

# TEFILLIN

The wearing of *tefillin* is a continued catalyst for Jewish spiritual growth. It is a highly personal act that serves to reinforce Jewish identity. The FJMC is dedicated to providing kosher *tefillin* at reasonable prices. We carry *tefillin* in several sizes and styles. We also offer all of our *tefillin* in both right-handed (for righties) and left-handed (for lefties) varieties. All of our *tefillin* are made in Israel and are *peshutim*. Our Deluxe *tefillin* are *peshutim mehudarim*.

There are three main parts to any pair of *tefillin*:

- ♦ **Batim** The black boxes, which make up the body of the *tefillin*
- ♦ **Retsuot** The black leather straps that are used to bind the *tefillin* to the head and the arm.
- ♦ **Parshiot** The hand-written scrolls that are folded up and placed inside the *batim*

**BATIM** Some facts about *batim*:

- They must be made out of leather.
- They must be square.
- The box that goes on the arm (the *bayit shel yad*) has one compartment inside for one scroll. The box that goes on the head (the *bayit shel rosh*) has four compartments for four scrolls. The division of the four sections must be equal.
- The Hebrew letter "*Shin*" is on the right side of the *bayit shel rosh*.

**RETSUOT**

The straps are tied in different types of knots depending on whether the wearer is right-handed (in which case the *tefillin* would be put on the left arm) or left-handed (in which case the *tefillin* are put on the right arm), as well as if the wearer is of Ashkenazi or Sephardi descent. We offer all of our *tefillin* in both right-handed (for righties) and left-handed (for lefties) varieties. We offer Deluxe *tefillin* in both Ashkenazi and Sephardi styles.

Some facts about *retsuot*:

- *Retsuot* must be made out of leather
- The front side of the *retsuot* must be entirely black. If any portion of the *retsuot* loses its blackness, it must be re-painted

**PARSHIOT**

A trained scribe writes the *parshiot* on parchment by hand. Just as with the mezuzah scroll, there are many rules pertaining to how *tefillin parshiot* are written.

Along with many other traditions, Sephardim and Ashkenazim developed different styles of scroll writing. We offer our Deluxe *tefillin* in both Sephardi and Ashkenazi styles. The other types of *tefillin* we offer are all written in the Ashkenazi style.

Our non-Deluxe styles of *tefillin* are written on parchment that is *mashuach*. *Mashuach* refers to a scribal practice developed about 200 years ago in which the parchment is glazed, making it easier to work with, thereby making the *tefillin* less expensive.

The *parshiot* contain the following excerpts from the Torah:

Sh'mot (Exodus) 13:1-10

Sh'mot (Exodus) 13:11-16

D'varim (Deuteronomy) 6:4-9

D'varim (Deuteronomy) 11:13-21

In the *tefillin shel rosh*, each of the four passages is written on a separate piece of parchment and then inserted into its own compartment in the *bayit*.

The *tefillin shel yad* contains one piece of parchment with all four passages written on it.

## [What's the difference between the Deluxe Tefillin and our other kinds of Tefillin?](#)

- Both the *batim* (boxes) and the *retsuot* (straps) of the Deluxe are made with a higher quality of leather.
- The parchment in the Deluxe *battim* is non-*mashuach* (see above for explanation).
- The Deluxe come with a velvet tefillin bag (for the other types of tefillin, bags must be purchased separately for \$12 each).
- The Deluxe come with a set of protective plastic covers; our other tefillin come with decorated cardboard covers.
- All our tefillin **peshutim**. Our Deluxe tefillin are *peshutim mehudarim*. "Peshutim tefillin are made from the leather of a sheep or a goat, and are made by glueing pieces of leather together. However, the **Peshutim Mehudarim** tefillin are made differently: the *bayit rosh* is made from a thin piece of leather which has been folded to form the four compartments of the *rosh*. This is what makes it "mehudarim".