SHABBAT: FOOD PREPARATION

SHABBAT: CHECKING FOR BUGS

Checking Product for Bugs on Shabbat

You may check produce for bugs on *Shabbat* or *Jewish festivals* but:

- On *Shabbat*, you may not remove any bugs.

  REASON You may not move it with your hand due to the bug's being *muktza* and you may not rinse it off on *Shabbat* due to *boreir*.

- On a *Jewish festival*, you may remove the bug but not by hand.

  EXAMPLE You may rinse a bug off produce on a Jewish festival.

  NOTE You may not kill bugs on *Shabbat* or *Jewish festivals*. To do something that is certain to kill the bug is forbidden; if might not kill the bug, it is OK.

NOTE You may remove the bug along with part of the produce even on *Shabbat*.

SHABBAT: COOKING

INTRODUCTION TO SHABBAT: COOKING

Introduction to Shabbat: Cooking

Bishul B'*Shabbat*/Cooking on *Shabbat*

The *Torah* forbids cooking on *Shabbat*. "Cooking" means making food edible by heating it to above 120° F (49° C).
Cooking includes:

- You may not make a soft food hard (such as cooking an egg).
- You may not make a hard food soft (such as cooking meat).
- You may not, in any manner, heat (to 120° F or above) liquids that you will drink or foods with liquids—such as sauces and gravies--whether fully cooked or not.

Timing of Cooking

According to the *Torah*, you may eat food on *Shabbat* that had been placed on the heat source Friday afternoon but was not completely cooked by sunset.

REASON No action is being taken and the cooking will be completed by itself.

Kli Rishon and *Kli Sheini*

According to *Torah* law, food is only considered to be cooked if it has been directly heated from the heat source, such as a kettle on a fire or a pot on a flame (even if that utensil has been removed from its heat source). This is called a *kli rishon*.
Once you pour water from a *kli rishon* into a glass, the glass is a *kli sheni*. Some foods, such as an egg or tea, get cooked in a *kli sheni* (*kalei bishul*--easily cooked). These foods are forbidden by *Torah* law to be put into a hot *kli sheni* on *Shabbat*.

EXCEPTION *Halacha* allows spices and water to be "cooked" in a *kli sheni*.

NOTE If the water is less than 120° F, nothing gets *halachically* cooked in any *kli*, even in a *kli rishon*.

Reheating/Replacing to Heat Source

1. **Do Not Reheat Food Unless It Is *Halachically* Dry.**

This includes heating on a hotplate, stove, or oven and applies to even fully cooked food. *Halachically* dry means the food is solid at either the beginning or the end of the cooking, or both. To determine whether a food is liquid (and therefore may not be reheated on *Shabbat*), shake the container. If the food does not move around, it is considered to be solid. (For when solid food may be reheated, please see *Shabbat*: Reheating.)

2. **To Replace Heated Food onto/into Its Heat Source (*hachzara*):**

- You must have taken it off with the intention of replacing it, and
- You may not put the utensil down onto a surface; you must continue to hold the food (or the utensil) in your hand.
- The heat source must be covered.

REASON *Chazal* were concerned that someone might see you put food on the heat, mistake it for actual cooking, and erroneously think that cooking is permitted on *Shabbat*.

NOTE You may not replace incompletely cooked food to a heat source.

REASON To do so would facilitate the cooking.

3. **Do Not Put Food on a Heat Source that has Adjustable Controls.**

This applies even to fully cooked food.

REASON You might adjust the heat and thereby violate a *Torah* law due to *shehiya* (stoking the fire or turning up the heat).

NOTE *Shehiya* is simple to avoid; just cover the flame (or electric heating element) and any temperature controls before *Shabbat*, as when using a *blech* (a metal sheet that covers the flames and controls). Then, on *Shabbat*, you may put fully cooked solid (but not liquid) food on top of other food (or utensils containing food) that were already on a *blech* from before sunset on Friday.

REASON Doing so does not look like you are cooking and the *blech* prevents you from adjusting the heat.

4. **Do Not Insulate Food to which Heat Is Added.**

You may not add insulation (which will help keep in the heat) during *Shabbat* to foods that are on a heat source, even to fully cooked foods, if they are "wet." By *rabbinic* law, you may not apply heat to an insulated utensil—or apply any insulation that adds heat--even before *Shabbat* began and let it remain that way during *Shabbat*--even if the food was completely cooked before sunset on Friday.

