



Shalom Desk

GAME FIELD GUIDE · EDITION 0.3 / SEPTEMBER 12, 2026

Jewish Community Simulator

A year at the desk. A community that remembers.

[Play the current game →](#)

Jacob Sager · Brand New Colors

A usable desk for the work a community carries.



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Take your seat

The school opens Sunday. Someone needs a call back. The building has needs of its own. Jewish Community Simulator gives you a desk in a fictional congregation and asks what you can carry through one Jewish year.

Begin after Sukkot, in Cheshvan, and lead through the next Tishrei. A campaign has twelve compressed months. You make consequential decisions, arrange the work you can do, and read what those choices leave behind. The people have names; a missed promise can outlast the month in which it was made.

[Play the current game](#) · [About the game](#)

A first month in six steps

1. Choose your movement, place, desk and kind of year. Open **Your year's four-word seed** if you want to edit the suggested seed.
2. Select **Take your seat**. Read the situation and the effects shown on each decision.
3. Choose the main decision. Its effects happen immediately; it is not part of the editable attention plan.
4. Add work to your plan. You may remove tasks or move them up before committing.
5. Check the month-end outlook and any warnings. Select **Commit ... & close month** when ready.
6. Read the report and its accounts, then use **Turn to ...** for the next month. The game saves in this browser when storage is available.

You can open **How to play** whenever you need the basic sequence. The game is free and does not require an account or an email address.



**Shalom Desk**
JEWISH COMMUNITY SIMULATOR

THE COMMUNITY REMEMBERS
EDITION 0.3

[How to play](#)

ONE JEWISH YEAR • FOUR DESKS

There's a place at the table.

The school opens Sunday. The boiler has an opinion. Miriam has corrected three numbers on the chesed rota.

Choose your congregation and take a desk.
The year will remember what you do.

CHESHVAN

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MONTHS TO
TISHREI

YOUR CONGREGATION

Begin after Sukkot

Movement

Conservative

Place

Midwest · legacy

Your desk

The Office Admin

The year ahead

A different year

Barb Kowalski, Office Manager
Beth El Congregation

Barb has run the office for 22 years, is Lutheran, and corrects everyone's Yiddish.

Your strength: Operational costs run 15% lighter; operational income +15%, within available funds. Cash hazards hit softer.

One big storyline changes the map — this year, the struggling congregation across town wants to talk. Practices describe this particular congregation.

► Your year's four-word seed

Take your seat

[Import a saved year](#)

[How a month works](#)

The current setup screen, with Shalom Desk's Star of David masthead.

Choose a particular congregation

Your setup changes the room in which decisions happen. These are particular fictional congregations; no movement or setting speaks for every community that shares its name.

Choice	What it changes
Movement	Reform, Conservative, Modern Orthodox or Reconstructionist. The congregation's language, practices, staff and available choices reflect the depicted setting.
Place	Northeast city, Sun Belt boomtown, Midwestern legacy congregation, or a small-town shul serving a wide radius. Household counts, costs and local details differ.
Year	A normal year of communal work; a different year shaped by talks with Beth Or; or a weird year with improbable interruptions. Scenes may depend on earlier work.
Desk	Rabbi, Cantor, Education Director or Office Admin. You inherit a particular person's strengths and a private queue of work.

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Four movements, four places, three year modes and four desks give 192 setup combinations. They share authored systems and stories. They are not 192 separately written congregations.

A small community begins with fewer households and a different school situation. The third-grade vacancy project appears only where the initial school is large enough. Building history and ordinary practices also depend on the setting.

Your desk changes your strengths

The displayed forecast already accounts for the relevant role. Use it to judge the actual choice in front of you; the base percentages below are not promises that every action will produce a whole extra point.

Desk	Current strength
Rabbi	Pastoral trust gains receive a 25% adjustment before later scaling. Pastoral work costs one less energy.
Cantor	Musical trust gains receive a 60% adjustment. Regular liturgy work can increase engagement and attendance over time.
Education Director	School work adds one trust before the trust curve; enrollment gains receive a 35% adjustment.
Office Admin	Tagged operational spending is 15% lighter, and operational income is 15% stronger within the remaining opportunity pool. Cash hazards are softened.

The Office Admin's advantage applies to tagged operational actions. It does not discount every salary, bill or purchase. A colleague doing delegated work brings their own role adjustment, and the card shows whose discretionary slot the task will use.

Your desk also gives you a queue: pastoral strain, rehearsal debt, school instability or paper backlog. Watch the queue alongside the congregation's visible measures.

Read the month before committing

The six status measures stay available while you work. None tells the whole story by itself.

