1. Lighting the Candles: It is customary to light two candles made especially for Shabbat, which remain burning until they go out. One explanation for the two candles is that they represent the two Torah commandments concerning Shabbat: “keep” and “remember”. Keeping Shabbat is understood as an obligation to observe Shabbat, and remembering Shabbat is associated with preparing for it. *(Many people have a candle for each member of the family so that each person gets to light one.)*

Between saying the blessing and lighting the candles, some people symbolically draw in the light from the candles with gentle circular hand motions over the flame. We then cover or close our eyes while reciting the candle lighting blessing. The reason for covering the eyes is that the usual order is to say the blessing before doing the action, but in this case, if we said the blessing first, thereby beginning Shabbat, we technically could not light a fire!

**Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam,**
asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who has sanctified us with commandments and commanded us to light the Shabbat candles.

2. Singing Shalom Aleichem: As we sit down at the table on Friday night, it is traditional to begin with singing “Shalom Aleichem.” This song welcomes the Shabbat angels into the home.

**Sha-lom a-lei-chem, mal-a-chen ha-sha-reit, mal-a-chei El-yon mi-me-lechh ma-le-chei ha-m'la-chim, ha-ka-dosh ba-ruch Hu.**

**Peace be to you**, O ministering angels, messengers of the Most High, the supreme Ruler of rulers, the Holy One of blessing.

**Bo-a-chem l'shalom mal-a-chei ha-shalom, mal-a-chei El-yon mi-melech ma-le-chei ha-m'la-chim, ha-ka-dosh, ba-ruch Hu.**

**Enter in peace**, O messengers of peace, messengers of the Most High, the supreme Ruler of rulers, the Holy One of blessing.

**Ba-re-chen ni le-shalom, mal-a-chen ha-shalom, mal-a-chen El-yon mi melech mal-a-chen ha-m'la-chim, hakadosh baruch Hu.**

**Bless me with peace**, O messengers of peace, messengers of the Most High, the supreme Ruler of rulers, the Holy One of blessing.
Depart in peace, O messengers of peace, messengers of the Most High, the supreme Ruler of rulers, the Holy One of blessing.

3. Blessing each other on Friday night: It is customary for parents to bless their children and each other, concluding with the priestly blessing. The sources of the tradition for blessing children are biblical. Isaac blessed his sons, Jacob and Esau. And Jacob blessed his grandsons Ephraim and Menasseh. The blessing for girls recalls the matriarchs of our people. The priestly blessing is taken from the biblical book of Numbers (6:24-26.) As the parents say the blessing, they place their hands on the children's heads.

Traditional blessing for a girl:
Ye-si-m'cha Elohim k'Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel v'Leah.
May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah.

And for a boy:
Yesim'cha Elohim k'Efraim, v'chi-Menasheh.
May God make you like Ephraim and Menasseh.

This is followed by the Priestly blessing:
May God bless you and keep you. May God turn toward you and be gracious to you. May God turn to you and grant you peace.

Many couples also bless each other, or say a few loving words. Traditionally a man recites a passage from Proverbs 31:10-31... known as Eyshet Chayil (woman of valor) to his wife. Women can offer Psalm 112... Or You can read from your ketubah (marriage contract.)

4. Saying Kiddush (the prayer of sanctification of Shabbat that is said over wine.) On Friday night the Kiddush has four parts. The first part recalls the biblical account of the creation of Shabbat. The second part is the blessing over wine. The third describes the gift of Shabbat, its meanings and symbolism. And the fourth describes Shabbat as a sign of covenant between God and Israel.

There was evening and there was morning. On the sixth day, the heavens and the earth and all their hosts were completed. And God completed, on the seventh day, God's work, which God had made, and God ceased on the seventh day, all God's work in which God had been engaged. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it; because on it God ceased all God's work which God had created. [Genesis 1:31, 2:1-3]

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech Ha-Olam, borei p'ri ha gafen.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Baruch a-ta Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam a-sher ki-de-sha-nu b'mitz-vo-tav ve-ratsa vanu v'shabbat kod-sho b'a-ha-va u've-ratson hin-chi lanu zi-karon le-ma-ah-sei v'reit-shit. Ki hu yom t'chi-la, le-mikra-ei ko-desh ze-cher l'tsi-at Mits-ra-yim.

Ki va-nu va-char-ta v'o-ta-nu ki-dash-ta mi-kol ha-a-mim. V'shabbat kod-she-cha be-a-hava u've-ra-tson hin-chal-ta-nu Baruch atah Adonai, m'ka-deish ha Shabbat.

We praise you Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who hallows us with mitzvot and favors us with the holy Shabbat, lovingly and graciously bestowed upon us, a memorial of the act of creation, first of the holy assemblies, a remembrance of the going forth from Egypt.

You have chosen us and hallowed us from among all peoples, by lovingly and graciously bestowing upon us Your holy Sabbath. We praise You, O God, who sanctifies Shabbat.

5. **Reciting the blessing over the challah:** The challah remains covered while Shabbat is being sanctified with the blessing over the wine so as not to embarrass it [the challah.] The person saying the blessing traditionally holds two loaves together. These correspond to the two portions of manna that fell from heaven on Fridays so that the Israelites, wandering in the desert, would have enough food to last through Shabbat.

Baruch ata, Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam ha motsi lechem min ha-arets.

We praise You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.