

סימן שב

A. Introduction to מלבן

The (1) **משנה שבת** (עג.) teaches that cleaning wool after it has been shaved from the sheep, which is done by removing the dirt that has accumulated on the wool (fleece), is one of the **מלאכות** "ל"ט, known as "מלבן" – literally, "whitening." Rashi explains that מלבן is performed by rinsing the wool in the river (i.e., with water). In the olden days, wool would be cleaned by placing it into a porous basket and submerging it in a river. As the water flows down the river, the wool would get cleaned and whiten. The (2) **רמב"ם** (פ"ט:יא) adds that laundering clothing in water (known as **כיבוס**) is a **תולדה** of מלבן and forbidden. To better understand this, let's quickly review the difference between an **אב** and a **תולדה**. The Torah prohibits performing **מלאכות** "ל"ט – 39 specific actions on Shabbos that are called "אבות" – "תולדות" – **ר"ן על המשנה דף עג.** teaches that their **גמרא בבא קמא (ב.)** – "extensions", are also biblically prohibited. Although both are forbidden, the **ר"ן** differentiates between an **אב** and a **תולדה** by saying that an **אב מלאכה** is defined as the actual **מלאכה** that was performed in the construction of the **משכן**, while the **תולדה** is an act that is classified in the same category as the **אב** (meaning the act is similar in purpose or in method to the **אב**), but was not actually performed in the construction of the **משכן**. Whitening raw wool (fleece) by rinsing it in water was performed in the **משכן** (when preparing the **יריעות**, the curtains) and is therefore considered an **אב**, while laundering clothing to remove a stain was not, and is thus considered a **תולדה**. However, both **אבות**, such as whitening/cleaning wool, and **תולדות**, such as laundering clothing, are biblically forbidden. All this is explained in **משנ"ב סקל"ט**.

Now that we have explained the **אב** and the **תולדה** of מלבן, we need to define the parameters of the entire **דאורייתא** of מלבן, which includes both the **אב** and **תולדה**, more specifically. In general, **מלבן/כיבוס** is defined as the beautification of a **fabric** by removing a stain that is absorbed in the fabric (this is implied in the **סק"ב משנ"ב** and **והוא** **ביה"ל ד"ה**; see also **סימן קנז:ד**). Therefore, **כיבוס** only applies to fabrics, but hard, non-absorbent materials such as plates are not included in **כיבוס**, and you may rinse them off and clean them (see **משנ"ב סקמ"א**). Similarly, if a feather falls on a garment, you may remove it because the feather is not embedded in the fabric; laundering is only forbidden when you are removing absorbed stains. There are two ways to remove an absorbed stain and thereby beautify the fabric: Either by soaking and scrubbing it in water, or by manually removing the stain without water. We will first discuss the **halachos** that pertain to beautifying fabrics (specifically garments) without water. This includes shaking off dust that settles on your garment (section B-D) and removing a dried stain (section E). These **halachos** are particularly fascinating because we encounter some opinions who **passkin** that a specific act is completely permitted, while other **posskim** hold that the same act is an **איסור דאורייתא**. We will then discuss the **halachos** that pertain to beautifying fabric with water (section G).

B. *Shaking A Garment to Clean it*

הונא רב in the (קמז.) **גמרא שבת** (3) teaches that shaking garments on Shabbos is biblically forbidden because of מלבן – the beautification of the garment. **Rashi** explains that רב הונא is referring to shaking off the dust from your garment, but **Tosfos** ד"ה המנער argues that רב הונא is referring to a case where the garment is wet from dew that settled on it, and shaking it is tantamount to the כיבוס element of מלבן. The **גמרא** continues that this prohibition of shaking a garment (according to Rashi from dust, and according to Tosfos from moisture) is only prohibited when three criteria are met: 1) The garment is new, 2) the garment is black (i.e., dark colored – see (שש"כ טו-סקפ"ז)), and 3) the dust/wetness bothers you to the point where you will not wear it outside without shaking it off. Thus, you only violate מלבן/כיבוס when these three criteria are all met, because only then is the garment considered to have been beautified. But shaking off dust/dew from an old garment does not beautify it to the level of beautification included in כיבוס.

The מחלוקת between Rashi and *Tosfos* on this Gemara can be explained as stemming from two different approaches as to how far Chazal extended the prohibition of מלבן. According to Rashi, the אב of מלבן is defined as rinsing wool in a river, while the תולדה is כיבוס, laundering garments to remove the stains and beautifying the garment. The Torah prohibition of כיבוס also includes the beautification of a garment by removing dust that settled in it even if no water is used in the process. Nevertheless, brushing off dust from a garment only rises to the level of כיבוס if the garment is new, black and the dust bothers you. The reason is that removing the dust only beautifies the garment significantly in such a situation. *Tosfos*, on the other hand, holds that shaking off dust from a garment is in no way similar to כיבוס (even with a new, black jacket that you care about) because no water is used as with regular כיבוס. Therefore, shaking off dust is entirely permitted according to *Tosfos* (see the אמר ד"ה קמו: ריטב"א, who explains *Tosfos* in this way). However, if droplets of water/dew settle on a garment, shaking them off would be prohibited if the garment is new, black and you care about it. Only when these three criteria are met and water is involved does the garment become sufficiently beautified to rise to the level of the prohibition of כיבוס.

