



B'nai
Tikvoh-Sholom

**PASSOVER
PREPARATION
GUIDE
5784**



BTS PASSOVER PREPARATION GUIDE 5784

(This guide contains materials excerpted from the *The Rabbinical Assembly Pesah Guide 5783* and the *Pesah Kashrut and Cleaning Guide*, published by B'nai Jeshurun, NYC; edited by Rabbi Debra S. Cantor)

From *The RA Pesah Guide 5784*:

“Because Passover involves more dietary strictures than the rest of the year, many Jews become downright compulsive about the rules of the holiday...Passover is really important: it is a central feature of what it means to live a Jewish life. Its very meaning, though, is completely undermined if the dietary rules of Passover lead people to treat each other with disrespect. So, as we explain the dietary rules of Passover below, we fervently hope that they will instead function as they are supposed to – namely, to serve as graphic reminders throughout the holiday of the critical lessons of Passover, of the need to free ourselves and the world around us of all the physical, intellectual, emotional, and communal straits that limit us and others in living a life befitting of people created in the image of God. May we all succeed in making this and every Passover the stimulus for us to fix the world in these ways every day of our lives.”

CLEANING THE HOUSE

Spring cleaning is fun (for *some* people), but it should not be confused with Pesah cleaning! When cleaning the house for Pesah, attention should be given only to places where edible hametz is used or stored: kitchen, pantry garage, etc. The purpose of cleaning and searching for hametz is: a) to avoid contact of hametz with the food we prepare and b) to prevent a case of eating hametz found on Pesah. To the cleaning and searching we add another protective measure: declaring any remaining hametz to be null and void. So, even if we miss a bit of well-hidden hametz, no prohibition will have been transgressed.

Before going through closets, removing books from shelves, and checking the pockets of all your clothing, ask yourself these questions:

1. What are the chances that I will find here a piece of hametz, clean and edible, which I will be tempted to eat upon seeing?

2. What are the chances that an edible piece of hametz will be mixed into a hot dish made for Pesah?

If you can answer these two questions with “negligible or infinitesimal,” abort the mission and turn to more important things.

KITCHEN

You only need to clean cabinets and storage areas where food is stored and which you are going to use on Pesah. If only dishes, utensils, paper goods or non-hametz foods are stored there, there is no need to clean. If food is stored there but you are not going to use it on Pesah, simply seal the cabinet and rely on the sale of hametz.

APPLIANCES

Oven: Clean thoroughly. Wash racks. Turn the oven to 450°F and leave on for 20 minutes. Some use the self-cleaning feature. Wipe out the ashes.

Stove Top: (gas, electric, induction) and broilers, grills: Clean as you would normally. Turn burners on high for 10 minutes.

Smooth, glass top electric ranges or convection stoves require kashering by pouring boiling water over the surface of the range top. First, clean the top thoroughly, and then leave it untouched for 24 hours. Then turn the coils on maximum heat until they are red hot. Shut off the elements and then carefully pour boiling water on the surface area over and around the burners. Induction stovetops are more complicated. See the *Rabbinical Assembly Pesah Guide*, p. 5 for details.

Microwave oven: Clean the turntable and the oven as you would normally. Place a microwave safe cup filled with water along with a drop of dish soap and a wooden stick or spoon (to avoid explosions) in the microwave and heat on high until the water is boiling and the microwave steams up. Make sure the water does not boil out!

Shabbat plata/hot plate/blech: Clean thoroughly and heat for 10 minutes.

Dishwasher: After the last round of hametz dishes has been washed, leave the dishwasher empty for 24 hours. Then, using soap, run it empty on the shortest cycle and clean the filter.

Refrigerator, freezer, coffee machines: Clean thoroughly.

Toaster/Toaster Oven: Since it is very difficult to remove all the crumbs/hametz from a toaster oven or toaster, these are generally put away for the week of Passover and not used.

Sink: A metal kitchen sink can be kashered by thoroughly cleaning and scrubbing the sink, especially the sink strainer (some let 24 hours pass during which only cold water is used) and then carefully pouring boiling water over all the surfaces of the sink starting with the bottom first and working up towards the top, including the lip. A porcelain sink cannot be kashered, but should be thoroughly cleaned; afterwards, Pesah dish basins and dish racks must be used in it, one each for dairy and meat.

Countertops: Many countertop surfaces (including plastic laminates, soapstone, granite, marble, glass, Corian, Caesarstone) can be kashered simply by a thorough cleaning (some then wait 24 hours) and pouring boiling water over them. Other types of counters should be thoroughly cleaned and covered for Pesach with contact or shelf paper, or aluminum foil. Tabletops should be covered with cloth or paper.

Dishes/Pots and Pans/Utensils

It is customary (and easiest) to set aside the utensils and dishes that are used during the year and replace them with either new utensils or utensils used year-to-year only for Pesah. This is clearly not possible for major appliances and may not even be possible for all dishes and utensils. Thus, there is a process for kashering many (but not all) kitchen items, making them kosher for Pesah.

To kasher pots, silverware, and utensils wholly of metal not used for baking, thoroughly clean the item with soap and water, then, following a strict 24-hour waiting period during which they are not used, immerse the items in water that is at a rolling boil. Pots and pans are immersed in a larger pot of boiling water (this may be done one section at a time.) To kasher a larger pot, fill it to the top with water, and allow the water to boil over the sides of the pot. In the case of silverware, each piece must be exposed to the water at a rolling boil. (Drop the pieces in one at a time.) After this, each utensil should be rinsed in cold water.

Metal bakeware used in a fire or in an oven must first be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned and then must be subjected to direct fire or an oven at its maximum setting (i.e. using the self-cleaning option or a blow torch.) This may ruin the pan (and burn down your kitchen!) Better to set aside a few baking pans for Pesah use only and/or use aluminum disposable pans.