NOTE Regarding food on a heat source, you may add insulation if there is at least one uncovered area at least the size of a quarter. Adding insulation on *Shabbat* is only a problem if the insulation completely surrounds the food or utensil on all surfaces and the top.

SHABBAT: HEATING LIQUIDS

Heating Liquids on Shabbat

You may not heat liquids by any method on *Shabbat*. You may put a hot water urn on a timer from before *Shabbat*, but you may not add any water to the urn once *Shabbat* has begun.

Heating Already Cooked Coffee or Tea on Shabbat

You may not brew coffee or steep tea on *Shabbat*. You may use:

- Instant coffee;

- Powdered, dried tea; or
- Tea that has already been steeped.

However, you may not add them directly to the hot water! You must:

- Pour or dispense the hot water into an intermediate utensil, and then
- Put the water and brewed or instant coffee or tea into that utensil.

SHABBAT: FOOD READY BY SUNSET

Blech and Food Fully or Incompletely Cooked by Sunset

When using a *blech* (sheet of metal to cover fire source and controls), it is customary for food to be fully cooked (edible) before sunset (or before candle lighting for a woman) to avoid the temptation to stir the food or increase the heat to help the food cook more quickly.

Replacing Lid and Food Incompletely Cooked by Sunset

For food that is not fully cooked, you may not remove and replace the lid (such as when checking to see if the food is cooked).

REASON Replacing the lid helps cook the food (the food's being fully cooked before *Shabbat* avoids this problem).

When using a crockpot or slow cooker with a glass lid, however, the food does not need to be fully cooked.

REASON You can see how well cooked the food is through the lid.

SHABBAT: REHEATING

SHABBAT: WHAT TO REHEAT

Shabbat: Reheat Solid Food but Not Liquid

You may reheat dry (not wet; not even damp), solid, cooked food, but not liquid food on *Shabbat*.

SHABBAT: HOW TO REHEAT

Shabbat: How To Reheat

How To Reheat on Hotplate or *Blech*: Before *Shabbat* Begins

1. Cover any cooking controls (knobs, switches, etc.) so no one adjusts them during *Shabbat*.
2. Cover the heat source with a "*blech*" (sheet of metal). This will help prevent *Torah* law violations by serving as a reminder not to adjust the heat. NOTE Some *blechs* also block the temperature controls, to help with the previous step.

   NOTE To use a hotplate, remove the control knob before *Shabbat*.
3. Turn on the source of heat (hotplate, burner under the *blech*...).
4. Put onto the hotplate or *blech* at least one utensil containing food or water.

How To Reheat on Hotplate or *Blech*: After *Shabbat* Begins

1. Start with food that is fully cooked and solid (no liquids may be heated on *Shabbat*!). NOTE "Solid" food includes cooked meat with congealed jelly or cooked fish with jelly.
2. Place the fully cooked dry food on top of the food- or water-containing utensil that had been placed on the heating appliance before *Shabbat* began. Remember not to put the fully cooked food directly onto the hotplate, *blech*, or other heat source after *Shabbat* begins (even if there is a separation between the heat

source and food).

NOTE After sunset on Friday, you may not put any incompletely cooked food (whether hot or cold) onto the heated part of the heating appliance or move it from a cooler part of the *blech* to a hotter part.

NOTE At some time during *Shabbat*, someone must eat or drink from the food- or water-containing utensil that had been on the *blech* since before *Shabbat* began.

Sabbath-Mode Ovens

Sabbath-mode ovens have a switch that:

- Keeps the light on or off (according to the way you have set it), regardless of whether the oven door is open or closed,
- Makes a forced delay in the heating elements' turning on after the door is opened so that the heating element never goes on while the door is open, and
- Shuts off the timer and digital display.

Sabbath-mode ovens do not permit any normally forbidden cooking-related actions on *Shabbat*. You may not ever cook food on *Shabbat*, even in such an oven (or any other way)!

Reheating on Hotplate with Timer

Once *Shabbat* begins, you may not put food on a hotplate with a timer that turns on the hotplate during *Shabbat*.