The S" A in **סעיף א'** *passkins* like *Tosfos* that shaking a garment that is slightly wet from dew that settled on it is forbidden if the garment is new, black and the moisture bothers you to the point that you would not wear it in that state. The **משנ"ב סק"ב** explains that the shaking qualifies as laundering and a beautification of the garment only if the wetness bothers you. But if the wetness does not bother you and you would occasionally wear it without shaking off the dew, then shaking does not rise to the level of כיבוס. The **Rama** argues on the S" A and says that we should be מחמיר like the opinion of Rashi that shaking off dust is also forbidden if the dust bothers you. The **משנ"ב סק"ו** adds that we *passkin* like the **Rama** מעיקר הדין and not just as a חומרא.

The **ביה"ל ד"ה והוא** explains the ruling of the S" A that removing the dew/dust is considered beautifying (כיבוס) the garment only if their presence bothers you. (In other words, when a fabric is laundered in water, it is clear that the fabric is being objectively beautified and the action is prohibited. However, when there is a little bit of dew/dust on the garment, the beautification of the garment (by

shaking it off) becomes subjective, where it is considered כיבוס for those who care about and for those who do not, it is not considered כיבוס.)

According to the *S" A* and *Rama*, it would seem that shaking off dew/dust is only forbidden with new, dark garments where the dew/dust bothers you. This is the position of the (שב-א) **שו"ע הרב** (4) that Chazal consider the shaking tantamount to laundering only if all three criteria are met (The **שו"ע הרב** interprets both the opinion of the *S" A* and of the *Rama* in this manner; see 'שו"ע הרב סע' ג'). Thus, it comes out that shaking off dew/dust from older, dark clothing or new, light colored clothing is permissible. This is also how the (שב-ד) **יוסף ילקוט יוסף** *passkins*. Thus, these *halachos* would not appear to significantly limit our ability to shake off moisture or dust from our clothing, because how often do we wear new, black garments that we would not wear if some dust or moisture fell on it?

In contrast, the **ביה"ל ד"ה עליה** explains that both according to the *S" A* and *Rama*, there is really only one criterion, and that is if the dew/dust bothers you. He explains that when the **גמרא** says that shaking a garment is forbidden if it is "new, black, and the dirt bothers you," the **גמרא** is teaching that most people are bothered by dew/dust on a new and black garment, and for the average person, dusting-off/shaking-off a new black garment is forbidden. However, if dew/dust bothers you even on older colorful garments, you are not allowed to shake it off because you are beautifying the garment in your mind. (The **ביה"ל** infers this from the continuation of the **גמרא**, see inside for details). The **שש"כ** (ט"ו-כט) (5) *passkins* in accordance with the **ביה"ל** that it is forbidden to shake off dust from any garment if you are bothered by it. He explains that most people care about dust settling on new black clothing, and are not bothered by dust settling on older dark garments or new light-colored garments. But if you are bothered by dust on older dark garments or new colorful garments, then dusting off the garment still qualifies as an איסור דאורייתא of כיבוס. This is also how the (שב-ג) **ערוך השלחן** understands the הלכה, and most *Ashkenazi posskim passkin* this way (see, e.g., (שב-ב) פסקי תשובות and מעורר ישנים אות ק"כ).

What emerges is that there are two major disputes concerning shaking off a garment that leads to significant ramifications. One מחלוקת exists between the *S" A* and *Rama*, and another מחלוקת exists between the **שו"ע הרב/ילקוט יוסף** and the **ביה"ל/ערה"ש/שש"כ**. According to the *S" A*, shaking off dust from a garment is permitted (and only shaking off dew is forbidden), while according to the *Rama* shaking off dust is an איסור דאורייתא. The **שו"ע הרב** interprets both the *S" A* and *Rama* as forbidding shaking off dew/dust (each one according to his respective opinion) when the garment is new, black and the dew/dust bothers you. On the other hand, the **ביה"ל/ערה"ש/שש"כ** hold that if the dew/dust bothers you, it is forbidden to shake it off even for older or light-colored clothing.

The **ביה"ל ד"ה יש אומרים** *passkins* that even in situation where you are allowed to shake off the dust from a garment (i.e. according to the *S" A* in all cases and according to *Ashkenazim* when the dust doesn't bother you), forcibly scrubbing the fabric is forbidden because forcibly scrubbing is always considered an act of כיבוס. The contemporary *Sephardi* and *Ashkenazi posskim* follow the opinions of the *S" A* and *Rama* accordingly. The (שב-ט) (6) **ילקוט יוסף** *passkins* like the *S" A* that you are allowed to shake off dust from a garment or hat on Shabbos, and you are even allowed to use a brush. He concludes though that it is best to brush off the dust with a שינוי, such as using your sleeve. In the footnote, he writes one caveat to this ruling based on the above **ביה"ל** that you are not allowed to forcibly scrub the garment against itself to remove the stain because forcibly scrubbing a garment

against itself is an act of מלבן (see section E. where we elaborate on the S”A’s view on forcibly scrubbing). The שש”כ (7) (טו-כח) *passkins* like the *Rama* that you are not allowed to dust off a garment if the dust bothers you. If the dust does not bother you, you are allowed to brush it off gently with your hand, a dry cloth or by gently shaking the garment. However, scrubbing the cloth or using a brush is forbidden (see ביה”ל ד”ה ועיין לקמן).

