

## Preparing for Pessah

*A detailed guide to Koshering your kitchen for Pessah*

*Based on article by Kollel Toronro, reviewed by Rav Mordechai Lebhav*

### THE OVEN

#### *Self-Cleaning Ovens*

1) Before using the self-clean cycle, the door, window and the gasket should be cleaned thoroughly because the self-clean cycle does not clean these areas.

2) Turn on the self-clean cycle for at least 2 hours for the oven to be cleaned and Koshered simultaneously. You can leave the racks inside during the cleaning cycle although they may get discolored.

3) If you do not want them to get discolored or the manufacturer does not allow the cleaning cycle to work with the racks inside, you should clean the racks well (see above). After cleaning you should put them in the oven at the highest setting for 1½ hours.

4) It is important to remember to either: cover the door with aluminum foil or not place anything on the door during Pessah. It is preferable to cover the door with aluminum foil.

#### *Conventional Oven Gas/Electric*

1) You should clean the oven thoroughly. It may be necessary to use an oven cleaner to remove baked-on grease. Be sure to check hidden areas, including corners, door edges, and the grooves of the rack shelves. If after using a caustic oven cleaner (such

as Easy Off) some stubborn spots remain you should apply it again. If they still remain you may disregard them.

2) Once the oven and racks have been cleaned you may should put the oven on to the highest setting for 1½ hours and after that on broil for ½ hour.

3) It is preferable to cover the racks with aluminum foil so as not to place pots/pans directly on the racks.

#### *Continuous Cleaning Oven*

1) You cannot assume an oven is a “continuously clean” oven because the manufacturer claims it to be so; you have to check and make sure it is clean. Since you cannot use a caustic cleaner on this oven (such as Easy Off) you have to use a non-caustic, non-abrasive cleaner.

2) You should clean it thoroughly. If dirt remains after cleaning you should turn the oven on to 450 F for an hour for the continuous cleaning to work. If the spots remain you should leave it on for a further few hours. If they still remain you should try to remove them with an oven cleaner or steel wool. Spots that are black and crumble when scraped can be disregarded.

Sponsor  
the Halacha  
Weekly!

3) Be sure to check hidden areas, including corners, door edges, and the grooves of the rack shelves.

4) Once the oven and racks have been cleaned you may Kosher them with "Libun Kal". To do this you should put the oven on to the highest setting for 1½ hours and after that on broil for ½ hour.

5) It is preferable to cover the racks with aluminum foil so not to place pots/pans directly on the racks.

### ***Microwave Ovens***

It is preferable not to Kosher a Microwave oven for Pessah. If it is necessary to use on Pessah it should be cleaned in the following way.

1) You should clean it thoroughly and not use it for Hametz for 24 hrs.

2) Place a bowl with a large quantity of water and turn the Microwave on until the entire oven is full of steam.

3) Cover the bottom of the oven where the food is placed well, with either plastic or paper (preferably plastic).

4) When using it on Pessah you should make sure everything is completely wrapped.

### ***Electric Stove***

1) The burners, chrome rings, drip pans should be cleaned thoroughly. If you are putting the oven on the self clean cycle you can put the drip pans inside the oven to be cleaned and Koshered (you should check with the manufacturer, if they will get damaged on the self-clean cycle).

2) You should turn the burners on to highest heat setting until they are glowing hot (usually takes a few minutes). A wide pot full of water should be placed on the burners to spread the heat to the chrome rings.

3) The burners should be left on for 10 minutes.

4) The entire surface of the stovetop should be covered including the chrome rings and drip pans. It should be covered with heavy duty aluminum foil (preferably with a double layer of foil). Alternatively, a Pessah Blech can be used with only the elements exposed. Important to remember; not to cover over the oven vent to allow the heat to escape.

### ***Stove Tops Gas Stove***

1) The cast iron or metal grates (on which the pots rest) and the burners should be cleaned thoroughly. If you are putting the oven on the self clean cycle you can put the grates and burners inside the oven to be cleaned and Koshered (you should check with the manufacturer, if they will get damaged on the self clean cycle).

