SUKKA: SCHACH

Sukka: Schach: Timing

Sukka: Schach: Timing: Within 30 Days

You must put <u>schach</u> on your <u>sukka</u> within 30 days of <u>Sukkat</u>. If you are using a porch that has slats year round as a roof for your <u>sukka</u>, you must lift up and put back the slats within 30 days of <u>Sukkat</u>.

Sukka: Schach: Materials

Non-Kli

You may not use a kli for sukka schach.

A kli is any item created with the intention of being used as a tool or utensil to make an activity easier.

EXAMPLES

- Bamboo if it had been used for any other purpose.
- · Wooden ladder.
- · Walking stick.

Non-Edible

A <u>sukka</u>'s covering (<u>schach</u>) must consist of non-edible branches, leaves, or other materials of plant origin such as boards. You may use wooden boards (such as 2" x 4"s) to hold up <u>schach</u>, even though lumber is intended to be used for construction.

Size

Boards or tree trunks—whether used as *schach* or used to hold up *schach*--must be not more than 15 inches (38 cm) wide. A board--whether used as *schach* or used to hold up *schach*--more than 15 inches wide invalidates the area below it and you would have to sit under *kosher schach* in order to fulfill the *mitzva*. In the case of a board more than 15 inches wide: If the *sukka* has only three walls, the board may invalidate the *sukka*. Consult a *rabbi*.

Fresh

You may not use branches whose leaves will dry up in less than 8 days, intending to replace the branches with fresh ones during *chol ha'moed*; the custom is to use evergreen leaves only if you want to use leaves as *schach*.

Fasteners

Schach on the <u>sukka</u> must stay by itself without fasteners or connectors, even in a place with normally high wind. Any <u>man</u>-made fasteners--such as plastic, metal, or even hemp cord or rope-will invalidate the <u>schach</u>. If the <u>schach</u> will stay without them, then you may use fasteners or connectors as reinforcements.

Year-Round Structures

You may use a pergola, gazebo, or other type of awning frame or roof structure that exists year-round for a *sukka* as long as the other conditions (size, slope, materials, timing, etc.) are *kosher*. You must first remove any permanent roof coverings before putting on the *schach*.

NOTE The slope of the *sukka* roof must be less than 45 degrees from horizontal.

Sukka: Schach: Gap

Sukka: Schach: Gap: What Invalidates

A gap in <u>schach</u> of 10.5 inches by 10.5 inches or larger will not invalidate the entire <u>sukka</u>, but you may not sit under that part of the <u>sukka</u> when eating or saying the blessing <u>leisheiv ba'sukka</u>. A gap of more than 14 inches wide may invalidate the <u>sukka</u>.

Sukka: Schach: Normal Wind (Ru'ach Metzuya)

 $\underline{Ru'ach\ metzuya}$ is defined as a normal wind for each location and season (this is relevant for \underline{schach} on \underline{Sukkot}).

© Copyright 2025 Richard B. Aiken | www.practicalhalacha.com