Summary chart:

<u>שו”ע הרב/ילקוט יוסף</u>	Dew	Dust
S”A	Forbidden only with a new, black garment and the dew bothers you	Permitted (forcibly scrubbing fabric against itself forbidden)
Rama	Forbidden only with a new, black garment and the dew bothers you	Forbidden only with a new, black garment and the dust bothers you. (Forcibly scrubbing fabric against itself forbidden)

<u>ביה”ל/ערה/ש/שש”כ</u>	Dew	Dust
S”A	Forbidden on any garment if the dew bothers you	Permitted (forcibly scrubbing fabric against itself forbidden)
Rama	Forbidden on any garment if the dew bothers you	Forbidden on any garment if the dust bothers you (forcibly scrubbing fabric against itself is always forbidden)

For both *Ashkenazim* with regard to dust and for *Sephardim* with regard to dew, we need to define the meaning of the condition "מקפיד עליו" – “it bothers you,” a bit more precisely, because the prohibition of shaking the garment applies only in that case. How much must the presence of the dew/dust bother you for מנער to be forbidden? What if the dust bothers you on Shabbos, but it would not bother you if you wore this garment during the week? Moreover, it seems to be a catch 22, if you are not bothered by the dust/dew on Shabbos, then why would you brush it off? The mere fact that you are brushing it off shows that you care about it, and it should then be forbidden!

As mentioned above, the S”A quotes the גמרא that if you would refrain from wearing a garment because of the dew/dust that settled on it, you are not allowed to brush it off. But it seems that if you prefer that the dust be removed, but would still wear the garment regardless, it is permitted to shake it off, and this is not defined as מקפיד. **Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach** quoted in the (8) שש”כ (טו-כט) explains further that any garment that you would regularly wear during the week even if it has a bit of dust on it is permitted to be shaken off on Shabbos, even if you do so לכבוד שבת. In other words, if you are willing to wear a garment with a bit of dust on it outside your house during the week, but on Shabbos you prefer to brush off the dust from that garment שבת לכבוד, you are allowed to do so. The same is true for clothes that one only wears on Shabbos (e.g., a suit for some people), but one would not mind some dust on them if he did need to wear them during the week. The reason for this is based on what we explained above that laundering is defined as the beautification of a garment. Therefore, if

you do not mind leaving your house on a Tuesday with some dust on your pants, then it is evident that brushing off those pants does not rise to the level of **כיבוס**, and brushing them off on Shabbos is permitted. Although this is true for anyone, a very common example of this can be found in the Israeli army. If an *Ashkenazi* soldier returns to his base on Friday night with dusty pants after a shift in the field, he is allowed to dust off his pants before davening **שבת קבלת**. The reason is that during the week, his dusty pants do not bother him and he is only dusting them off **שבת לכבוד**. It is important to note that in the **שולחן שלמה (שב-ב)**, RSZA stresses that if the dust/dew bothers you, cleaning it off is an **איסור דאורייתא**, and if it does not bother you it is **מותר לכתחילה**. He is therefore surprised and shocked how one can be definitively honest with himself and say that the dust/dew does not bother him.

C. *Leniencies in Shaking Off a Garment + Practical Examples*

The *Rama* adds that even according to Rashi, removing a feather that falls on a garment is permissible. The **משנ"ב סק"ר** explains that shaking off dust and water droplets is forbidden because they get slightly absorbed and trapped in between the weaves of the fabric, but a feather or other substance that only settles on top of a garment may be removed on Shabbos. It seems from here that the *Rama* prohibits brushing off dust from a garment because the small dust particles are absorbed and settle into the fibers of the fabric itself. Thus, removing them is similar to **כיבוס**. Accordingly, substances such as flour, confectionary sugar, and baby powder that spill on fabric may also not be brushed out because the small particles are absorbed and settle in the weavings of the fabric. However, grains of sand, salt and sugar do not get absorbed by the fabric and may be brushed off.

As mentioned in the previous section, *Sephardim* follow the *S"A* as explained by the **ילקוט יוסף** that brushing dust off is permissible, while the majority of *Ashkenazi poskim* follow the *Rama* as it is understood by the **ביה"ל/לערה"ש/שש"כ** that dusting off a garment is forbidden if the dust bothers you. However, there are two exceptions where even *Ashkenazim* are **מקיל** to dust off a garment. The **משנ"ב סק"ו** writes that since the majority of **ראשונים** argue on Rashi and hold that the prohibition of shaking a garment only applies to slightly wet garments (like the *S"A*), you are allowed to tell a non-Jew to brush dust off your jacket, especially when you would be embarrassed to leave your house and there is an issue of **כבוד הבריות**. The **מסגרת השלחן (9)** on the **(פרק פ סק"פ)** goes one step further and adds that if a non-Jew cannot be found and the dust is so embarrassing to you that it is preventing you from leaving your house, you are allowed to shake off the garment yourself because we can rely on the *S"A* (who follows the majority of the **ראשונים**) and permit shaking off dust in all cases. (For example, if right before leaving to shul you briefly lift up your child and when putting him back down you notice a small footprint on your jacket, you are not allowed to brush off the footprint if you would usually brush it off before leaving the house (i.e., it bothers you). Rather, you should walk out of the house with the footprint on your jacket and that itself shows respect for Shabbos. However, if on the way out to shul your son sprays you with baby powder, transforming your dark suit to a white one, and you are the *gabai* in shul, you would be allowed to ask a non-Jew to dust it off (**משנ"ב**) or dust it off yourself if you cannot find one (**מסגרת השלחן**) because you are so embarrassed that you would not leave your house in such a fashion.