Reheating in Microwave Oven with Timer

On *Shabbat*, you may not put food in a microwave oven and have a timer turn it on, even if no light will be lit. However, you may put the food into the microwave oven BEFORE sunset on *Shabbat* and have the timer turn on the microwave oven on *Shabbat*.

NOTE You must cover the microwave controls from before *Shabbat*.

Reheating in Hot, Turned-Off Oven

Dry food that has been fully cooked before *Shabbat* may be heated in an oven if the oven is off even if the oven is hot (120° F--49° C--or more).

NOTE If the oven is on, you may not heat the food.

Reheating Using a Warming Tray

On *Shabbat*, you may not heat food, whether liquid or solid, on a warming tray that is 120° F--49° C--or more. But if the tray is less than 120° F, it may be permissible. Ask a *rabbi*, since there may be other problems due to switching on or off the heating element, lights, etc.

Reheating by Covering (Hatmana)

Hatmana is forbidden on *Shabbat* and applies to an item or structure that retains heat.

- You may not, during *Shabbat*, place a food container in an item or structure, such as a blanket, that retaines heat. You may do so if the food container was already wrapped before *Shabbat*.
- You may not add insulation (which will help keep in the heat) even before (and certainly not during) *Shabbat* to foods that are on a heat source, even to fully cooked foods, whether the foods are wet or dry.
- You may not apply heat to an insulated utensil--or apply any insulation that adds heat--even before *Shabbat* began and let it remain that way during *Shabbat*--even if the food was completely cooked before sunset on Friday.

SITUATION You wrap a pot in blankets before *Shabbat*, serve the food on *Shabbat*, and return it to a non-heat source.

WHAT TO DO You may rewrap it after eating to retain heat for later.

Heating Frozen Food

Frozen food is considered “dry” (unless it has ice crystals or frost on the outside) and, unlike liquids, may be heated (under some conditions) on *Shabbat*. See How To Reheat on Hotplate or *Blech*.

SHABBAT: MIXING HOT AND RAW FOODS

Shabbat: Hot Liquids on Raw Foods

You may not pour a hot liquid (120°F--49°C - or more) onto raw vegetables, uncooked salt, or other raw foods on *Shabbat*. If a *kli shishi* is used, ask a *rabbi* what to do, as this is controversial.

Shabbat: Hot Soup and Cheese

You may not put cheese in hot (120° F--49° C—or more) water or soup on *Shabbat*.

REASON This is cooking/*bishul*. Even though the *milk* was probably pasteurized, there are other ingredients (such as rennet) that have not been cooked.

Shabbat: Mixing Hot and Pickled Foods

Pickles, sauerkraut, olives, and other pickled foods are considered raw and may not be put into hot food on *Shabbat*.

NOTE Pickled and salted foods are sometimes considered to be cooked regarding some *halachot*, but not in this case of putting them into hot food (which will actually cook them).

SHABBAT: SERVING HOT FOOD

Shabbat and Ladling Soup

You may ladle soup from a pot on a turned-off burner without having to remove the pot from the burner.

Returning Hot Soup or Cholent to Heat Source

To serve hot soup, *cholent*, etc., and then return the food to the hotplate, *blech*, or other covered heat source:

- You may pick up the pot or utensil containing the food from the hotplate, *blech*, or other covered heat source, but you must not put it down, even to partially rest on a table or other surface;
- You must intend to return the utensil and food to the hotplate, *blech*, or other covered heat source; and
- You may not remove/serve food from the utensil while it is still on the hotplate, *blech*, or other covered heat source.

SHABBAT: FOOD HEATED BY NON-JEW

Conditions for a Non-Jew To Put Food into Oven for a Jew

A non-Jew may put food in an oven for a Jew on *Shabbat* if:

- Oven controls are covered,
- Food is fully cooked, and
- Food is non-liquid.

If a Non-Jew Heats Food or Water for Self

If a non-Jew heats food or water on *Shabbat* for himself or for other non-Jews, a Jew may use the water and eat the food.

SHABBAT: FOOD HEATED BY SOLAR HEAT

Shabbat: Cooking by Solar Heat

You may cook or reheat food on *Shabbat* using solar heat, but only if the sun's rays directly cook the food. Practically, this can probably only be done by using a magnifying glass.

