



PESACH PREPARATION GUIDE

**INCLUDING:
HALACHOS FOR THE
SEDER**

**COMPILED BY RABBI ARIEH BERLIN
FOR QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL
0425858503**

Or email rabbi@shaarei-tefillah.com



Pesach

is one of the most inspiring and meaningful Yomim Tovim (Festivals). Everyone has memories of the Seder from their childhood years. However, due to the pre- Pesach preparations one can often lose focus, arriving at Pesach exhausted, unable to enjoy the Simcha (joy) of the Yom Tov.

Everyone must enjoy Pesach, look forward to it and not dread it. Both men and women should be rested and alert at the Seder table so they can fulfil all the Mitzvos and follow the Haggadah. All the biblical and most of the Rabbinic obligations on Pesach are equally binding for both men and women. Clearly, the performance of pre-Pesach duties must be balanced against the Pesach obligations.

Pre-Pesach cleaning is required to avoid the danger of transgressing any Torah or Rabbinic prohibition of having Chometz in the house on Pesach. It is evident that this need not be excessive.

It is not the intention here to abolish minhogim, which have been passed down from generation to generation. Nevertheless some practices adopted in the Pesach cleaning today are not an actual continuation of the old customs. These extra exertions should not prevent anyone from fulfilling their Pesach obligations.

Following are some guidelines to help make your Pesach preparations easier. However, these instructions are by no means a complete halachic guide to Pesach.

Wishing you and your families a Good Yom Tov and a Kosher Pesach.

Rabbi Ariele Berlin

CONTENTS

General Halachos	Page 3
Practical Application	Page 3-6
Checking for Chometz	Page 7
Sale of Chometz	Page 7-9
Important Points to Remember	Page 9
Measurement guide	Page 10-11
Checking Lettuce	Page 12

GENERAL NOTES

All property and possessions must be cleaned and checked to make sure that they are free of all Chometz, except in the following cases:

- A. If, there is a room or an area in a room into which Chometz is never brought during the year, it does not have to be cleaned out or checked for Chometz. A possible example could be a bedroom or on top of cupboards in a kitchen.
- B. Any item which is not used on Pesach and which is put away and sold need not be checked for Chometz. i.e. clothes if not worn or pots and pans
- C. Crumbs, which have been rendered inedible to the extent that they are not fit to be eaten by a dog are not considered Chometz, eg. by applying detergent.

The general obligation to check for and destroy crumbs does not apply if

- (a) The crumbs are less than the size of a kazayis (approx 30 grams) and
- (b) Are dirty enough that a person would not eat them, or a household detergent has already spoiled the crumbs to the extent that people would refrain from eating them.

An item to be kashered should not be used for hot Chometz for 24 hours prior to kashering. Any vessel or surface which has cracks could be difficult to be kashered, a Rav should be consulted.

Anything that has hot Chometz on during the year and cannot be kashered needs to be covered.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

THE KITCHEN

Floors

In our times we don't have earthen floors with deep cracks in them. Therefore it is sufficient for tiled or covered floors to be swept and rinsed well with a detergent. Small cracks do not have to be checked if the detergent reaches into them.

Food Cabinets

If the cabinet is going to be used on Pesach, take out all the food and wash the surfaces with a rag soaked in detergent. Be sure the detergent goes into all the cracks and soaks into any crumbs that might be there. The cabinets are usually lined.

Refrigerator/Freezer

Take the food out, and wipe with a rag soaked in a detergent. Chometz can also be found in the rubber edges around the door. The racks are usually covered (it is advisable to leave holes for air circulation).

Kashering Sinks (stainless steel) and draining board

- 1) Make sure completely clean (one should use detergent)
- 2) Should not have been used for hot Chometz for 24 hrs.
- 3) Some people pour hot water mixed with bleach down the drain.
- 4) In order to make sure that the water from the kettle remains at boiling point one should either pour the boiling water over a hot stone making sure the water

touches all surfaces of the sink/draining board, or use an electric kettle (Pesachdik) and pour the water over all surfaces within 10 seconds of boiling the water.

- 5) After pouring the boiling water one should rinse the sink / draining board with cold water.

Taps

Cleaning thoroughly with detergent without any further kashering procedure, is sufficient.