To summarize, everyone agrees that feathers or other substances that do not get absorbed into your clothing may be removed on Shabbos. With regards to dust, *Sephardim* hold that gently shaking it off of a garment is always permitted, while shaking off dew is prohibited if the garment is new, dark, and the dew bothers you. *Ashkenazim* hold that you are not allowed to shake off dust from new, dark garments when the dust bothers you (as per the יוסף הרב and יוסף הרב), and many *posskim* (such as the ביה"ל/לערה"ש/שש"כ) hold that shaking off dust from any garment is also prohibited if the dust bothers you. Yet, if you are embarrassed to walk outside with a dusty suit and would choose to remain at home, then the משנ"ב allows you to ask a non-Jew to dust it off and the מסגרת השלחן even allows you to dust it off yourself.

Practical examples:

Seltzer *shpritzes* on your brand-new black suit jacket: All agree that forcefully shaking the drops off the jacket is forbidden when you care about your jacket being wet (and would not wear it in such a fashion).

Seltzer *shpritzes* on your brand-new white suit jacket or an older black jacket: If you do not care about the wetness, everyone agrees it is permitted to shake off the drops. If the wetness bothers you, the יוסף הרב/ליקוט יוסף permit and the ביה"ל/לערה"ש/שש"כ forbid.

Dust falls on your brand-new black suit jacket: **S"A** – you are allowed to dust it off even if it bothers you (and you would not wear it with the dust). **Rama** – if it bothers you, you are not allowed to dust it off, but asking a non-Jew is permitted especially when כבוד הבריות is at stake.

Dust falls on your brand-new light colored suit jacket or an older black jacket: **S"A** – you are allowed to dust it off even if it bothers you. **Rama** (according to שו"ע הרב) – you are allowed to dust it off even if it bothers you. **Rama** (according to ביה"ל/לערה"ש/שש"כ) – you are not allowed to dust it off if it bothers you, but asking a non-Jew is permitted especially when כבוד הבריות applies.

Your son spills baby powder all over your carpet: **S"A** – you are allowed to shake it off. **Rama** – if the carpet is light colored or old and dark colored, the שו"ע הרב allows you to shake it off, but the ביה"ל/לערה"ש/שש"כ would prohibit if it bothers you.

A woman reaches to pull a spice from the cabinet and a bag of flour spills on her sheitel: **S"A** – she is allowed to shake it off. **Rama** – if the *sheitel* is light colored or old and dark colored, the שו"ע הרב allows her to shake it off, but the ביה"ל/לערה"ש/שש"כ would prohibit if it bothers her. According to them, asking a non-Jew would be permitted, and it would even be permitted to do it herself in dire situations.

Snow falls on your suit/coat: The ביה"ל ד"ה מן הטל writes that snow on your garment is similar to a feather that has not been absorbed by the fabric, and shaking it off is therefore permitted. However, the ביה"ל adds that you should shake the snow off gently in case part of the snow has begun to melt, which thereby ensures that only the snow falls off and not the absorbed moisture.

Your 7-year-old son's pants got all dusty when he was playing on the floor: If the dust only bothers you because today is Shabbos but during the week you would not mind if he was wearing those same dusty pants, you are allowed to dust them off. This is based on the שש"כ above who defines that "מקפיד" applies only if the dust on this specific garment bothers you even when you wear it during the week. But if you would walk out with this dusty garment during the week, you are allowed to dust it off on

Shabbos for the sake of **שבת** כבוד. The same would apply to a sweater that you wear both on Shabbos and during the week. If during the week you would walk out of the house with a dusty sweater, you are allowed to dust it off on Shabbos for the sake of **שבת** כבוד.

It should be noted again that RSZA was surprised and astonished how one can have the confidence to definitively say that the dust/dew does not bother him, given that the consequence of dusting it off if it does bother him is that he is transgressing an **איסור דאורייתא**. The **משנ"ב סק"ו** writes that a person should be extra careful not to get his clothing dirty on Shabbos in order not to be in a situation where it is questionable whether he is allowed to dust it off. For this reason, you should carefully hang up your coat/clothing and be careful when holding children so that their dirty shoes do not get you dirty.

D. Brushing off Someone Else's Garment

We have mentioned multiple times that according to the *Rama*, brushing off a garment is forbidden if the dust bothers you, though the S"A permits it. Would the Rama permit brushing off someone else's garment if their dust does not bother you? (Washing their garment with water is certainly forbidden because you are clearly beautifying the garment irrespective of whether the dust bothers you or not, thereby transgressing the prohibition of **כיבוס**).

The **ביה"ל ד"ה והוא** writes that if you are the type of person who is bothered by dust on a garment, you might still be allowed to dust off your friend's garment if he does not care because for him, the garment was not beautified. The same is true as well of the flipside that even if you do not care about dust on your garment, you may not be allowed to dust off the garment of someone who does care about it because the determination of whether dusting violates **מלבן** may be dependent on the subjective feeling of the owner. Thus, if he does not want the dust, then you are beautifying the garment. The **ביה"ל** concludes though by saying "**צריך עיון**", meaning that this conclusion is not entirely definitive.

There are many people who erroneously think that you are always allowed to dust off the clothing of another person. As we just learned, though, it would depend on whether the person whose clothing is being brushed off cares about his suit being dusty, and even if he does not care, the **ביה"ל** concludes by saying that "**צריך עיון**" if it is permitted.

E. Removing a Stain Without Water

Until this point, we have discussed shaking your garment to remove dust particles and precipitation that have settled in the fabric of your garment. We will now discuss the very similar *halachos* that pertain to removing a dried stain that is partially absorbed in the garment and partially elevated above the garment. It would seem that the part of the stain above the fabric is most equivalent

to the case of a feather falling on a garment, where removing the feather is permissible, and the part of the stain that is in the fabric is equivalent to the case of dust, where the S”A and Rama disagree as to whether one may remove it.