2) The entire surface of the stovetop should be covered with heavy duty aluminum foil (preferably with a double layer of foil) or a Pessah Blech should be used with only the burners exposed. Important to remember; not to cover over the oven vent in order to allow the heat to escape.

### ***Glass or Ceramic Stovetop***

1) The stove top should be cleaned thoroughly.

2) You should turn the burners on to highest heat setting until they are glowing hot (usually takes a few minutes). The burners should be left on for 45 minutes.

3) The area between the burners that does not get hot and cannot be Koshered (there is a risk of cracking the glass/ceramic) should be covered with heavy duty aluminum foil (preferably a double layer). Remember; not to cover the burners because it will cause the glass to crack.

4) You should cover the backsplash etc. see above.



### ***Induction Stove Top***

- 1) The stove top should be cleaned thoroughly.
- 2) The stove top can be Koshered by substantially wetting the top and then placing a steel pot with water over it and letting it boil. The pot will heat up and transfer heat to the glass top also. You can also place a water-full pot and let it boil over and spill on the top. Then lift the pot slightly so the water penetrates the space under it and let it boil.
- 3) The area between the burners that does not get hot and cannot be Koshered (there is a risk of cracking the glass/ceramic) should be covered with heavy duty aluminum foil (preferably a double layer).
- 4) You should cover the backsplash etc. see above.

### ***For All Stove Tops:***

Any part of the stove or counter near the stove that may come in contact with pots or steam from the cooking (backsplash, hood, or low hanging cupboards) should be cleaned well and, in some instances, should be covered with heavy-duty aluminum foil.

### ***Kitchen Sinks Stainless Steel Sinks***

- 1) The sink should be thoroughly cleaned and not be used for hot Hametz for 24 hours.
- 2) On crevices that cannot be cleaned thoroughly (such as between the sink bottom and the drain) a strong chemical cleaner should be used, (it should be left there for a while).
- 3) The sink is now ready to be Koshered.
- 4) Koshering is accomplished by pouring boiling hot water from a Pessah kettle/pot over every part of the stainless steel sink. Preferably you should Kosher the sides of the sink first and then the bottom. It is not sufficient to pour water on one spot and let it run down the sink. The poured water must touch every part of the sink, including the drain and the spout of the water faucet (see below how to

Kosher the faucet). It is likely that the Koshering kettle will need to be refilled a few times before Koshering can be completed.

- 5) After Koshering, the sink should be rinsed with cold water. The sink is now Kosher for Pessah.

### ***Porcelain, China, Corian or Granite Composite Sinks***

These sinks cannot be Koshered. However it is advisable to do the following;

- 1) The sink should be thoroughly cleaned and not be used for hot Hametz for 24 hours.
- 2) On crevices that cannot be cleaned thoroughly (such as between the sink bottom and the drain) a strong chemical cleaner should be used, (it should be left there for a while).
- 3) It is advisable to pour boiling hot water over all surfaces of the sink three times.
- 4) The dishes that are to be washed should not be placed directly into the sink. They must be washed in a Pessah dish pan which sits on a Pessah rack (the dish pan may not touch the bottom of the sink). It is necessary to have separate dish pans and racks for milk and meat dishes. It is preferable to cover the entire sink with aluminium foil.
- 5) You should be careful that hot water does not collect in the sink and come in contact with the dish pan

### ***For All Sinks:***

- 1) The faucets and its knobs or lever should be cleaned thoroughly including all crevices.
- 2) To Kosher the faucet, boiling water should be poured over the faucet, the knobs or lever, and the faucet base. Each part of the faucet should come in contact with the direct stream of boiling water. You should turn on the hot water before Koshering the faucet and pour the boiling water over the faucet as the hot water flows through the faucet. In this way the faucet is being heated both within and without

with boiling water. If you have an extendable sprayer faucet (after cleaning) you can extend the faucet and place it in a pot of boiling water for a few seconds (don't leave it too long because the heat may ruin the plastic parts).

