a fellow player lands on a gimmel, is out of the game. The game ends when there is one player left.