As mentioned, the S”A *passkins* in א' סעיף א' that you are allowed to remove dust that is embedded in a fabric. Yet in סעיף ז' he teaches based on the (קמא.) שבת גמרא שבת that removing a stain or mud by scrubbing the fabric against itself is prohibited because scrubbing is an act of כיבוס and similar to מלבן (this is mentioned in the י"א ד"ה ביה"ל ד"ה י"א that we quoted in section C). The S”A explains that the prohibition applies where you try to remove the mud by folding the garment such that the stain is situated in between the folds and then scrub both sides with one another. The משנ"ב סקל"ג explains that this is forbidden because the garment is beautified in such a manner, which makes it similar to כיבוס. The (שב-סקכ"ב וסקי"א) ילקוט יוסף (10) explains that even though shaking off dust from a garment is permitted because no water is used, scrubbing a stain off without water is still forbidden because the act of scrubbing a fabric against itself is similar to כיבוס. The S”A adds that folding the garment inward whereby you create a crease/fold under the area of the mud and move the fabric up and down causing the mud to fall off is permitted. The reason is because this act does not involve scrubbing the fabric, and is therefore not similar to כיבוס. Similarly, the S”A writes that you are allowed to remove the dirt using your fingernail (or the back of a knife, see משנ"ב סקל"ד), even if you are doing so from the outside of the garment because this too is not similar to כיבוס.

What emerges from here is that according to the S”A (who holds that dusting off a garment is permissible), you are allowed to peel away a stain with your fingernail even if the stain will no longer be visible because this is similar to removing dust. However, you are not allowed to forcefully scrub the fabric against itself because that constitutes an act of כיבוס. At the end of section C we listed a few very practical examples and we wrote that with regards to dusting off a garment the S”A holds it is permitted. The one caveat to the ruling of the S”A is that forcibly scrubbing the garment with itself to remove the dust is forbidden because it is an act of כיבוס.

The question that arises is how does the Rama reconcile this סעיף א' with the *halacha* in א' סעיף א' The Rama in א' סעיף א' *passkins* that shaking off dust that settles on a garment is prohibited, but here he seems to agree that removing a stain by folding the garment and slowly peeling away at the stain is permitted.

The שער הציון סקמ"א explains that shaking off the dust in א' סעיף א' is prohibited because you are completely removing the dust, thereby beautifying the garment to the level that qualifies as כיבוס. In contrast, slowly peeling away at a residue in א' סעיף ז' is only permitted if the stain is still visible after removing the excess. But completely removing a stain stuck to the fabric is forbidden (see משנ"ב סקל"ו) just like completely removing dust from a garment is prohibited. Moreover, just like shaking off the dust is only forbidden if it bothers you, so too completely removing the stain is only forbidden if it bothers you. If the stain does not bother you, removing it is permitted in one of the ways mentioned by the S”A, i.e., using your fingernail or folding the fabric away from the stain, but scrubbing one part of the fabric against another is forbidden. This is how the (11) שש"כ (טו-לב) and (סימן שב הע' 33) פסקי תשובות *passkin*, and the same conclusion can be drawn from the end of דהוי ד"ה ביה"ל ד"ה י"א as well, though the ביה"ל adds that most people are bothered by mud splashes on their clothing and it would be forbidden to completely remove. Therefore, if you have a dried cholent stain on your jacket, you are not allowed

to scrub it off with your fingernail if the stain will no longer be visible and you do not want the stain to be there. However, if the stain is on the bottom of your suit pants or in an area that does not bother you at all and you would normally walk out in such a fashion, you are allowed to completely remove it (using your fingernail).

It emerges that according to the *Rama*, there are two situations where you are allowed to remove a stain from your jacket: A) If after removing the thickness of the stain, the stain is still visible on your jacket. B) If it is a type of stain that does not bother you at all and you would walk out of the house with that stain on your garment. In the second situation, you are allowed to completely remove the stain with your fingernail just like you are allowed to brush off dust from a garment if the dust does not bother you. However, the *ביה"ל* adds that with an actual stain (not just dust) this is not common at all. For example, if a kernel of dried barley falls on your jacket, you are allowed to remove the kernel because it is similar to a feather falling on your garment. However, using your fingernail to clean away a cholent stain that is left on your jacket is prohibited, unless the stain is in an inconspicuous location that does not bother you and you would leave your house with such a stain during the week (but scrubbing it forcibly is always prohibited).

To summarize, removing the dried cholent stain with your fingernail is permitted for *Sephardim* because no water was used (see *שב-נה* (כף החיים), similar to the shaking off of dust. However, the *S" A* prohibits removing that stain by rubbing the garment against itself (as explained clearly in the *ילקוט* (יוסף שב-א), because scrubbing is an act of *כיבוס* even when no water is used. *Ashkenazim passkin* that removing the excess stain above the surface level of the garment is permitted if removed with a fingernail or by folding the garment in the way described in *סעיף ז'*, where the excess stain is lifted off the fabric. But removing the remaining stain that is still visible after the excess was removed is prohibited, just like the removal of dust is prohibited according to the *Rama*. However, if the stain does not bother you and you would walk out of the house in such a manner, you are allowed to remove it (with your fingernail), though that would be quite uncommon concerning a mud or food stain.

