

PASSOVER GUIDE 2023/5783

“Unleavened bread shall be eaten throughout the seven days and there shall be no leavened bread or leavening seen with you, in all of your borders.” (Exodus: 13:7)

The following guide to *kashrut* will assist you in preparing your family and home for Pesah.

Prohibited Foods:

Leavened bread, cakes, biscuits, crackers, cereal, coffees containing cereal derivatives, wheat, barley, oats, spelt, rye, and all liquids containing ingredients or flavors made from grain alcohol. Most *Ashkenazic* authorities have added the following foods (*kitniot*) to the above list: rice, corn, millet, legumes (beans and peas; however, string beans are permitted). Peanut oil is permissible as peanuts are not actually legumes. Most *Ashkenazic* authorities forbid the use of legumes in a form other than their natural state, for example, corn sweeteners, corn oil, and soy oil. *Sephardic* authorities permit the use of all of the above. All products require a *kosher l'Pesah* label. Consult Rabbi Klein for guidance in the use of these products.

Permitted Foods:

A. The following foods require no *kosher l'Pesah* label if purchased prior to Pesah: unopened packages or

containers of natural coffee without cereal additives (coffees produced by General Foods are not kosher for Passover unless marked KP); sugar, pure tea (not herbal tea), salt (not iodized), pepper, natural spices, frozen fruit juices with no additives, frozen (uncooked) vegetables (for legumes see above), milk, butter, cottage cheese, cream cheese, ripened cheeses such as cheddar (hard), muenster (semi-soft) and Camembert (soft), frozen (uncooked) fruit (with no additives), and baking soda.

B. The following foods require no *kosher l'Pesah* label if purchased before or during Pesah: Fresh fruits and vegetables (for legumes see above), eggs, fresh fish, and fresh meat.

C. The following foods require a *kosher l'Pesah* label if purchased *before* or *during* Pesah: All baked products (matzah, cakes, matzah flour, farfel, matzah meal, and any products containing matzah), canned or bottled fruit juices (these juices are often clarified with *kitniot* which are *not* listed among the ingredients; however, if one knows there are no such agents, the juice may be purchased prior to Pesah without a *kosher l'Pesah* label); canned tuna (since tuna, even when packed in water, has often been processed in vegetable broth and/or hydrolyzed protein; however, if it is known that the tuna is packed exclusively in water, without any additional ingredients or additives, it may be purchased without a *kosher l'Pesah* label); wine; vinegar; liquor; oils; dried fruits; candy; chocolate flavored milk; ice cream, yogurt and soda.

D. The following processed foods (canned, bottled or frozen), require a *kosher l'Pesah* label if purchased during Pesah: milk, butter, juices, vegetables, fruit, milk products, spices, coffee, tea, and fish, as well as all foods listed in category **C**.

Detergents: If permitted during the year, powdered and liquid detergents do not require a *kosher l'Pesah* label.

Medicine: Since *Chametz* binders are used in many pills, the following guidelines should be followed: If the medicine is required for life sustaining therapy, and no substitutes are available, you should take it. In all cases, capsules are preferable to pills.

Kashering of Utensils:

The process of *kashering* depends on how the utensils are used. According to *halakhah*, leaven can be purged from a utensil by the same process in which it was absorbed in the utensil (*ke-volakakh pol-to*). Therefore, utensils used in cooking are *kashered* by boiling, those used in broiling are *kashered* by fire and heat, and those used only for cold food are *kashered* by rinsing.

A. Earthenware (china, pottery, etc.) may not be *kashered*. However, fine translucent chinaware which has not been used for over a year may be used if scoured and cleaned in hot water.

B. Metal Utensils used in Fire (spit, broiler) must be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned and then made as hot as possible. Those used for cooking or eating (silverware, pots) must be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned and completely immersed in boiling water. Pots should have water boiled in them which will overflow the rim. Pots should not be used for a period of at least 24 hours between the cleaning and the immersion in boiling water.

Metal baking units cannot be *kashered*.

C. Ovens and Ranges: Every part that comes in contact with food must be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned.

Then, oven and range should be heated as hot as possible for a half hour. If there is a broil setting, use it. Self-cleaning ovens should be cleaned and scrubbed and then put through the self-cleaning cycle. Continuous cleaning ovens must be *kashered* in the same manner as regular ovens.

Microwave Ovens: Should be cleaned, and then a cup of water should be placed inside. Then the oven should be turned on until the water disappears. A microwave oven that has a browning element cannot be *kashered* for Pesah.

D. Glassware: Authorities disagree as to the method for *kashering* drinking utensils. One opinion requires soaking in water for three days, changing the water every 24 hours. The other opinion requires only a thorough scrubbing before Pesah or putting them through a dishwasher.