Measure	How to read it
Cash on hand	Available money. Each month combines decisions, receipts and the ongoing operating commitment.
Households	The congregation's household count. Growth can bring both income and additional service costs.



Measure	How to read it
Students	The school register. Enrollment affects tuition, workload and attendance.
Shabbat attendance	A calculated picture of participation, influenced by membership, students, trust and engagement.
Community trust	An imperfect shared measure of how the congregation is doing. Positive gains become smaller at high trust.
Your energy	Capacity to carry work. Low energy weakens some positive effects and reduces the next assigned attention budget.

Read the situation and any letter before the options. A main decision may do work in more than one area, open a continuing project, or make a promise. It takes effect as soon as you select it.

Risky choices state their odds and the possible effects. A forecast is an aid to judgment. It cannot make a chance outcome certain or guarantee that the rest of the month will be quiet.

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Conservative · Midwest

Beth El Congregation

AT THE DESK

Barb Kowalski, Office Manager

This month's desk

People & promises

Projects & teams

The year's record

Words in the room

4 open projects

0 promises to keep

0 teams carrying work

Your saved year

Cash on hand	Households	Students	Shabbat attendance	Community trust	Your energy
\$30,000	142	30	52	62/100	8/10

Cheshvan · School begins

The buses, the binders, the beginning

Sukkot decorations are barely down and religious school opens Sunday. 30 kids, a carpool thread that three parents are editing at once. Barb has run the office for 22 years, is Lutheran, and corrects everyone's Yiddish. How does Beth El Congregation open the year? Miriam Roth has brought the Tuesday chesed rota, and Ari Levine has asked what the teens get to decide this year.

What gets your commitment?

One decision · takes effect now

Throw a splashy opening festival on the lawn

-\$1,800 cash +5 trust -1 energy +3 students

Skip the show — invest in teachers and materials

-\$1,200 cash +2 trust +2 students

Family kickoff Shabbat — everyone in one room

-\$400 cash +4 trust +1 household -1 energy

Forecasts include your role, local costs, current energy, trust curve and stat caps. Trust fractions carry forward until a whole point is earned.

A main decision shows its effects before you select it.



Plan the attention you actually have

The attention budget is assigned after the main decision, usually from two to five units. It stays fixed for that month's planning phase. Rest can restore energy; it does not create extra attention to spend inside the same plan.

The **Work on the desk** menu starts with **Needs your attention**. It is a selection of relevant work, not the complete list. Choose **All available work** or an area such as pastoral care, school or building and operations to browse more.

Use **Add to plan** on a task. The plan remains editable until commitment. **Move up** changes the order, and **Remove** returns a task to the available work. Cards update their effects in the context of the current ordered plan. Doing restorative work first can change a later task's effect, so order deserves a look.

The plan's **Month-end outlook** includes the expected billing and operating costs as well as the ordered tasks. It also accounts for seasonal energy and unused attention. Surprises, risk outcomes and penalties may change the actual result.

You do not need to spend every unit. Up to two unspent units return as energy when the month closes. More unused attention does not keep adding energy beyond that limit.

Before you close the month

- Check promises due soon and work that is one step from completion.
- Look for a colleague-slot conflict; each colleague can carry one discretionary task this month.
- Read the cash outlook, then consider any recurring commitment you are about to create.
- Notice the warning when an area is about to go untended for a third month.



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Conservative · Midwest

Beth El Congregation

AT THE DESK

Barb Kowalski, Office Manager

This month's desk

People & promises

Projects & teams

The year's record

Words in the room

3 open projects

1 promise to keep

1 team carrying work

Your saved year

Cash on hand

\$27,619

Households

141

Students

32

Shabbat attendance

57

Community trust

70/100

Your energy

8/10

Tevet · YOUR ATTENTION

There is more than one kind of work.

The decision you made: Take the meeting with Beth Or

Paper backlog: 1/10

Filings, billing, bookings, forms. Your lane and trained teams bring it down.

Work on the desk

Needs your attention

Liturgy & music

Hold the promised listening rehearsal

Promised to Miriam Roth. Due by the end of Shevat.

+1 trust -1 energy

In your plan's order

1 attention

Remove from plan

Building & ops

Survey the system and agree the repair

Step 1 of 2. Inspect and commission the repair. A completed repair prevents the boiler failure.

-\$1,445 cash +1 trust -1 energy

After your current plan

YOUR MONTHLY PLAN

3 of 5 unplanned

Your attention is fixed for this month. Up to 2 unspent attention return as energy.