It should be noted that the *S" A* also quotes another opinion that says that although scraping away with a fingernail at a stain is permitted (according to the *S" A* even if it will not leave a mark, and according to the *Rema* only if it will leave a mark or if it does not but you do not care about it), this applies only if the stain is still wet. But if the stain is dry and scraping away at it will cause it to crumble, it is prohibited because of *טוחן* – crushing. Therefore, according to this opinion, if mud dries on your jacket, you are not allowed to peel it off if the mud will crumble into smaller pieces, even if a stain will remain, and even if you are not bothered by the presence of the mud. The *מחמיר* (12) *שש"כ* (טו-לא) is like this opinion, but only concerning dried substances that come from the ground (because *טוחן* only applies to *גדולי קרקע* – substances that come from the ground) and only if it has not been crushed before (because of the principle of *טוחן אחר טוחן* - the prohibition of *טוחן* only applies to items that have not yet been crushed). Therefore, if mud dries on your suit, you are not allowed to remove it even if residue remains, because of the prohibition of *טוחן*. However, if oatmeal (that was previously crushed) or dough dries on your jacket, you are allowed to remove it even if it will crumble, as long as some residue will be visible on the jacket or even if no residue is left over but you would walk out of the house with a similar stain. Similarly, if the mud is still moist, you are allowed to remove it on Shabbos since it will not crumble and there will still be residue left over, or even if there will be no residue left over but

you would walk out of the house with such a stain on your clothing. The (שב-יז) **ילקוט יוסף** (13) *passkins* like the first opinion of the S”A that you are allowed to remove even dried mud from your garment because you are not intending to crumble the dirt (i.e. it’s a מתכוון).

Removing a stain by ➡	Scrubbing both sides of garment with one another	Scratching off a moist stain with your fingernail	Scratching off a dry stain with your fingernail
Sephardim (S”A – according to ח"ה and ילקוט יוסף)	Forbidden – even when dust settles on garment because “scrubbing” is an act of כיבוס	Permitted – even if the stain is completely removed (ח"ה), just like shaking off dust from a garment	Permitted – even if the stain is completely removed (ח"ה), just like by dust
Ashkenazim (Rama according to שש"כ and משנ"ב)	Forbidden – like Sephardim + you are completely removing the stain/dust	Permitted – if residue is left on garment or even if completely cleaned and you would walk out with that stain (i.e., it doesn’t bother you). Prohibited – if completely clean and you would not walk out with it	Prohibited – even if stain does not bother you and residue is left, still forbidden because of טוחן, but only with substances that grew in the ground that were never crushed.

F. Soaking Leather and Other Material with Water

In this section we will begin to discuss the *halachos* that pertain to removing a stain with water, focusing on the question of soaking materials in water. As an introduction, the (טו-א) **שש"כ** (14) teaches that laundering with water has three phases: A) Soaking cloth in water, which is called שרייה or שכשוך. B) Rubbing/scrubbing the fabric with itself, which is called שפשוף. C) Wringing out the water, which is called סחיטה. The same phases occur in our modern-day washing machine, where there is a soaking cycle, a rinsing/agitation cycle where the fabric is shaken, and then the final spin cycle that removes the excess water from the clothing. As we will learn, though, the *halacha* differentiates between the laundering of leather and fabric due to the difference between the materials.

The (צד:) **גמרא זבחים** (15) relates that רבא initially taught that one is allowed to soak (שרייה) and scrub (שפשוף) leather, but he later confessed to making a mistake. He therefore retracted his *pssak* and taught instead that only soaking leather is allowed, but not scrubbing. The S”A in **סעיף ט** *passkins* that soaking leather is permitted, but rubbing leather against itself or forcibly scrubbing it (see Rav Moshe (17) quoted below) is forbidden. Accordingly, if your leather shoes get muddy, you are allowed to pour water on them to clean them off, but you are not allowed to vigorously scrub them. The ארחות שבת (י"ג-טו) adds that when pouring water on your shoes you should be careful not to pour water on your shoelaces because pouring water on fabric is forbidden.

What is the difference between leather and fabric? Why is soaking leather permitted but not soaking fabric? The (ח"ה-י:ג) **ציץ אליעזר** (16) explains that soaking fabric is considered כיבוס because the water is absorbed by the fabric and subsequently loosens the dirt that has become stuck to the fabric. However, rinsing leather is not considered כיבוס because the leather does not absorb the initial dirt or the cleansing water. Rather, the dirt settles on top of the leather, similar to a feather falling on a jacket, which you are allowed to remove. Therefore, pouring water on it only rinses away the dirt that settled on top of the leather but does not penetrate the leather itself. In contrast, rubbing leather against itself constitutes an act of כיבוס and is forbidden. The **משנ"ב סקמ"א** adds that as opposed to leather, washing wooden vessels is permitted even if you scrub it vigorously because כלים can never be "laundered"; they are only cleaned. Therefore, washing dishes is permitted on Shabbos (assuming no סחיטה takes place with the sponge) because כיבוס only applies to fabrics and not to כלים.

