The Lulav

One of Sukkot's special mitzvot is to recite blessings over the Four Kinds: a citron, a palm branch, three myrtle twigs and two willow branches. The citron is held in one hand, while the palm, myrtle and willow are bundled together into what is called a lulav. An etrog is a kind of citron.

"And you shall take for yourselves on the first day (of Sukkot), the fruit of the beautiful (citron) tree, tightly bound branches of date palms, the branch of the braided (myrtle) tree, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before Adonai your God seven days. (Leviticus 23:40)

Here's How:

1. **Stand facing east** and hold the **lulav in your right hand** with the spine towards you. Hold the **etrog in your left hand** with the *pittam* **facing down** (opposite of the way it grows). You now recite a blessing that goes: "***Baruch atah Adonai Eloheynu Melech Ha-olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu al netilat lulav."***
(Blessed are You, O LORD, our GOD, King of the Universe, Who has sanctified us with Your commandments and commanded us to take hold of the lulav)

2. On the first day only, you now recite a blessing called the Shechiyanu. It goes like this: **"Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheynu Melech Ha Olam, shechiyanu v'kimanu, v'higianu, lazman ha ze."** *(Blessed are You Adonai, King of the Universe, who has given us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this moment.)*

3. Now bring the lulav and etrog together with both hands. Facing each of the **six** directions - **east,** south, west, north, (clockwise), then above and below - **you are going to wave them up and down 3 times**. Hold the lulav and etrog so that the top of the etrog is next to the bottom of the lulav and so that the etrog is covered with your fingers.

4. Face **east** and, holding the lulav and etrog with both hands, **extend** your arms, **shake** the lulav and etrog together, then **bring** your arms **back** towards you. **Repeat this twice more**.

5. **Repeat for the next 5 directions:** south, west , north; (clockwise), upwards and downwards.