Hold the promised listening rehearsal

+1 trust -1 energy

Move up Remove

Walk the entrance with Ruth Adler

-\$510 cash +1 trust -1 energy

Move up Remove

Month-end outlook

Cash about \$27,248

Energy 8/10

An ordered attention plan with its cash and energy outlook.

The work has names attached

Open **People & promises** to see the people you have met and their memories of the year. Miriam Roth carries the chesed rota and a musical memory. Ruth Adler wants to use the same entrance as her friends. Ari Levine wants a real say in the teenagers' work. In a different year, Sarah Ben-Ami speaks for Beth Or's families.

A promise records a person, a commitment and a deadline. The promise stays visible after the conversation ends. Some commitments open follow-through tasks in later planning phases; read the task's details and the due month.

Keeping a promise leaves one kind of memory. Missing it leaves another. Where the story allows repair, acknowledging the miss and doing the work can create a repaired promise. Repair does not erase the original delay. A final-month miss cannot be put right by a thirteenth turn that the game does not have.

People's memories and community trust are related but distinct. A healthy trust total does not mean every individual concern has been met. Read the words beside the numbers.



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Conservative · Midwest

Beth El Congregation

AT THE DESK

Barb Kowalski, Office Manager

This month's desk

People & promises

Projects & teams

The year's record

Words in the room

3 open projects

1 promise to keep

1 team carrying work

Your saved year

Cash on hand	Households	Students	Shabbat attendance	Community trust	Your energy
\$27,619	141	32	56	68/100	9/10

PEOPLE & PROMISES

The names behind the numbers.

Relationships remember what happened, including the work of repair.

What you said you would do

Open

Make room for the old melody's story and Ari's contribution

Miriam Roth · Due Shevat

The follow-up is on your attention list.

Rabbi Aliza Morgenstern

A relationship still being written

Care that reaches people before a crisis.

Your shared history begins with the work ahead.

Hazzan Ezra Katz

A relationship still being written

A room that can sing together, with space to learn.

Your shared history begins with the work ahead.

Morah Shira Ben-David

A relationship still being written

Reliable teachers and teenagers with real responsibility.

Cheshvan

You put the opening month into the school's work.

Barb Kowalski, Office Manager

A relationship still being written

Accurate lists, predictable bills and a usable entrance.

Kislev

The conflicting lists are reconciled. Gifts and family records now

People's memories and current commitments remain part of the year.

Finish work that can stay finished

Open **Projects & teams** to review continuing work and its operating commitment. Projects remain available until completed; the next step is listed explicitly.

Project	What completion changes
Boiler & HVAC	Survey and commission the work, then complete it. A completed repair prevents the boiler failure. Other story opportunities can depend on when the work happened.
An entrance everyone can use	Plan the entrance with Ruth, then finish the agreed improvements. Access is a continuing obligation to a person.
One reliable office record	Reconcile the lists, then move the office to one shared record. Completion prevents a particular unacknowledged-gift error and reduces ongoing administration expense.
A permanent third-grade teacher	Where available, interview and check references, then hire. Hiring adds recurring payroll; the displayed amount is scaled to the place.



A project has two steps. The task cost shown is for the current step in the current circumstances. Earlier decisions can advance or complete work. Inspect the progress rather than assuming every project is untouched at the start of each month.

Delegation uses your attention to make room in a colleague's month. Their named slot is limited. Asking the same colleague to do two discretionary tasks in one plan creates a conflict the game will reject.

Build capacity, then support it

A trained team continues working in later months without asking for another unit of your attention each time. Its contribution appears in the monthly record. Support begins in the month the team is formed and continues afterward.

Team	Continuing work	Base monthly support
Bikkur cholim team	Visiting rota and pastoral care	\$90
Lay service leaders	Service coverage and liturgy preparation	\$60
Madrichim team	Classroom support and school stability	\$100
Office & calendar rota	Room bookings and regular office work	\$50
Welcome team	Following up with newcomers	\$60

These are base amounts; the game's current task and operating-commitment panels show costs for your setting. Building every team immediately is not a universal solution. Decide which recurring support your congregation can afford and which work needs continuity most.

Major decisions, planned work and matching teams all count toward the areas they serve. Sustained neglect matters: an untended area incurs a consequence after three missed months. Your own queue has separate pressure, and a relevant team can help reduce it. The plan warns about developing trouble before commitment.

Read the accounts, including next month's costs

The month-end table begins with opening cash and ends with closing cash. Between those figures are dues, tuition, gifts and other receipts, spending, base payroll and building costs, growth-related service costs, added teacher payroll, team support and savings from reliable records.