What is the *halacha* with regards to removing a stain from a plastic tablecloth or a plastic furniture cover? Are you allowed to pour water on it (שכשוך)? Are you even allowed to scrub it forcefully (שפשוף)? Soft plastic would seem to be similar to wood or dishes and even scrubbing should be permitted on Shabbos since it does not absorb at all. However, the (טו-סקכ"ה) **שש"כ** and **Rav Moshe** (17) in (י"ד ח"ב עו) write that since plastic is a new material that was not present in the time of Chazal, forcibly scrubbing it with water may violate איסור דאורייתא since it is tantamount to rubbing two sides together. Therefore, we are מחמיר not to forcibly scrub plastic, but pouring water on it or soaking it in water and then gently wiping away the dirt is permitted. In other words, plastic has the same *halachic* status as leather. Therefore, pouring water and scrubbing the location of a stain on a plastic tablecloth or couch cover is forbidden, but pouring water on it or soaking it in water is permitted. The (שב:כב-נג) **ילקוט יוסף** and the (ח"ז-ל) **אבני ישפה** also *passkim* like the **שש"כ**/Rav Moshe that soaking plastic is allowed but forcibly scrubbing it is forbidden. The (פי"ג-לח) **ארחות שבת** adds that if there is fabric woven into plastic (which is commonly found around the edges of a tablecloth) you are not allowed to soak those areas. It should be noted that the (ח"ב-כ"ד:ו) **אור לציון** argues and says that plastic does not absorb at all and you are allowed to wash and scrub your plastic table cloth with liquid soap and water. Thus, the majority of *posskim* hold that scrubbing plastic is forbidden but soaking it with water is allowed.

If we follow the majority ruling that does not allow laundering (i.e., scrubbing) plastic, how are you allowed to wash a plastic container, a baby bottle or a pacifier? The (פי"ג-ז) **ארחות שבת** (18) quotes **RSZA** and **Rav Nissim Karelitz** that washing a plastic container or a pacifier is permitted because laundering does not apply to כלים – vessels, but only to garments and fabrics. Moreover, you are merely removing dirt on top of the plastic and not dirt absorbed inside of it. In other words, since the plastic container/pacifier did not absorb the stain plus it is considered a כלי, washing it is permitted. However, scrubbing a plastic tablecloth is prohibited because it not considered a "כלי". On the contrary, it is more similar to a sheet of fabric. Therefore, even if the dirt is not absorbed in the plastic, forcibly scrubbing it with water is forbidden. (In other words, everyone agrees that plastic does not absorb, but since tablecloths resemble fabric (i.e., they are clearly not a כלי) and plastic was not around in the times of Chazal, we are מחמיר not to scrub it with water, because scrubbing it could be an א.איסור דאורייתא.)

What is the *halacha* with regards to cleaning plastic dishwashing gloves? Scrubbing them clean after washing the dishes is forbidden since they are not considered a כלי and we are מחמיר not to scrub

plastic. However, pouring water on them (שכשוך) is permitted. Additionally, the (פי"ג-ו) (19) **ארחות שבת** *passkins* that you are allowed to wash dishes with them even though inadvertently you will scrub the gloves with one another (שפשוף) because you do not intend to wash the gloves. On the contrary, you are busy cleaning the dishes.

What is the *halacha* regarding soaking contact lenses on Shabbos? Is it permissible to place your lenses in the lens solution on Shabbos? Before we answer this question, we need to have a basic understanding of the two types of contact lenses: hard lenses (also called RGP – Rigid Gas Permeable contact lenses) and soft lenses. **See video:** bit.ly/SCPcontactlenses The hard lenses were most popular in the 1970's, though there are some who still use them today. These lenses are custom made for the wearer from hard plastic that does not bend. Today, most of the lenses produced are soft lenses made of soft and flexible plastic that is mass produced and not designed for specific individuals. These soft lenses need to be soaked daily in a contact lens solution consisting of a disinfecting and cleansing liquid. The contact lens manufacturers recommend first scrubbing the lenses with the solution to loosen and break apart any dirt or bacteria that is stuck on the lenses and then to soak them for at least six hours before reusing. Would any of this be allowed on Shabbos?

We will first discuss the less common case of hard lenses and then the more prevalent soft lenses. The (פי"ג-יא) (20) **ארחות שבת** *passkins* concerning hard contact lenses that you are not only allowed to soak them, but you are also allowed to scrub them. But why? We only permitted scrubbing כלים, but scrubbing plastic clothing (such as washing gloves) is forbidden and the same should apply to contact lenses! The reason is that we are only מחמיר not to scrub soft plastic that is similar to fabric (such as a tablecloth and plastic gloves), but hard plastic is more similar to hard material such as dishes where מלבן does not apply. In other words, the ארחות שבת is being מחדש that when the *posskim* ruled that plastic has the same *halachic* status as leather, that applies only to soft plastic, but hard plastic is not subject to the prohibition of מלבן at all. (What emerges is that scrubbing plastic is permitted with regards to either כלים or hard plastic, even if the hard plastic is not a כלי.)

What is the *halacha* with regards to soft contact lenses? Are you allowed to soak them and scrub them in contact lens solution? We learned above that the modern day *posskim* forbid scrubbing soft plastic but allow pouring water on it and soaking it. Accordingly, it would seem at first glance that since soft contact lenses are made of plastic, soaking them should be permitted, but scrubbing them would be prohibited (similar to a soft plastic tablecloth). However, there is a fundamental difference between a soft plastic tablecloth and soft lenses. A plastic tablecloth does not absorb moisture at all, while soft contact lenses absorb a large amount of water and may be more similar to clothing (see bit.ly/contactlensesinfo). As we saw in סעיף ט', soaking clothing in water is forbidden because it absorbs the water and thereby cleans any embedded dirt and the same would apply to contact lenses. Furthermore, even if we would consider contact lenses to have the same *halachic* status as leather (because leather ultimately does absorb some water), only soaking leather in water is permitted, but soaking leather in water mixed with detergent is still prohibited because using detergent is the formal method of מלבן. Similarly, it should be forbidden to soak your contact lenses in lens solution since lens solutions contain cleaning agents that remove dirt, residue, and protein buildup from within the lens itself.