Gas top

- 1) The minhag is to clean the grates first.
- 2) Lechatchila, place a blech on top of all the burners, switch them on to their maximum for approx 10 mins, or until the blech gets red hot (the blech can be a Chometz one).
- 3) The areas in between the burners should be covered.

Electric top

- 1) Clean top.
- 2) Switch on to maximum heat for approx 15-20 mins.
- 3) Cover in between areas.

Electric / Gas Ovens

Some do not kasher their ovens for Pesach and use a different oven, some go through the process but still cover it.

According to those who kasher, this is the process:

- 1) Make sure it is completely clean (this must be done using oven cleaner) particular care should be taken when cleaning the racks, screw areas and fan to ensure there is no remnant of Chometz. Any rust must be removed (if this cannot be done then one should put a flame (or blow-torch) to it, bringing anything there to ash)
- 2) Some only kasher the oven using a blow torch (this is called ליבון גמור)
One would put the blow torch to all areas for approx 7 mins, this is done so that there will be sparks and it will get red hot.
Others don't require a blow torch, and leaving the oven on maximum heat for an hour is enough.

Microwave

Some do not kasher a microwave for Pesach, others only kasher them if they are made of metal.

Those who kasher them do it in the following way:

- 1) Clean completely (one should use detergent)
- 2) Not to be used for 24 hrs.
- 3) Boil up some water, so that steam comes out.

4) Cover over the glass dish.

Dishwashers

Many authorities don't allow one to kasher a dishwasher, those who do, do so in the following way:

- 1) Clean completely (one should use detergent)
- 2) Not to be used for 24 hrs.
- 3) Remove the racks, since they cannot be kashered.*
- 4) Let the dishwasher run through 3 cycles, 1 with soap and 2 without

*there are some opinions who allow the racks to be kashered if there are no cracks in the racks

Hotplate

These are very hard to be kashered. If one wants to use them one should clean them as well as possible and double wrap them.

Tabletops/Marble Counters

If they were used for hot Chometz they should be cleaned well with a detergent, especially in places or grooves where Chometz can get stuck. Then boiling hot water should be poured from a kettle, or the surface can be completely covered so that nothing "Pesach'dik" touches them (the covering should be strong enough that it will not tear when moving something on it). Some people do both (for a list of materials that can be kashered see page 6)

Food Processor/Mixer A Rav should be consulted.

Pots, Pans, Dishes, & Silverware (Cutlery)

Whatever is not going to be used for Pesach should be put away with the Chometz, which will be sold. There is no need to clean them if they are going to be sold.

Cutlery and silverware may be kashered (consult a Rav).

Any cutlery, which will be kashered, should NOT be used 24 hours prior to kashering.

Tea Towels and Tablecloths

If one does not have a Pesach'dik set of dishtowels or tablecloths, then one's regular dish towels and tablecloths may be used if they are washed with a detergent.

OTHER PRE-PESACH CONSIDERATIONS

Clothes

If they have been washed in detergent, then there is no need to worry, even if you find crumbs in them on Pesach. Pockets of clothes not being washed or dry-cleaned need only be checked for Chometz by brushing them out.

However, if there is a possibility of crumbs between the stitches or in a hidden crevice, which cannot be shaken out, then the pockets must be wiped with a wet rag soaked in detergent. Of course, clothes, which will not be worn on Pesach can be put away without being checked if all the actual Chometz in them is sold.

Siddurim, Benchers, Seforim, & Books

If there is a chance that they contain Chometz crumbs, then they should either be put away with other Chometz utensils or checked. A thorough shaking is sufficient. It is advisable not to put such books on the table during Pesach.

Shares

There is no problem owning shares in a company that deals with Chometz products. It's not your company, you just get a share of the profit.

Perfumes, Creams, Washing Up Liquid etc

Any Chometz, which is not edible for a dog, although one must not eat it, one can have benefit from it.

Vacuum - Don't forget to clean the Vacuum and empty out the Vacuum bag before Pesach.

Bins

Who do our Rubbish bins belong to? If you would realise as the rubbish truck was collecting your bin that you left a valuable item in it, could the rubbish collector say, "No, sorry this is now council property"?! So it would appear that what's in the bin is the house-owners. Therefore, one should ensure that all the Chometz that is put in the bin is not fit for a dog to eat, ie. pour bleach over the Chometz.

