



# Tefillin Blessings -

## Hebrew blessings for wearing "phylacteries"

וְקִשְׂרָתָם לְאוֹת עַל-יָדְךָ וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ:

*And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand  
and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. - Deut 6:8*



**TEFILLIN ARE VERSES** from Torah written on kosher parchment and placed within leather boxes (*batim*) with leather straps attached to them. These straps are used to bind the *batim* to one's arm/hand (*Tefillin shel Yad*) and to one's head (*Tefillin shel Rosh*) in obedience to Deuteronomy 6:8 ("And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes"). The customary practice is to wear Tefillin during the entire weekday morning (*Shacharit*) service but not during Shabbat or holidays.

The two *batim* each contain four sections of the Torah. There are various script styles that may be used, including Bet Yosef and Sephardic varieties.

The Torah passages are:

1. The Shema (Deuteronomy 6:4-9)
2. The Vehaiyah (Deuteronomy 11:13-21)
3. The Kadesh (Exodus 13:1-10)
4. Vehaiyah (Exodus 13:11-16)



*Tefillin shel Yad and  
Tefillin shel Rosh*

- The *Tefillin shel Yad* is placed upon the left arm so that it rests against the heart, and the suspended leather strap is wound around the left hand and around the middle finger of that hand.
- The *Tefillin shel Rosh* is placed upon the head, above the forehead, resting upon the brain.

When putting on tefillin, Ashkenazi Jews stand, whereas Sephardic Jews sit. The custom is that while donning the tefillin, you must not talk from after the first blessing through finishing of the ritual.



**First, put on the Tefilin shel Yad**

While standing, roll up your (left) sleeve and remove any rings and watches from that hand. Unwrap the straps and take the shel Yad out of the box. Open the loop and position the shel Yad on the center of your biceps.

*Recite the first blessing:*

כִּדְּשָׁנוּ	אֲשֶׁר	הָעוֹלָם,	מֶלֶךְ	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	יְי	אַתָּה	בְּרוּךְ
kid-de-sha-nu	'a-sher	ha-'o-lam	me-lekh	e-lo-hei-nu	Adonai	at-tah	ba-ruk
sanctifies us	who	King of the universe		our God	LORD	You	Blessed

	וְצִוָּנוּ	לְהַנִּיחַ	תְּפִלִּין.	בְּמִצְוֹתָיו,
	ve-tsi-va-nu	li-ha-ni-ach	te-fil-lin	be-mits-vo-tav
	and commanded us	to let rest	tefillin	with his mitzvot

*Blessed art Thou, LORD our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with his commandments and commanded us to wear tefillin.*

*Barukh attah Adonai eloheinnu melekh ha-olam asher kiddeshanu bemitzvotav vetsivanu lehani'ach tefillin.*

Tighten the loop, and begin wrapping the strap around your hand. Wrap at least once around your biceps, and seven times around your lower arm. Stop at the palm, and wrap the remainder of the strap around your palm.



Note that you will not wrap the fingers with the excess strap (that is wrapped around your palm) until later, *after* putting on the shel Rosh.



**Next, put on the Tefilin shel Rosh**

Remove the *shel Rosh* from the bag, unwrap the straps, and take it out of the box. Place the shel Rosh on your head just before the hairline. The knot should be behind your head - just above your neck, and the strap should be lying loosely on your head.

*Recite the blessing:*

בְּרוּךְ	אַתָּה	יְי	אֱלֹהֵינוּ	מֶלֶךְ	הָעוֹלָם,	אֲשֶׁר	קִדְּשָׁנוּ
ba-rukḥ	at-tah	Adonai	elo-hei-nu	me-lekh	ha-'o-lam	'a-sheṛ	kid-de-sha-nu
Blessed	You	LORD	our God	King of the universe	who	sanctifies us	



בְּמִצְוֹתָיו,	וְצִוָּנוּ	עַל	מִצְוַת	תְּפִלִּין.
be-mits-votav	ve-tsi-va-nu	'al	mits-vat	te-fil-lin
with his mitzvot	and	regarding	the mitzvah	tefillin
	commanded	us	of	

*Blessed art Thou, LORD our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with his commandments and commanded us regarding the mitzvah of tefillin.*

*Barukh attah Adonai eloheinnu melekh ha-olam asher kiddeshanu bemitzvotav vetsivanu al mitzvat tefillin.*

Tighten the straps around your head by pulling them down at the sides from front to back.

*Now recite the Statement:*

בְּרוּךְ	שֵׁם	כְּבוֹד	מַלְכוּתוֹ	לְעוֹלָם	וְעַד
ba-rukḥ	shem	k'vod	mal-khu-to	le-'o-lam	va-'ed
Blessed is the name of	His glorious kingdom	forever	and ever		

*Blessed is the name of His glorious kingdom forever and ever.*

*Barukh shem k'vod malchuto le-olam va'ed.*



### Finish winding the shel Yad

Finally, you will finish wrapping the strap of the shel Yad over the fingers.

1. Unwind the excess strap that you temporarily wrapped around your palm.
2. As the strap comes from the wrist, wrap it around the upper part of the middle finger once.
3. Lead the strap down a bit and then wrap around the lower part of the middle finger twice.
4. Lead the strap around the third finger across to the index finger, and then repeatedly around the palm until it runs out.
5. Finally, tuck the last stretch of the strap underneath the winding on the palm side.

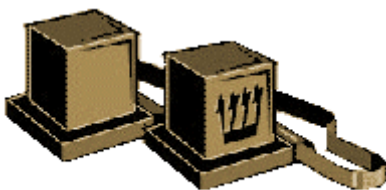


You are now ready to recite the **Shema** and the **Amidah**.

### Removing the Tefillin

Generally speaking, you will proceed in the opposite order in which you put on the tefillin:

1. Unwrap the strap of the shel Yad from your fingers, wrapping the excess around your fist.
2. Loosen and remove the shel Rosh, carefully wrapping the strap neatly in its box.
3. Loosen and remove the shel Yad from your arm, wrapping the strap neatly and putting it back into its box.



Four-Headed Shin

The letter Shin appears engraved on both sides of the head tefillin. On the right side, the Shin has three heads, while on the left side it possesses four. If you look closely, it is possible to see an additional three-headed Shin formed from the spaces between the four heads. The three-headed Shin is the Shin of this world, while the four-headed Shin is the Shin of the World to Come.