Afikoman:

Bentschers: Prayer and song books

Besamim: Spice Box

Bircat Habayit: Blessings for the home - inside the front door

Bircat ha Mazon: Grace after meals

Birconim: Prayer and Song books

Blech: A stove/warmer for food on Shabbat

Challah: Braided bread for Shabbat

Charosets: Part of the Pesach Seder Meal. It is a mixture of food and nuts the colour of which is meant to signify the mud used for the bricks which the Israelites made when they were in slavery in Egypt.

Chevra Kiddusha: The Jewish Burial Society.

Chumash: Another word for the Torah

Deckl (Yiddish): Challah cover

Dreidels (Yiddish): Spinning tops used as a game during Hanukkah.

Eruv: Literal meaning is to mix or to join together. On Shabbat all activities associated with work are prohibited, and according to traditional Jewish law include formal employment as well as traveling, spending money, and carrying items outside the home, in the public domain. The prohibition against carrying includes house keys, prayer books, canes or walkers, and even children who cannot walk on their own. Recognizing the difficulties this rule imposes, the sages of the Talmud devised a way to allow for carrying in public without breaking the rule. Through this means, called an eruv, communities are able to turn a large area into one that is considered, for Jewish law purposes, a large private domain, in which items may be carried. The term eruv refers to the act of mixing or combining, and is shorthand for eruv hazerot--the mixing of domains, in this case, the private (rashut hayahid) and the public (rashut harabim). An eruv does not allow for carrying items otherwise prohibited by Jewish law on Shabbat, such as money or cell phones. Having an eruv does not mean that a city or neighborhood is enclosed entirely by a wall. Rather, the eruv can be
comprised of a series of pre-existing structures (walls, fences, electrical poles and wires) and/or structures created expressly for the eruv, often a wire mounted on poles. In practice, then, the eruv is a symbolic demarcation of the private sphere, one that communities come together to create.

Etrog holder: An etrog is a citron or lemon. The branches are waved during Sukkot. Etrog holders are made of wood, plastic, silver, metal or pottery.

Graggers (Yiddish): Percussion instruments (Noise makers)

Hagaddah: The re-telling of the story of the liberation of the Israelites from the hands of the Egyptians at Pesach.

Hanukkah: The eight-day festival from 25 Kislev which marks the miracle of the oil lasting 8 days and the re-dedication of the Temple in the time of Mattathias (Matisyahu) and Judas Maccabaeus (Judah Maccabee)

Hanukkiyah: an eight-branched menorah which is lit on the eight nights of Hanukkah from 25 Kislev corresponding to some time in December in the Gregorian calendar.

Havdalah: The ritual of separating Shabbat time from the rest of the week.

Kashrut: Jewish food laws

Ke’arah: Seder Plate for Passover

Ketubah: Marriage contract which shows the obligations a husband has to his wife. This can be seen in an observant Jewish household and can be very ornately presented on parchment.

Kiddush: Kiddush is the sanctification of Shabbat. On Friday night the Kiddush celebration is carried out. A cup of wine is filled and held in the hand by the person presiding, usually but not necessarily the father of the house, and the benediction over wine recited. Then the Kiddush proper is recited: ‘Blessed are you, O L-rd our G-d, King of the universe, who has made us holy by your commandments and have taken pleasure in us, and in love and favour have given us your holy Sabbath as an inheritance, a memorial of the creation--that day being also the first day of the holy convocations, in remembrance of the departure from Egypt. For you have chosen us and made us holy above all nations, and in love and favour have given us your holy Sabbath as an inheritance. Blessed are you, O L-rd, who makes holy the Sabbath.’

Kosher: Observances pertaining to food or clothes which are rabbinically certified.

Lulav holder (for Sukkot): Lulav, palm tree, is the largest of the Four Species of plants used for Sukkot. There is a mitzvah from the Torah in the Book of Leviticus (23:40) to gather the Four Species during Sukkot: ‘On the first day you
shall take the product of hadar trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before Adonai your God seven days.’

**Machzor:** Literally means ‘cycle’ but also meaning ‘festival prayer book’. The liturgical texts for the two holidays often are put into one book, the High Holiday Machzor.

**Maror:** Bitter herbs eaten at the Pesach Seder meal in keeping with the biblical commandment “with bitter herbs they shall eat it” (Exodus 12:8).

**Matzah/matzo (Matzot pl.):** Unleavened bread made from one of five species of grain – wheat, barley, spelt, rye, and oats – mentioned in the Torah, and the only bread which is permitted for use during Passover.

**Mayim aharonim:** ritual washing before meals.

**Megillah (megillot or megillot pl.):** Scroll, usually, of the Book of Esther used on Purim but it can also refer to other scrolls e.g. the Book of Ruth, Lamentations, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes

**Melachah:** Usually defined as work but it has quite a specific meaning in connection with Shabbat. The Torah specifically mentions two *melachot*, kindling a fire and carrying. The Mishnah further explains that 39 different categories of *melachah* went into building the *Mishkan (Tabernacle).* While these categories of labor refer to the construction of the *Mishkan,* they actually encompass all forms of human productivity. These *melachot* are not a haphazard collection of activities, and do not necessarily represent physical exertion. Rather, the principle behind them is that they represent constructive, creative effort, demonstrating man's mastery over nature. Refraining from *melachah* on Shabbat signals our recognition that, despite our human creative abilities, G-d is the ultimate Creator and Master.