Toys

If there is edible Chometz, then either it should be removed, or be made inedible.

List of materials that can be kashered (according to CRC- Chicago Rabbinical Council)

MATERIAL		
ACRYLIC	YES	Kasherable if no stains or scratches, otherwise must be covered
CERAMIC TILE	NO	These countertops must be covered for Pesach
CONCRETE, CEMENT	YES	If there is a synthetic finish, consult a Rov
GLASS TILE	NO	These countertops must be covered for Pesach
GRANITE	YES	If there is a synthetic finish, consult a Rov
MARBLE	YES	If there is a synthetic finish, consult a Rov
METALS	YES	
PLASTIC LAMINATE	YES	according to cRc policy, this can be kashered
POLYESTER BASE	YES	Kasherable if no stains or scratches, otherwise must be covered
PORCELAIN TILE	NO	These countertops must be covered for Pesach
QUARTZ RESIN	YES	
SLATE	YES	If there is a synthetic finish, consult a Rov
SOAPSTONE	YES	If there is a synthetic finish, consult a Rov
WOOD, BUTCHER BLOCK	YES	Kasherable if no stains or scratches, otherwise must be covered
STOVETOPS		
METAL GRATES	YES	
METAL FLAT TOP	YES	
ELECTRIC BURNERS	YES	
GLASS TOPS	YES	According to the cRc policy, it can be kashered
OVEN TOPS BETWEEN BURNERS (on gas and electric) NO These should be covered		
OVEN TOPS BETWEEN BURNERS (on glass tops) The area should be covered unless this will damage the surface. Otherwise, it must be cleaned.		

CHECKING FOR CHOMETZ

If it is too difficult to check all the rooms on one night, then the work may be divided and done at other times. No Chometz should be left in any room that has been cleaned and checked properly. The brocha may not be recited if the search is done earlier than its correct time. Therefore, at least one place where Chometz was left should be left unchecked in order to fulfil the mitzvah of Bedikas Chometz on the correct night. However, if the whole house has been cleaned completely, then 10 pieces of Chometz (according to the minhag) should be hidden by somebody else so that a proper search is made. Bedikas Chometz is done the night before Seder Night. One has an obligation to check and clean out all the places where Chometz could be. This also includes your office/desk and your car.



Food that Falls

Food that falls onto a chair or onto the floor on Pesach should be washed off for hygienic reasons. The food does not become Chometz even if the food is hot.

SALE OF CHOMETZ

This is the easiest way of getting rid of Chometz and it saves cleaning. However one needs to be aware of how it works.

The Purpose of Selling your Chometz

The Torah tells us that not only is it forbidden to eat or have benefit from Chometz on Pesach, but it is even forbidden to own Chometz wherever it is. This is more stringent than any other Torah prohibition.

Origin

Jews who had large stocks of whiskey etc had to hold on to their stocks because of their livelihood. Therefore, sale was introduced. This is discussed in Shulchan Aruch (Ohr Hachayim 448). Nowadays it is accepted custom that anyone may sell their Chometz.

1. Selling is not a religious act, it's a monetary act, just like giving a ring to get married, or buying a product. It's important to know that **this is a monetary act** because normally with a religious act, even if you do not understand why you're doing it, you have still fulfilled your obligation i.e. tefillin. With a sale you have to know what you're doing, signing and saying.
2. The Rabbi is a shaliach (agent), the form you sign is to appoint him as your agent. You do not sell your Chometz to the Rabbi.

3. Originally when the Chometz was sold to a non-Jew, it was transferred to his domain. This made it difficult to sell either because there was so much Chometz and because of the burden involved, or often the non-Jew didn't have space for the Chometz. So later on it was instituted that rather the Chometz should remain in the Jew's home, and included in the contract is that the Jew rents out the area where the Chometz is placed.

Therefore one should dedicate an area to place the Chometz; if possible, lock it or at least it should be out of sight that you cannot easily get to it, ie. a garage. You rent out this place to a non-Jew. However, it's only rented out to him for storage purposes; otherwise the non-Jew could come on Seder night and make a party in your garage! Therefore the place is rented only for storage. Thus, you empower the Rabbi to do 2 transactions on your behalf: (a) to rent out a storage area (b) sell the Chometz.