NOTE You may even cook or reheat liquids this way on *Shabbat*.

NOTE You may not cook the food by having the sun's rays first heat a surface—such as heating a black backing that will absorb heat--and then transfer it to the food.

SHABBAT: FOOD IN TURNED-ON OVEN

Shabbat: Food in Turned-On Oven

SITUATION Food is in a turned-on oven.

WHAT TO DO Even if the heating element is not on at that moment, once you have opened the door, you must remove any food from the oven. You may not leave food in there to be eaten later.

SHABBAT: DISHES

Shabbat and Sponging

You may not wash dishes with a:

- Sponge (even if it is on a handle),
- Dish rag, or
- Scrubbing pad (a pad that holds water and, when used, the water gets squeezed out).

Wide mesh or other items that do not normally hold water may be used.

SHABBAT: FREEZING

Shabbat and Making Ice Cubes

You may fill an ice cube tray on *Shabbat* if you intend to use the ice cubes during *Shabbat*.

SHABBAT: GRINDING (TOCHEIN)

Grinding on Shabbat: How Finely You May Grind

You may not grind, grate, or even finely chop or dice food on *Shabbat*. You may not use a garlic press on *Shabbat*.

The minimum size before violating the *melacha* of *tochein* varies by the type of food. The resulting pieces must be somewhat larger than the size you would normally use in order to be permitted.

Grinding on Shabbat: Avocadoes

You may crush or squash an avocado (such as when making guacamole) on *Shabbat*, but ONLY:

- Using a *shinu'i* (such as a spoon, knife, or spatula),
- Without using a specialized tool (such as a grinder, potato masher, or fork),
- If you eat it immediately after preparing it, and
- If you leave some pieces larger than you normally would.

NOTE If you intend for all pieces to be somewhat larger than usual but some end up small, it is OK.

Grinding on Shabbat: Eggs

You may pulverize a cooked egg (such as a hard-boiled egg) on *Shabbat* but:

- You may not use a specialized utensil (you may use a fork), and
- You must eat it immediately.

NOTE No *shinu'i* is needed.

SHABBAT: KNEADING (LASH)

Shabbat: Mixing Powders with Liquid

You may mix powdered food substances with liquids on *Shabbat* if:

- The resulting mixture will be fluid (you can pour it in a smooth and steady stream), AND
- You put whatever is normally added second into the container first and then add the component that is normally added first to the other substance, AND
- You mix it with your finger, not with a utensil.

NOTE You may not mix a powdered food substance with a liquid on *Shabbat* if it will result in a paste (such as wasabi).

Shabbat: Mixing Soft Foods

Mixing tuna and mayonnaise and or other soft or mushy foods is permitted on *Shabbat*; it does not constitute the *melacha* of kneading/*lash*.

SHABBAT: MUKTZA IN THE KITCHEN

Shabbat: Muktza: Moving a Hotplate

You may move a hotplate on *Shabbat* but ONLY if you need the space where it is located. You do not need to use an unusual method (*shinu'i*).

NOTE You may not unplug an operating hotplate. If the hotplate will not go on again, you may unplug it--but only in a non-standard manner.

Shabbat: Muktza: Moving an Empty Pot

Pots become *muktza* on *Shabbat* once the food in them is all gone. See Introduction: *Shabbat*: *Muktza*.

SHABBAT: OPENING/SEALING/TEARING

SHABBAT: BOTTLES

Opening Plastic Bottles on Shabbat

You may completely open plastic bottle caps on plastic bottles on *Shabbat* (even if doing so will leave a plastic ring on the bottle), as long as it is theoretically possible to dispense the liquid without completely separating the cap from the bottle.

REASON Since liquid can be poured with the cap still attached, the sealed bottle does not become a “new utensil”—a *Shabbat* violation.

However, if you will destroy letters that are printed on the cap, you may not open the bottle.

Opening Metal Bottle Caps on Shabbat

You may not open metal bottle caps on *Shabbat* if doing so will leave behind a metal ring. You may break the ring or open the bottle (and close it again, if desired) before *Shabbat*.

