

Bar Mitzvah Guide

Chabad of Boca Raton – Central



Mazel tov on your son's forthcoming Bar Mitzvah, which you have chosen to celebrate at Chabad of Boca Raton. I am sure that you are eagerly looking forward to this important milestone in his life and in the life of your family. I hope and pray that you derive much Jewish pride—"nachas" from your son.

We believe that no two children are the same and no two families are the same and we therefore strive to personalize this most meaningful life cycle event to make it most meaningful, enjoyable and inspiring for your family.

Our goal is to instill in each child the meaning and relevance behind what it is they are doing so the experience is meaningful and relevant to their lives in today's day and age.

The Bar Mitzvah is much more than a ceremony, it is about who we are. Our focus is on experiencing the joy and depth of being Jewish. Enjoy the whole experience and Keep stress to a minimum. It is not a contest



Chabad of Boca Raton offers a comprehensive Bar Mitzvah Program with multiple service options to choose from. At Chabad of Boca Raton-Central, our primary goal is assisting families to live Jewish lives with pride, knowledge, and enthusiasm. When your child reaches the age of Bar Mitzvah, we share with your family the privilege and responsibility of welcoming him into the adult Jewish community. In reaching this goal, we feel that family participation and support are integral to your child's success in this process. We therefore ask for family involvement throughout. Together, we hope to instill the meaning and significance of the occasion, to celebrate appropriately, and to honor your child's place among the Jewish people.

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Age and Dates



Bar Mitzvah is the day on which a child becomes responsible for Mitzvot and accountable for his behavior under Jewish law. According to Jewish tradition, this takes place at age 13. This happens automatically on their **Jewish** birth date, regardless of the way the day is marked. The ceremony and celebration should take place as close to the Hebrew birthday as possible. The Jewish calendar follows the lunar cycle and represents the years from creation. The secular calendar follows the solar cycle. Most often, the Jewish and secular birthdays end up being days or weeks apart. To determine your child's Jewish birthday, please consult with the Rabbi. We recommend scheduling Bar Mitzvahs at least 24 months prior to your child's 13th birthday. While planning and preparation takes about one year, it is important to get the date on the Chabad of Boca calendar to avoid any conflicts. To choose a date, set up an initial meeting with the Rabbi.

The Bar Mitzvah preparation includes the Bar Mitzvah Discovery Course which will meet on Sunday mornings over the course of 10 months for an interactive class covering key topics in Judaism. This will be preceded or followed by at least 6 months of private lessons with the synagogue tutor and the Rabbi in preparation for his ceremony. The Bar Mitzvah celebration is, after all, a Jewish celebration. We therefore have some guidelines which have been implemented to uphold the proper spirit and character of a Bar Mitzvah.



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Bar Mitzvah Guidelines



In order to hold your child's ceremony and/or celebration at Chabad of Boca Raton, the following requirements must be met:

1. Your child must be born to a Jewish mother or converted in accordance with the guidelines set by the Offices of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel. If the mother or maternal grandmother converted to Judaism, please set up an appointment with the Rabbi to determine if those conversions meet the above stated guidelines. According to the Jewish tradition, solely the mother determines religious identity and an intermarried family where the father is not Jewish has no effect on the religious identity of the child.

2. We require active family participation in Jewish community experiences beginning at least one year prior to the Bar Mitzvah. Active participation includes participation in holiday programs and synagogue services. This would show family participation and support to your son. It will also make your family and son familiar with Jewish community life.

3. The Bar Mitzvah Discovery Course is designed especially for Bar Mitzvah students who are approaching their special day. It is necessary for the Bar Mitzvah boy to attend this course which is a supplement to any Hebrew School and Bar Mitzvah training. (If your child attends a Jewish Day School he will not be required to attend the Bar Mitzvah Heritage Course.)



4. A pair of Kosher Tefillin must be purchased for every Bar Mitzvah boy at least 3 months prior to his Hebrew birthday. Either we can order them for you or we can refer you to a legitimate seller. Please do not purchase them from an outside source before consulting with us. The Rabbi will teach your son the significance of Tefillin and how to put them on.

5. The Bar Mitzvah Family is required to have a membership to Chabad of Boca Raton.

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Bar Mitzvah Service Options:

There are different options of Bar Mitzvah Services, which you may pick from for your Bar Mitzvah. Each has its own unique level of participation for the Bar Mitzvah boy as well as different requirements.

1. A Sunday/weekday Tefillin service. This service held on Sunday/weekday morning. It does not include a Torah reading. The Bar Mitzvah boy dons Tefillin, leads several prayers in Hebrew as well as in English. After the service the Bar Mitzvah boy shares a speech. Songs, the Rabbi's speech, the parents blessing and/or speech and the throwing of candies are included in this service. This service is approximately 45 minutes. Photography, videography & microphones are welcome. The family is welcome to host a light brunch for their guests.



2. A Monday/ Thursday/ Rosh Chodesh Service. This is a morning service which includes the Bar Mitzvah boy donning Tefillin, leading several prayers in Hebrew as well as in English, being called to the Torah for his Aliyah, and reading the Torah during the service. After the service, the Bar Mitzvah boy shares a speech. The Rabbi's speech, the parents blessing and/or speech and the throwing of candies are included in this service. This service is approximately 75 minutes. Men & women sit separately. Photography, videography & microphones are welcome. The family is welcome to host a light brunch for their guests.

3. A Shabbat morning service. This service is on Saturday mornings at 9:30am - 12:15pm. It includes the Bar Mitzvah Boy reading the Torah and Haftorah, and possibly parts of the service and the throwing of candies is included. The Bar Mitzvah boy & the Rabbi give a speech during the service. The service is followed by a Kiddush (an informal light buffet lunch) that usually ends about 1:30pm. The parents blessing and/or speech are welcome during the Kiddush. The service includes a morning Shabbat service from 9:30 -10:40, the Torah reading from about 10:40-11:30, speeches and the concluding service from about 11:50 - 12:15. We encourage you to invite your guests for the main service, which begins at 10:30am. This service is approximately 2 hours. Men & women sit separately.

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Fees

The lessons with the tutor are arranged privately between him and the family.

The lessons with the Rabbi are included in your membership. All catering should be arranged with the synagogue caterer.

Contacts

Chabad Boca Central Office—

561-994-6257

Rabbi Moishe Denburg

RabbiDenburg@ChabadBoca.com

Rabbi Arele Gopin

Rabbi Gopin@ChabadBoca.com

Avi– CEK Caterers

561-241-6977

Bar Mitzvah Tutor– Motty Pshemish

561-302-1880