4. It should be a real sale, not a trick. Therefore, the non-Jew must know what he's buying. Ideally one should specify what he is selling. The non-Jew should be able to get to the Chometz. Therefore the non-Jew should know how he can get access to "his" Chometz. If you're at home you can give your address or if you're away or your business is closed, you should notify where the key is. If you are going overseas you should inform the Rabbi.
5. If you have an open packet of biscuits, nobody's going to buy it. Therefore the non-Jew is told that as part of the "package deal" it includes products, which he would not normally buy. **Many people try to finish all started packets.**
6. Chometz Pots, Pans, Dishes & Silverware may be owned over Pesach provided they are clean and they are put away so you don't come to use them by mistake. If they are not clean then you can put the pots with the Chometz. It is advisable to do this anyway as it saves you the job of checking all the plates etc. However, it should be noted that one is not selling their pots etc because that creates problems regarding Tevillas Kelim, rather one is selling just the Chometz attached to the pans etc. As mentioned previously, nobody is going to buy dirt attached to pots etc but since it's part of the deal and the non-Jew is told, it's a valid sale.
7. You may have heard that one should not sell proper/pure Chometz eg. bread, biscuits or something that contains real Chometz, eg. jam which contains glucose which may come from wheat or corn. Some people do not sell Chometz because they are concerned it's not a valid sale because perhaps the non-Jew doesn't really want to buy the Chometz. Generally this is looked at as a stringency (chumra). All the shops and bakers sell Chometz
8. If you will be away for Pesach you can sell all the Chometz in your possession. You do not have to clean those areas. However, you would miss the opportunity to perform the mitzvah of searching for Chometz. (for more details consult a Rav)

9. What makes the non-Jew want to buy the Chometz? Either before the transaction he is given a gift (money or whiskey etc) to keep, or after Pesach he gains from the sale back with a profit
10. The non-Jew is told at the time of sale that this is a complete sale. We hope he'll sell it back but he can refuse and the Jew can refuse to buy it back.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Search for Chometz (B'dikas Chometz) takes place on the night before Seder Night (when seder night is on Motzei Shabbos the bedikah is done on Thursday night) immediately after nightfall. The customary Brocha (blessing) is said beforehand and the first Kol Chamira declaration afterwards (see Artscroll Siddur page 654)
- All the Chometz which will be required for the next morning should be put aside in a special place.
- Particular care should be taken to prevent children from carrying Chometz about the house after the search.
- The Fast of the First Born is held on Erev Pesach (when Erev Pesach falls on Shabbos it is held on Friday) . First born males or fathers of under-barmitzvah first born males have to fast, unless they participate in a siyum in the morning. A siyum will take place after Shacharis.
- One should stop eating Chometz on Erev Pesach by the end of the 4th Halachic hour of the day **(See Pesach Timetable)**
- All Chometz, other than that sold should be burnt on Erev Pesach morning by the end of the 5th Halachic hour **(see Pesach Timetable)** and the second Kol Chamira declaration said (see Artscroll Siddur page 654)



HALACHA AND MEASURING GUIDE FOR THE SEDER

(Based on the rulings of Harav Moshe Feinstein Ztl.)

The four cups of wine

Preferably the four Cups should be of red wine. One may, however use white wine or wine mixed with grape juice in as strong a mixture as one can bear. If one cannot drink wine one may drink plain grape juice.

The size of the cup should be at least 130.7ml (according to some opinions one can be lenient and rely on 86ml. There are also those who follow the ruling of the Chazon Ish that one should use 150ml) It is best to drink each cup in its entirety but if this cannot be done the majority is sufficient. Each cup should preferably be finished without a pause. If this cannot be done, one is allowed a maximum of nine minutes to finish the cup. It is required that one recline on ones left side while drinking the Four Cups.



Karpas

Any vegetable that grows from the ground may be used for Karpas, it is customary to use either celery, potatoes, parsley or radishes. The Karpas is dipped into salt water and is then eaten. One should eat an amount smaller than the size of an olive.

Matzah

For the mitzvah of Matzah, one takes some of the top and middle Matzah together with additional unused Matzah equal to the size of 15.9cm x 17.8cm (approximately 1/2 Hand Matzah or 2/3 Machine Matzah)

This is eaten at one time. If this cannot be done it may be finished in a time period not longer than nine minutes but preferably less than 2 minutes. The matzah must be eaten while reclining on ones left side.