NOTE If you need the contents for *Shabbat* (such as if it is a bottle of wine), you may ask a non-Jew to open it for you. But if the wine is not cooked/*mevushal*, the wine will become non-*kosher* once opened

and handled by a non-Jew.

SHABBAT: TWIST-TIES

Shabbat: Non-Permanent Twist-Ties

You may twist or untwist twist ties on *Shabbat*, but only if you intend them to be a non-permanent seal. If you will (at any time in the future—even long after *Shabbat* is over) remove the twist-tie, it is considered non-permanent.

SHABBAT: TEARING

Shabbat: Tearing Paper and Plastic Wrap

You may tear paper, plastic, foil, or other wrappers around food in order to eat that food on *Shabbat*.

You may tear plastic and foil (but not paper) around napkins, plasticware, etc., that you need on *Shabbat*.

But you may not:

- Do so if you will inevitably tear through any words or pictures on the package.
- Use scissors.

Except for wrappers for food or eating utensils, do not tear paper, foil, toilet paper, parchment paper, plastic wrap, paper towels, etc., on *Shabbat*.

NOTE If there is a perforation, that makes the tearing worse.

NOTE If you do not have any torn toilet paper, tear it is an unusual way:

EXAMPLES

- Tear using the back of your hand.
- Spread the toilet paper across your knees and then spread your knees apart.

SHABBAT: SALTING

Shabbat and Salting Food

You may not salt certain foods, whether cooked or raw, on *Shabbat* if the:

- Salt will materially (not just due to the flavor of the salt) change the flavor of the food, as in salting cut or chopped onions or salting tomatoes.

  NOTE You may dip the tomato or other food into salt using your hand as you are eating it.

- Foods have a shell; e.g., corn kernels (on or off of the cob), beans, peas.
- Salt has not been heated previously (e.g., during the processing of the salt) and the food you are salting is hot (over 120° F, or 49° C).

Leniency If the food has oil in it, you may add salt even if the food contains onions or has a shell. Even a thin layer of oil will exempt the salt.

NOTE You may pour salt into a liquid or a liquid onto salt, but you may not make a saturated salt solution (brine) on *Shabbat*.

SHABBAT: SELECTING/BOREIR

Introduction to Shabbat and Selecting/Boreir

Selecting Good from Bad and Bad from Good

***Boreir* Principle #1**: You may eat anything in the manner in which it is normally eaten.

EXAMPLE Peeling an orange.

***Boreir* Principle #2**: You may not use a specialized tool.

***Boreir* Principle #3**: You may not remove "bad" from "good."

WHAT TO DO Take good (edible or desired food) from the undesired (bad) components.

NOTE You may do this only when you are ready to eat it or when you are preparing the food to be eaten soon afterward.

NOTE *Boreir* is a complicated area of *halacha*. Because issues of *boreir* are almost always from the *Torah* (*d'oraita*, not *d'rabanan)*, we are stringent in applying restrictions concerning *boreir*. Consult a *rabbi* for specific questions.

Selecting Undesired from Desired Food

On *Shabbat*, you may not usually separate totally undesired from totally desired food in a standard way, even without a specialized tool.

Undesired Mixed with Desired Food

However, you may separate undesired elements from desired food—even with a specialized tool--if the undesired food is mixed with some desired food (any amount that you would use or eat is enough). This is called "taking some good with the bad."

SITUATION You want to remove fat on gravy.

WHAT TO DO You may remove fat along with some gravy.

REASON *Boreir* is separating bad from good. Here, the junction area is still intact, so separating fat from gravy is like separating good from good (gravy from gravy, not fat from gravy).

Removing Easily Removable Food in a Non-Standard Way

SITUATION The undesired food is easily distinguishable and easily removable from the desired food.

WHAT TO DO You may separate totally undesired food elements from desired food in a non-standard way--using only your hand, fingers, or implement that is not designed for separation. That is, you may not use a utensil that is designed to separate food from other foods, substances, or parts of foods, such as a slotted spoon, peeler, or sieve. But you may pick a lemon seed off a serving of fish, for example.