3) The drain stopper should be replaced for Pessah.

4) Drano (or another drain cleaner) should be put down the drain.

5) Caution should be taken that the drain does not back up over Pessah.

### ***Koshering***

Normally, for Koshering it is adequate to ensure that both the utensil being Koshered and the Koshering pot are clean and not a Ben-Yomo. However, for Pessah it is customary to Kosher the Hametz pot even if it is not a Ben-Yomo (even though you are not Halachically required to) before using it for Koshering. If a Pessah pot is used it is customary to Kosher it afterwards. Koshering has to be done with the kettle or pot itself (you cannot pour the water into a jug and use the jug to Kosher).

### ***Countertops Granite, Marble, Stainless Steel, Metal and Wooden (if it is smooth) Countertops***

1) The Countertops should be cleaned thoroughly and not be used for hot Hametz for 24 hours.

2) After it has cleaned well the countertop can be Koshered by pouring boiling water from a Kettle. It is not sufficient to pour water on one spot and let it run on the counter; the poured water must touch every part of the counter.

3) The counter is now Koshered for Pessah, however it is preferable to cover the counter with a waterproof covering.

### ***Formica/Plastic, Siltstone, Corian, Porcelain Enamel and Granite Composite Countertops***

1) All the above countertops cannot be Koshered for Pessah.

2) They should be thoroughly cleaned and covered. They should be covered with a material that is waterproof (such as linoleum or something similar). You should fasten it securely.

### ***Refrigerator and Freezer***

1) They should be cleaned thoroughly. Special attention should be taken to clean all the crevices. All shelves and bins that are removable should be removed and cleaned.

2) *Halachically* you are not required to cover shelves. [Those who have a custom to cover all surfaces that come in direct contact with food should be careful not to inhibit the air circulation.]

### ***Cabinets and Drawers***

Cabinets and drawers that are used for Hametz should be thoroughly cleaned and covered.

## ***Kosher Investments***

Is one allowed to own shares in companies which trade on Shabbat, sell Hametz or lend with interest?

By Dayan Shlomo Cohen

### ***The Legal status of a Corporation***

In law, a corporation is a separate identity from its stockholders. A "veil" separates the stockholder from the assets of the corporation, which are not considered as his property, but those of the corporation. The corporation is a type of "golem" with its own identity, and the ability to own and trade in assets.

### ***The Halachic Status of a Corporation***

The *Halacha*, however, does not recognize a corporation as such, but lifts the "corporate veil" and looks at the true situation, which is the same as any other partnership, but with limited liability.



This raises a *Halachic* question for shareholders where *Hametz* products are owned by the corporation and traded in during *Pessah*.

In the case of a privately-owned corporation, where all stockholders are voting on company decisions, it is agreed by all poskim that the 'corporate veil' be lifted and that *Halachically*, all stockholders are partners and just as they themselves cannot own *Hametz* on *Pessah*, so too the company must either sell its *Hametz* or the stockholder must sell his stocks before *Pessah*.

However, in the case of a small stockholder in a large corporation who stocks are traded on the stock exchange, there are two major opinions.

### ***The Opinion of the Igrot Moshe***

The opinion of Rav Moshe Feinstein (see *Igrot Moshe Even Ha'Ezer 1:7*) is that the owner of a small insignificant number of stocks, in a publically traded corporation, is not considered as a partner and owner of the corporation's property, but as someone who has purchased the right to benefit from the corporation's profits.

Even though the stockholder may have voting rights at the corporation's mandatory annual meeting, since he is not interested in participating in the decision-making process and even if he was, cannot, because of the insignificant size of his holding, he is not considered as the *Halachic* owner of the corporation's property, and therefore would not be required to sell his stocks for *Pessah*.