Income actions draw on finite opportunities. Arrears, vendor savings, refunds, grants, gifts and sponsorships are not bottomless money buttons. Once a pool is exhausted, the forecast should not promise receipts that are no longer there.



Collecting outstanding dues also improves the modeled collection rate by 3.5 percentage points, within its cap. Trust and reliable records affect that rate too. A household's appearance in a count is not a guarantee that every invoice was paid.

Growth has an operating cost. Hiring creates payroll. Teams need support. A large one-time receipt can help finish urgent work, but it does not remove the continuing commitment shown in **Projects & teams**.

After the accounts, read **Beyond the ledger**. Seasonal energy, ordinary upkeep and background household changes help explain why the final measures differ from the sum of the choice cards alone.

A different year with Beth Or

In a different year, Beth Or's situation develops over several months. Preparation can cover governance, ritual and finances; personal contact and shared activity also matter. The approval chance shown for the eventual vote reflects that work and remains capped below certainty.

Do not confuse an early exploratory conversation with a final merger. Read what each decision actually agrees to. Preparing an agreement during the attention plan can change the later outlook, and the vote has its own timing.

Holiday participation is a separate decision from the merger itself. A congregation can make a High Holidays choice without silently rewriting the earlier governance outcome. Sarah's memories help show how Beth Or's families experienced the process.

The weird year also rewards attention to timing and context. Some scenes depend on earlier building work or subsequent care. A mode choice opens a set of possibilities; it does not guarantee that every unusual event will appear.

What the year leaves behind

The monthly record includes the ordinary work: services, classes, calls and the details that keep a congregation recognizable. Some counts and lines reflect the actual game state. The record is worth reading even when the large decision seemed uneventful.

At the end, the year portrait draws together the change in the congregation, what people remember, the capacity built and the work still open. It is descriptive. The game does not hand out a moral rank for being a good enough Jew or a good enough community.

Severe cash or trust problems can end the campaign early. Otherwise the twelve-month year ends in Tishrei. Language about the next work is an invitation to reflect; this edition does not continue directly into a playable second year.

Use **Same congregation, another desk** to revisit the setup from another role, or choose another congregation. Export the completed year first if you want to keep its record.



Keep your year safe

The game stores one current year in this browser, at this game origin, when browser storage is available. A Netlify deployment serves the game; it does not provide a cloud account or synchronize your progress between devices.

Open **Your saved year**, then select **Export year** to download a JSON file. Keep that file before clearing browser data, changing devices, or beginning a different campaign. To continue elsewhere, use **Import a saved year** on setup or **Import year** in the saved-year controls, then choose that exported file.

A reload and **Resume saved year** continue the existing campaign. Starting a different year asks for confirmation before replacing the browser's saved year. If storage fails, the game reports that it could not save locally; exporting remains the way to keep a copy.

Moving from the earlier game address

If you played at shalomdesk-community-simulator.netlify.app, open that address in the browser you used and export your year. Then open shalomdesk.com/game/play/ and import the file. Browser storage does not automatically move between those addresses.

The [original single-file edition](#) remains available separately. Do not assume that an original-edition session can be imported into this game. Supported saved-year files come from the upgraded simulator's export controls.

Only one current local save is managed at a time. Avoid playing the same saved year in two tabs at once. Separate exported files can preserve additional campaigns.

Seeds, words and replay

A new setup suggests a fresh four-word seed. You can request another or type your own. The word bank has 100 entries; four independently chosen positions permit 100 million phrases, including repeats. A repeated suggestion is possible, and the number of phrases is not a count of unique stories.

A seed helps reproduce the starting randomness. To compare runs, keep the setup choices and rules edition the same too. Later choices matter. The seed alone does not remember a played decision or a partly completed project; export the year to preserve progress.

Words in the room

The in-game glossary is available throughout play. These short explanations can help you begin:

Word	In this game
Chesed	Lovingkindness; here it includes the practical work of showing up for people.



Word	In this game
Bikkur cholim	Visiting and caring for people who are ill.
Madrichim	Guides or teen aides helping carry learning and communal work.
Minyan	A prayer quorum; particular communities differ in who is counted and how services are organized.
Gabbai	A person helping organize the synagogue service and its participants.
Niggun	A melody, often sung without words.
Nusach	The musical and liturgical manner of prayer in a community or occasion.
Genizah	A place for storing worn sacred texts and related materials before appropriate care or burial.
Shabbatot	The plural of Shabbat.
Days of Awe	The High Holy Day season, especially Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

This is a fictional, compressed calendar, not a full implementation of the Hebrew calendar. Customs vary within every movement. The language belongs in the experience; the glossary offers context when you want it.

Keep playing

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