NOTE As on *Jewish festivals*, an action needed to eat a food normally (*derech achila*) does not violate the prohibition of *boreir* on *Shabbat*. So you may peel a food that is normally separated from its peel or shell in order to be eaten, as long as you do not use a specialized instrument to do so. For example, on *Shabbat*, you may do the following by hand without a *shinu'i*:

- Peel an orange
- Remove the shell of a hard-boiled egg
- Separate peanuts from their shells.

NOTE If peanut shells are then put into a container that also has unshelled peanuts, you may not remove the

empty shells from that mixture!

SITUATION You want remove dirt from a carrot's surface on a *Shabbat*.

WHAT TO DO You may remove the dirt with an altered method (*shinu'i*), such as scraping the peel with a knife (which is a tool not specialized for separating food)-- but not by using a peeler.

REASON The normal way to eat the carrot is to peel it.

Selecting Desired from Undesired Food

While eating food (and some time before--within the amount of time you would normally need to prepare a meal), you may select desired food from undesired (or inedible) substances by hand or non-specialized tool. You may not use a specialized implement.

EXAMPLE You may remove fish from its skeleton even before eating it, but you may not remove the skeleton from the fish (because you have removed bad from good).

NOTE Once *Shabbat* has begun:

- You may remove fish bones from fish while you are eating the fish, but not before you are eating the fish.
- You may cut open a melon such as a cantaloupe and shake the seeds out (this is because some of the seeds remain), or take a bite of the melon and spit out the seeds. **But you may not remove any remaining seeds using your hand or an implement.**

EXCEPTION If you take undesired elements along with the desired food, it is not considered to be separating: you may use a specialized tool and it does not have to be eaten soon (within the normal food-preparation time).

Shabbat: Removing Seeds in Foods

***Shabbat*: Easy to Remove**

If each unwanted element is easy to identify and remove, there is no issue of *boreir*. Consult a *rabbi* regarding what is halachically considered easy to remove.

***Shabbat*: Removing Cantaloupe Seeds**

You may remove cantaloupe seeds only by shaking, not by scooping, them out.

***Shabbat*: Removing Lemon Seeds**

You generally may not remove lemon seeds (pits) from food. However, if you are squeezing a lemon and some pits get partly squeezed out, you may:

- Shake the lemon in order to shake off the pits, or
- Use your hand to remove the pits from the surface of the lemon.

Once the pits fall onto food, you may use your hand to push the seeds to the side of the plate. But you may not use any instrument to do so, not even a non-specialized instrument such as a spoon.

NOTE If there are only one or two seeds and they are easily differentiated from the food, you may remove them by any means, except by using an instrument that is intended to separate food from non-food or from undesired food, such as a sieve, strainer, or slotted spoon.

Shabbat: Separating Good Food from Bad in Your Mouth

Boreir does not apply to separating anything inside of your mouth: you may separate anything that way, even if you remove the bad from the good.

Shabbat: Salt Shaker with Rice

On *Shabbat* you may not, due to *boreir*, use a salt shaker into which rice has been added (in order to keep the salt dry).

Shabbat: Washing-Draining Food

You may wash or rinse food on *Shabbat* and pour off the water afterwards if there is no tangible dirt. (This is not *boreir*.)
If the food does have tangible or visible dirt, you may not wash or rinse the food.

You may wash and drain olives and other canned fruits and vegetables on *Shabbat.*

Shabbat: Dropping Unwanted Food

When you have food mixed with non-desired substances, you may remove the non-desired ones by picking up the entire mixture and dropping away the non-desired elements.

Shabbat: Fat from Gravy

You may skim fat from gravy as long as you take some gravy, too, with your spoon. Or, you may pour the gravy with the fat into a container and then pour off fat, including a little gravy, from the top.

SHABBAT: SQUEEZING (DASH)

Shabbat: Squeezing Fruit

On *Shabbat*, you may squeeze a lemon (or other fruit) onto solid food that you will eat right away but not into a container or into a liquid.

Shabbat: Squeezing Brine from Tuna

You may squeeze brine from canned tuna on *Shabbat* but only if you will eat the tuna soon afterward (at your next meal or snack).

Shabbat: Squeezing Liquid from Cooked Vegetables

You may squeeze liquid from cooked vegetables on *Shabbat* but only if you:

- Throw out the liquid, and leave some liquid together with the food,
- Eat the vegetables soon afterward (at your next meal or snack).

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