**Menorah:** A 6 or 8 branched candelabrum reminding people of the light which never went out in the Temple, and also the Hanukkiyah which recalls the 8 days miracle of the oil of Hanukkah and the re-dedication of the Temple.

**Mezuzah (mezuzot pl.):** Containers which are on the doorposts of houses on entrance to the house or rooms within the house (with the exception of the bathroom). Within the case is contained the text of the Shema Israel, Deuteronomy 6: The Lord your G-d is one Lord and you shall love the Lord your G-d with all your heart, and all your soul and all your mind... and these words which I command you this day shall be written...

**Mishloach manot:** Basket of food or items sent to friends at Purim

**Mishnah:** Rabbinical texts

**Netilat yadayim:** Hand-washing
Parve: Pareve (Yiddish) refers to food or meat without any dairy or meat ingredients. Jewish dietary laws considers parve food to be neutral; Parve food can be eaten with both meat and milk dishes. Fish, eggs, fruits and vegetables are parve.

Pesach: Passover commemorating the story of the Israelites’ liberation from the oppression of the Egyptians.

Purim: This takes place on 13 Adar (February/March time) The story in recounted in the Book of Esther and tells of the defeat of a plot to kill the Jews of Persia.

Pushke (Yiddish word for Tzedakah)

Ra’ashanmim: Percussion instruments (Noise makers)

Rosh Hashanah: Jewish New Year and High Holiday. It takes place over two days

Shochet: A Jew who is licenced to slaughter and inspect cattle and fowl in the ritually-prescribed manner, for kosher consumption.

Schechitah: The ritual slaughter of animals and fowl for food according to Jewish dietary laws.

Seder Meal or Seder Plate: The meal which is an integral part of Pesach. The plate has the different foods which are very symbolic in terms of what is being remembered at Pesach.

Sehilot: Prayers of repentance

Shabbat: Day of rest going from sundown on Friday night to sundown on Saturday night: For six days work is to be done, but the seventh day is a day of sabbath rest, holy to the L-rd... it is an eternal sign that in six days, the L-rd made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed’ (Exodus 31:15-17).

Shavuot, Shavuos, Shabu’oth: Festival of Weeks, often called Pentecost, which occurs on the sixth day of the Hebrew month of Sivan (late May or early June). The holiday is one of the three Biblical pilgrimage festivals.

Shofar: Usually a ram’s horn used at Rosh Hashanah

Shulchan Aruch: Literally means ‘Set table’ and is the code of Jewish law and is the most authoritative legal code of Judaism. It was authored in Safed, Ottoman Eyalet of Damascus, by Yosef Karo in 1563 and published in Venice two years later. Together with its commentaries, it is the most widely accepted compilation of Jewish law ever written.
Sukkot:  Feast of Tabernacles or Feast of Booths.  is a biblical holiday celebrated on the 15th day of the month of Tishrei (variously from late September to late October). It is one of the three biblically mandated festivals on which Hebrews were commanded to make a pilgrimage to the Temple in Jerusalem. It follows the solemn holiday of Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement.

Siddur: Order of service for Jewish prayer

Sukkah: The temporary three-sided shelter erected by Jews during Sukkot to commemorate the temporary dwellings of the Israelites as they moved across the desert in the Exodus.

Svivonoim: Doughnuts used for Hanukkah

Talmud: Literally means ‘instruction’. Rabbinical texts which are considered second in importance to the Torah. It is also traditionally referred to as Shas a Hebrew abbreviation meaning the "six orders" of the Oral Law of Judaism. The Talmud has two components: the Mishnah (c. 200 CE), the first written compendium of Judaism’s Oral Law, and the Gemara (c. 500 CE), an elucidation of the Mishnah and related writings that often ventures on to other subjects and expounds broadly on the Hebrew Bible. The terms Talmud and Gemara are often used interchangeably.

Tanakh: Acronym for the Torah, Neviim (the Prophets) and Ketuvim (the Writings): the Hebrew Scriptures

Tisha B’Av: The Ninth of Av is an annual fast day in Judaism, named for the ninth day (Tisha) of the month of Av in the Hebrew calendar. The fast commemorates the destruction of both the First Temple and Second Temple in Jerusalem, which occurred about 655 years apart, but on the same Hebrew calendar date. It takes place in July or August in the Gregorian calendar.

Tzedakah: Literally means ‘righteousness’ but is commonly used to signify charity.

Yom Kippur: The Day of Atonement which takes place after Rosh Hashanah at the beginning of the Jewish new year.

Yom Tov: literally meaning ‘good day’ is used for the festivals of Biblical origin during which melacha is prohibited. These are Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the first day(s) of Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret-Simhat Torah, the first and last day(s) of Passover, and Shavuot.