Glass dishes used for eating and serving hot foods may be kashered by cleaning them and immersing them in boiling water. **Glass cookware** is treated like a metal pot for kashering (see above.) The issues regarding **glass bakeware** are complex. Some authorities allow it to be kashered and others do not. **Drinking glasses or glass dishes used only for cold foods** may be kashered simply by rinsing.

Heavy duty plastics including dishes, cutlery or serving items, providing they can withstand very hot water and do not permanently stain, may be kashered with boiling water. **Ceramic dishes (earthenware, stoneware, pottery, etc.) cannot be kashered.** **Fine china**, if it has not been used for at least a year, may be used for Passover after it is washed, and may be deemed either meat or dairy.

FOOD FOR PASSOVER

The Torah prohibits the ownership of hametz: flour, food or drink made from the prohibited species of leavened grain (wheat, oats, barley, rye or spelt) during Pesah. Prohibited foods include the following: biscuits; cakes; coffees containing cereal derivatives; crackers; leavened bread; pasta. Flavorings in foods are often derived from alcohol produced from one of these grains, which would render that food hametz.

1) Food requiring *no* Kosher for Passover (KLP) certification no matter when purchased (they are certainly hametz-free): baking soda; pure bicarbonate of soda, without additives; eggs; fresh fruits and vegetables (including pre-washed bagged); fresh or frozen kosher meat (other than chopped meat); Nestea (regular and decaffeinated); pure tea leaves; unflavored tea bags; unflavored regular coffee; olive oils (and other pure oils); whole or gutted fresh kosher fish; whole or half pecans (not pieces); whole

(unground) spices and nuts; raisins; kosher wine; plain butter, either salted or unsalted; unflavored seltzer water; sparkling water (without additives); unshelled nuts; pure white sugar; (non-iodized) salt; dried prunes without potassium sorbate

2) The following list of foods without KLP designation may be purchased *before* Passover The reason for this is that these products present the consumer with a slightly lesser level of certainty (unlike category 1, for which there is a certainty) as to whether an unintentional trace amount of hametz may have found its way into the product:

All pure fruit juices; frozen fileted or whole fish; frozen fruit (no additives); plain cheeses (without added flavor morsels); quinoa (with nothing mixed in, ideally marked gluten-free); wild rice (which is actually a grass); white milk; plain frozen vegetables (need to be checked for possible hametz before cooking); kosher chopped meat plain; non-flavored almond milk, rice milk, soy milk, cashew milk; non-flavored cream cheese with ingredients of milk and cream, salt, stabilizers (xanthan and/or carob bean and/or guar gums); plain yogurt with milk and bacteria, only (*Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermopiles*); kosher canned tuna with just tuna, water or oil, salt, and pyrophosphates; 100% maple syrup; 100% agave; ground salt and pepper; pure ground spices; plain (non-flavored) decaf coffee; pure honey; dried fruit; club soda.

3) Requires “Kosher for Passover label” at any time: All baked goods; matzah; any product containing matzah, such as farfel, matzah flour, cake flour, or matzah meal; Pesah cakes; all frozen processed foods; candy; chocolate milk; herbal tea; decaf coffee; ice cream; liquor; flavored sodas; vinegar; margarine.

Another way to potentially find acceptable foods without a specific “Kosher for Passover” designation during pre-Passover shopping, when the situation demands, is to look for certified Gluten Free (and oat free) products

4) Kitniyot – legumes, corn, beans, peas, rice and other foods eaten by Sephardic and most Middle Eastern Jews on Pesah. In 2015, the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the Conservative Movement formally permitted Ashkenazim to consume kitniyot on Pesah. It’s up to you!

Fresh Kitniyot: corn on the cob and fresh beans (like green beans or lima beans in their pods) may be purchased before and during Passover (that is, treated like any other fresh vegetable.) While soybeans (such as edamame) may be eaten on Passover, processed soybeans, including tofu in any form, may not.

Dried Kitniyot (legumes, rice, and corn) may be purchased bagged or in boxes, and then sifted or sorted before or on Passover. These should not be purchased in bulk from bins because of the concern that the bin might previously have been used for hametz, and a few grains of hametz might be mixed in. In any case one should inspect these to the extent possible before Passover and discard any pieces of hametz.

Frozen, raw Kitniyot (corn, edamame/soybeans, etc.): One may purchase bags of frozen non-KLP kitniyot before Passover.

NON-FOOD ITEMS - Cleaning Supplies: KLP certification is needed only for edible products. That said, one should use new dishwashing sponges for Pesah. Paper, aluminum foil and plastic products do not need Kashrut supervision. To clarify: all paper goods, foil, Styrofoam and plastic disposables are kosher for Pesah.

A note on medications: All medications that are needed for illnesses and medical conditions that involve possible life-threatening situations are permitted.

Medications that do not involve life-threatening situations are divided into two categories. Those medications, in particular pills, which are known remedies in the medical community and are made to be swallowed whole, are permitted, since they are to be considered like a “burnt item” that has lost its relationship to its possible non-kosher origin. Although swallowed, they are considered to be neither food nor (edible) hametz.

However, medications for illnesses or medical conditions that do not involve a life-threatening situation (including vitamins and supplements) that have been formulated to be edible or semi-pleasant to drink can be problematic. This includes soft gel caps which often contain porcine gelatin and liquid medicines that often contain glycerine and other additives (which may be made from animals.) It is recommended that all such over-the-counter items be purchased with Kosher certification before Pesah. If this is not possible, then it is preferable to purchase unflavored and hard capsules, also prior to Pesah. Note that some supplements, such as Benefiber, are made of actual hametz.

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