Glass Cookware: There is a difference of opinion as to whether it is to be *kashered*. After a thorough cleansing, there should be water boiled in them which will overflow the rim. The other opinion is that only a thorough cleansing is required. Glass bakeware, like metal bakeware, may not be *kashered*.

E. Dishwasher: After not using the machine for a period of 24 hours, a full cycle with detergent should be run.

F. Electrical Appliances. If the parts that come into contact with *Chametz* are removable, they can be *kashered* in the appropriate way (if metal, follow the rules for metal utensils). If the parts are not removable, the appliance cannot be *kashered*. (All exposed parts should be thoroughly cleaned.)

G. Tables, Closets, and Counters: If used with *Chametz*, they should be thoroughly cleaned and covered, and then they may be used.

H. Kitchen Sink: A metal sink can be *kashered* by thoroughly cleaning and then pouring boiling water over it. A porcelain sink should be cleaned, and a sink rack used. If, however, dishes are to be soaked in a porcelain sink, a dish basin must be used.

I. Chametz and non-Passover Utensils: Non-Passover dishes, pots and *Chametz* whose ownership has been transferred, should be separated, locked up or covered, and marked in order to prevent accidental use.

Mehirat Chametz - Selling Chametz

The Torah prohibits the ownership of *Chametz* (leaven) during Pesah. Therefore, we arrange for the sale of the *Chametz* to a non-Jew. The sale of *Chametz* must be completed this year by Wednesday April 5th. The transfer, *mehirat Chametz*, is accomplished by appointing an agent, in our case Rabbi Michael Klein, to handle the sale (see enclosed power of attorney form). It is a valid and legal transfer of ownership. At the end of the holiday, the agent arranges for the reversion of ownership after havdala. . If ownership of the *Chametz* was not transferred before the holiday, the use of this *Chametz* is prohibited until after havdala as well (*Chametz she-avaralav ha-Pesah*).

Bedikat Chametz -The Search for Chametz

This year, the search for the *Chametz*, traditionally conducted the evening before the first Seder, should be conducted on Tuesday, April 4th Using a candle, feather, and wooden spoon, we search for *Chametz* in our homes. To make sure that the search is successful, several pieces of bread are scattered throughout various parts of the house by an adult to be collected by the children during the search. Before the actual search begins, light the candle and recite the blessing:

***Baruch atah Adonai elohaynu
Melech ha'olam asher kidshanu
Bemitzvotav vetzivanu al bi'ur
Chametz.***

**Praised are you, Lord our God,
Ruler of the Universe, who has
made us holy with *mitzvot* and
instructed us to remove the leaven.**

After all of the *Chametz* has been gathered and placed into a bag, recite the following in Aramaic:

***Kol Chamira vechamiya de'ika
Virshuti dela chametay u'dela
vay'artei udela yadana lay libatayl
v'lehevay hefker ke' afra de' ara.
Bi-Ur Chametz- Burning the Leaven***

**Any leaven that may still be in the
house, which I have not seen or
have not removed, shall be as if it
does not exist, and as the dust of the earth.**

On Wednesday April 5th by 10:30 AM, take all the leaven remaining in the house together with the leaven collected during the search the previous night and burn it. When the leaven is burned, one may recite the following:

***Kol chamira vachamiya de'ika
birshuti (dechamitay u'dela
chamitay devayartay u'dela
veartay libatayl) v'lehavay hefker
ke'afra de'ara.***

**Any leaven that may still be in the
house (which I have seen and not
seen, which I have or have not
removed) shall be as if it does not
exist, and as the dust of the earth.**

On the eve before Pesah, Rabbi Israel of Rizhin explained the rules of the search after leavened crumbs in the following manner:

“This evening we search after *Chametz*, but we do not burn it before tomorrow. The search and the burning are allegories of things to come. *Galut* is the night of exile during which we allow the *Chametz* (the meaner qualities of our people) to remain in the house. But when the morning of our redemption comes, those qualities are cast into the fire of our return, and completely consumed. Then the words of Isaiah will be fulfilled: ‘He will destroy death forever. Adonai will wipe the tears away from all faces’” (Isaiah25:8)

Siyum B'chorim on Wednesday April 5th

It is a tradition for the first-born (usually the first-born of the mother) to fast on the day before Passover,

in commemoration of the episode described in the Torah when “the Lord slew all the first- born in Egypt but...spared the first-born of the Israelites.”

In most congregations, including our own, it is customary to have a *Siyum*—a celebration upon concluding the study of the tractate of the Talmud—following the morning service on the day preceding Passover. First-born who are present at this *siyum* need not observe the fast.

