

Shehecheyanu during Sefiras ha-omer

Are there any restrictions against reciting the blessing of shehecheyanu during the mourning period of Sefiras ha-omer?

The poskim agree that from a halachic point of view there is no reason not to recite shehecheyanu during the days of sefirah. It is, therefore, permitted to eat new fruit in season and to buy new clothing or dishes during this time period.

Still, there are communities where shehecheyanu is not recited during sefirah. Some communities are even stricter and refrain from buying new clothes during sefirah altogether, even basics which do not require the blessing of shehecheyanu. Since these restrictions have valid sources — some can be traced as far back as to the Rishonim — they should be upheld by the communities or families whose traditions they are. But those who do not have these customs are not required to observe them, as the halachah makes no such stipulations.

One who was under the impression that it is halachically prohibited to recite shehecheyanu during sefirah, but learned subsequently that this is not the case, does not need hataras nedarim in order to change his custom and recite shehecheyanu during sefirah.

Moving into a new house or apartment during sefirah is another case in point. The halachah permits one to move during sefirah. It is also permitted to paint or decorate one's home during sefirah. But if one's family practice is to refrain from moving or making home improvements during sefirah, one should follow the principle of not deviating from family custom, as is true in all matters of halachah.

Note: The above halachos apply only to the days of sefirah. During the Three Weeks, which take place before Tishah b'Av, the halachos are more stringent. (*Daniel Neustadt, torah.org. For final rulings, consult your Rav.*)