### ***The Opinion of the Minhat Yitzhak***

HaRav Weiss (*Minhat Yitzhak*, Vol. 3 1:11) disagrees, arguing that where the stockholder has voting rights, regardless of the size of his holding and the amount of influence he has, he is the

halachic owner of all the corporation's property, and must therefore sell his stocks for *Pessah* where the corporation remains the owner of *Hametz* during *Pessah*. Even though the legal sale of stocks is only possible through the stock exchange, nevertheless he permits the inclusion of stocks in the sale of *Hametz* products that each Jew does on *Erev Pessah* and does not require a formal sale.

### ***The Dilemma***

The consequences of this disagreement are far reaching.

According to the opinion of Rav Weiss, a Jewish investor may not buy stocks in any corporation that trades on *Shabbat*, lends or borrows with interest, or trades in non-kosher food products. This would include holding stocks in any corporation that holds stocks in any such corporation and makes investing on the stock market virtually impossible.

### ***Pension Funds***

The *Badatz* in Jerusalem adopted the opinion of Rav Weiss and recently introduced a *Hechsher* for financial investments. They have also listed pension funds which only invest in financial instruments which have no voting rights, as kosher.

This is debatable, however, as a pension fund purchases stocks in its own name on behalf of investors, but not in the name of the investor. While it could be argued that the pension fund manager is the agent of the investor, and therefore the stocks purchased, the property of the investor, which would of course be *Assur* according to this opinion. It could also be argued that the investor just benefits from the portfolio purchased by the pension fund, but is not the owner. This could be proved by the fact that the fund does not sell a portion of its investments every time an investor withdraws his money.



The approach of Rav Moshe Feinstein permits investing freely on the stock market, as long as the investment remains insignificant.

### ***A Significant Holding***

The boundary between a significant and insignificant investment is unclear and was not defined by Rav Moshe.

In my opinion, it would be around the 3% mark. In many countries, there are rules governing investors on the stock market requiring them to identify themselves and declare their intentions when they become owners of 2-3% of a corporation, as this is considered as significant.

### ***The Sale of Stocks for Pessah***

Many contracts for the sale of *Hametz*, include the sale of stocks. Where this is being done as a *Humra* – a stringency – why not?! But if the investor is doing so because he wishes to follow the ruling of Rav Weiss, one should bear in mind that his opinion is that the holding of stocks in a publicly-traded company is problematic all the year round, because of them doing business on *Shabbat*, charging and paying interest and trading in non-kosher products.

An interesting question would arise where the corporation paid a dividend or issued more stock to existing investors during *Pessah*, as these would belong to the gentile who purchased the *Hametz* and not to the Jewish seller.

Sponsor  
the Halacha  
Weekly!

#### **Sephardic Halacha Center**

Halacha Consultation Line:  
*Dayanim (Talmudic judges) and Poskim (Halachic decisors) available for Halachic consult*  
*Available throughout the day via phone, email, text, or in person*  
Weekly Halacha e-Journal  
Monthly print Journal  
State-of-the-art website  
Parasha and Halacha – Audio Series  
Awareness and education

#### **Business Halacha Services**

Contracts and Heter Iska  
Halachic wills and estates  
Partnership, employment, and other business agreements  
Shabbat agreements  
Business Halacha consultations  
Halachic resources

#### **Sephardic Bet Din and Dispute Resolution Center**

Experienced Dayanim and dedicated administration  
Professional, expedient, and cost effective  
Business, divorce, and familial matters  
Mediation and arbitration  
(Licensed mediators and arbitrators)  
Legal Advisory Board

To dedicate an issue of the Sephardic Halacha Weekly E-Journal in honor, Refu'ah Shelema or memory of a loved one, please email us at [info@theshc.org](mailto:info@theshc.org) or call 732.276.1332

For Halachic guidance, questions, or services, call or text 732.9300.SHC (742)

SEPHARDIC HALACHA CENTER / [WWW.THESHCH.ORG](http://WWW.THESHCH.ORG) / P 1.844.200.TSHC (8742) / E [INFO@THESHCH.ORG](mailto:INFO@THESHCH.ORG)