All first-born sons and daughters are invited to participate in the traditional *siyum* on Wednesday April 5th, following the morning service In-Person or Zoom, which **begins at 8:15 AM**. It will include a brief study session to be followed by a breakfast which will be eaten at home.

The Seders

The central event of Passover, Wednesday April 5th and Thursday April 6th, is the Seder. The complete Seder setting should include the following:

The Seder Plate

ROASTED SHANK BONE (*Z'roa*): to commemorate the Paschal sacrifice which our ancestors brought to the Temple on Pesah in ancient times.

ROASTED EGG (*Beitsa*): symbolic of life; the egg is also the symbol of our faith in the future, our hope that God's blessing of life and peace will come to all men.

BITTER HERBS (*Maror*): to symbolize the bitterness of Israel's bondage in Egypt. (Horseradish is usually used).

HAROSET: to symbolize the mortar which the Israelites used in building treasure cities for Pharaoh. The *Haroset* is a mixture of grated apples, nuts, cinnamon, and a little wine.

GREEN HERBS (*Karpas*): (Parsley, lettuce or watercress.) These greens symbolize the coming of spring and suggest the perpetual renewal of life; hence, the ever-sustaining hope of human redemption.

Symbols

THE THREE MATZOT: are placed separately in a special Matzah cover, or in the folds of an ordinary napkin. The three Matzot represent the Kohen, Levi, and Israelite.

AFIKOMEN: the middle Matzah is broken in two. One portion is wrapped in a napkin and hidden until the meal has been concluded. This portion is known as *Afikomen*, the Greek word meaning dessert. In Temple days, the meal ended with the taste of the Paschal lamb. Today, in its absence, we substitute the Matzah. The custom of hiding the *Afikomen* has developed out of a desire to keep children alert until the conclusion of the Seder.

SALT WATER: to symbolize the tears of bondage and the hardships of slavery.

FOUR CUPS OF WINE: to be drunk during the Seder service. These four cups symbolize the fourfold promise of redemption which, according to the Bible, God pledged to Israel.

THE CUP OF ELIJAH: the celebration of the redemption of Israel would be incomplete without symbolic representation of Israel's imperishable hope of the greater redemption of the future. Our tradition pictures Elijah as the herald of the great Messianic era, when all humanity will enjoy freedom and peace, and God will reign over all. Hence, a cup is kept ready on the table at the Seder, in anticipation of his coming. We open the door of our homes during the Seder, indicating our eagerness for his coming and also as a symbol of hospitality.

Order of the Seder Service

The Seder is a dramatic family lesson, the purpose of which is to teach and interpret the historical epic of the Exodus. One may discuss the theme of freedom as it applies to our day. Divide the reading sections of the *Haggadah* among individual participants. Since the central mitzvah of the Seder is to “tell our children,” attention should be given to making sure it is educationally appropriate to the children who are present. The Seder consists of separate sections. Each is a highlight in the drama of freedom.

The Seder Sections

1. The Kiddush is chanted by all.
2. Ritual washing of hands by the leader.
3. Blessing over parsley dipped in salt water.
4. Breaking middle matzah and hiding half as the *Afikomen*.
5. Reading and chanting of prayers and hymns in the *Haggadah*.
6. Ritual washing of hands by all.
7. Blessing over the matzah by all.
8. Blessing over the bitter herbs together with the matzah.
9. Eating bitter herbs together with matzah.
10. Enjoying the Pesah meal.
11. *Afikomen* is distributed to all, concluding the meal.
12. Grace after the meal.
13. *Hallel*: psalms of praise and gratitude.
14. Concluding Seder hymns.

Some Seder Suggestions

The Passover Seder is probably the most meaningful of all observances in the Jewish calendar year. It has been designed as a masterpiece of pedagogic method to interest the young, to maintain their enthusiasm, and to teach important lessons. In order to get the most out of the Seder, several things should be kept in mind.

1. Be sure that there is a *Haggadah* for each participant in the Seder.
2. The leader of the Seder should study the *Haggadah* in advance and decide upon questions and stories that he/she might want to use at various points in order to awaken interest.
3. You do not need to read every word of the *Haggadah*; it is more of a map through 14 sections mentioned above. Most important is to make sure everyone thinks about the story of the Exodus.
4. You may choose to rotate the reading among the people around the Seder table.
5. Recite all blessings in unison so that everyone feels a part of the ceremony.
6. Do not be afraid to interrupt in the middle of a reading to ask a question, to make a point, or to launch a discussion. Whenever possible, try to relate the historical passages to modern events.
7. Children or adults can be given assignments in advance.
8. Do not let the hunt for the *Afikomen* transcend the importance of the Seder itself. The “thief” should be rewarded with a prize of Jewish significance and the Seder completed.

Information in this guide is based upon the Rabbinical Assembly Pesah Guide (issued annually).