Marror

Romaine (Cos) lettuce leaves or stalks or ground horseradish may be used for



Marror. When romaine lettuce is used great care must be taken to carefully check each leaf (see attached Halochas relating to checking lettuce)

For ground horseradish preferably 32.5ml should be eaten. If this is difficult, one should eat at least 20.7ml (slightly more than 2 level teaspoons).

When using romaine lettuce leaves an amount the size of 20.3cm x 25.4cm should be eaten. Some have the custom to combine horseradish with romaine lettuce. Before the Marror is eaten it should be dipped into Charoses (a mixture of chopped apple, nuts, cinnamon and wine). The Charoses is then shaken off. The Marror should preferably be eaten at one time, but if this cannot be done, it may be finished in a time period of up to nine minutes. There is no requirement to recline while eating the Marror.

Korech

For Korech a sandwich is made of a piece of the third (bottom) Matzah (combined with other Matzah) equal to the size of 10.2cm x 17.8cm (just over 1/4 of Hand Matzah and just over 1/3 Machine Matzah) This is combined with Marror (same amount as above)

The sandwich is then dipped into the Charoses and the Charoses is shaken off. The Korech should be eaten at one time. If this cannot be done, it may be finished in a time period up to nine minutes. One must recline on the left side while eating Korech.

Afikoman

For the Afikoman, a piece of the hidden Matzah is given to each person along with additional pieces of Matzah to cover an area the size of 15.9cm x 17.8cm (approximately 1/2 Hand Matzah or 2/3 Machine Matzah)

This is preferably eaten at one time. If this cannot be done it may be finished in a time period not longer than nine minutes and preferably less than 2 minutes. One must recline on the left side while eating Afikoman.

YOUR GUIDE TO ROMAINE (COS) LETTUCE

ROMAINE (COS) LETTUCE IS COMMONLY USED FOR *MAROR*.

This lettuce type is known as an open leaf variety. This means that as they sprout forth from the ground, the leaves begin to open up like a flower. Toward the end of their growth, they begin to close around the stalk. Since romaine lettuce grows open, it is much more prone to insect infestation throughout the head than other varieties of lettuce that primarily grow as a closed ball.

We are fortunate here in Australia that locally grown vegetables are in general not as prone to insect infestation as they are in other countries such as US, Europe and Israel. The major concern here are largish, readily identifiable green or black worms.

In addition the insects that can at times be found in open leaf lettuce are small black or green Aphids and Thrips. The leaves of the vegetable often camouflage these insects. The open structure of these vegetables allows insects to penetrate the entire head. Often, insects may be found between the innermost layers of leaves of an infested head. Therefore, each leaf must be washed and checked individually. The use of a light box for checking lettuce can be extremely convenient and helpful.

However, even if a light box is not used, it is crucial to examine both sides of each leaf against a good source of light.

CHECKING FOR INSECTS

BELOW ARE STEP BY STEP RECOMMENDATIONS for how to properly check romaine lettuce for insects:

- 1. Cut off the lettuce base and separate the leaves from one another.**
- 2. Soak leaves in a solution of cold water and soap. The proper amount of soap has been added when some bubbles are observed in the water.**
- 3. Agitate lettuce leaves in the soapy solution.**
- 4. Spread each leaf, taking care to expose all its curls and crevices. Using a heavy stream of water or sink hose, remove all foreign matter and soap from both sides of each leaf. Alternatively, a vegetable brush may be used on both sides of the leaf.**
- 5. Leaves should be checked over a light box or against strong overhead lighting to verify that the washing procedure has been effective. Pay careful attention to the folds and crevices in the leaf where insects have been known to hold tightly through several washings.**

Occasionally, worms may be found in burrows within the body of the leaf. Look for a narrow translucent burrow speckled with black dots breaking up the deep green colour of the leaf. These burrows will often trap the worm within the leaf. To rid the leaf of these worms, carefully slit the bumpy part within the burrow with a sharp knife and remove the worm. It is important to note that many of these varieties feature curly leaves with many folds in which the insects tend to hide. It is therefore recommended that they be washed and checked with particular caution.