Our analysis so far seems to indicate that two main reasons exist to forbid placing soft lenses in contact lens solution: 1) Maybe lenses have the status of a garment since they absorb lots of moisture. 2) Even if they have the status of leather, only soaking them in water is permitted, but not in contact lens solution that contain cleaning agents. For these reasons, the **ארחות שבת** (21) *passkins* that soaking soft lenses in contact lens solution is prohibited, and scrubbing them is certainly prohibited. Nevertheless, the **ארחות שבת** (ח"ב בירורי הלכה סימן ה) and in *פסק"ד* י"ג סקס"ד *passkin* that soaking lenses in saline solution is permitted for a number of reasons. Firstly, if soft contact lenses have the *halachic* status of leather, then soaking them in saline solution is permitted because the saline does not penetrate and clean the lens; at best, it removes some excess residue found on top of the lens. Secondly, even if soft contact lenses have the status of clothing (since they absorb a lot of moisture) the *S"A* in *ט' סעיף ט' passkins* like the *ר"י* that soaking clean clothing in water is permitted when you are not intending to clean them. In the case of saline solution, your intention is to preserve the moisture and not necessarily to clean. Thirdly, no dirt is visible in the contact lenses and *מלבן* is only forbidden when the cleaning process is noticeable. (The third reason given here would apply equally to contact solution as well, but the **ארחות שבת** would not solely rely on it; he is only using it here as a *צירוף*.)

Rav Yonaton Singler in (*חוברת י"ז-עמ' ה*) **אור השבת** (22) *passkins* that even soaking lenses in contact lens solution is permitted. He explains that according to the *אבני נזר*, *מלבן* of *מלאכה* is only forbidden if the cleansing is noticeable. When you place your contact lenses in the solution at the end of a long day, there is no visible dirt on the lenses themselves. The reason you are soaking them in lens solution is solely preventative; to make sure that the dirt/protein from your eyes does not accumulate. This is not considered laundering and is permitted on Shabbos. However, if your lenses dry up or are very dirty you are not allowed to place them in contact lens solution. At the conclusion of this *תשובה*, Rav Sternbuch writes that he reviewed it and agrees with what is written.

Based on what we have seen, scrubbing soft lenses on Shabbos is forbidden according to all opinions. With regards to placing them in solution, the **ארחות שבת** forbids placing in contact lens solution but permits placing them in saline solution. Rav Singler and Rav Sternbuch argue that even placing lenses in contact lens solution is permitted. *Lema'aseh* you should ask your LOR as this is a question of an *איסור דאורייתא*.

G. Soaking Fabric with Water

In this section we will discuss the *halachos* of *שרייה* – soaking fabric in water, which is the first of the three steps of laundering. We briefly mentioned in the previous section that soaking dirty fabric in water is forbidden because the absorbed water begins to loosen and remove the stain that is embedded in the fabric. It should be noted, that soaking clothing is forbidden in water or cleaning agents, but soaking clothing in wine or dirty water is not prohibited because you are dirtying the clothing (see *S"A* *שלד-כד*).

By way of introduction, we should note that soaking or wetting a garment can consist of two separate prohibitions, one biblical and one rabbinic. Completely soaking a garment or even adding small

amounts of water (משנ"ב סקמ"ד)¹ to a garment is a violation of כיבוס דאורייתא (more specifically שרייה – the initial step of כיבוס). However, we will see shortly that in certain situations soaking a garment is permitted and not considered כיבוס, yet Chazal still forbade soaking it completely lest you come to wring it out, thereby transgressing סחיטה (see S"א שא-ג). Therefore, whenever we approach cases of water being placed on a garment, we first need to determine whether the כיבוס of דאורייתא is being transgressed. Even if it is not, we still need to examine whether the איסור דרבנן of "שמא יחסט" – lest you wring it out, applies.

We will begin by learning the משנ"ב סקל"ט who quotes a three-way ראשונים מחלוקת regarding the conditions needed to transgress the איסור דאורייתא of כיבוס by soaking/wetting a garment. The ר"י *passkins* that wetting/soaking clean garments on Shabbos is biblically permitted because you are not cleaning anything. Wetting fabric with water is only forbidden if the fabric is dirty (in which case it is forbidden even if you only add small amounts of water to the stain, such as saliva) because only then is your action actually cleaning the garment. רבינו תם argues that even wetting/soaking clean garments is forbidden because wetting a garment is an act of כיבוס.² However, if you wet a garment "בדרך לכלוך" – in a manner that dirties the garment, it is permitted because that clearly cannot be considered כיבוס – the beautification of the garment. Therefore, drying your hands on a clean shirt is permitted even though you are wetting the shirt, because you are dirtying the shirt in the process. The יראים argues that wetting any garment is forbidden even if done בדרך לכלוך, because wetting a garment is automatically defined as the beginning of the first stage of כיבוס, regardless of the intent or context of the wetting.

The S"א in סעיף ט' *passkins* like the ר"י that only wetting a dirty garment is forbidden (מדאורייתא), but wetting a clean garment is permitted (see מג"א סקכ"א). The *Rama* explains that even according to this opinion, only adding a little bit of water to the clean garment is permitted, but completely soaking it in water is rabbinically forbidden lest you wring out the water from the fabric (i.e., סחיטה). The *Rama* then brings the opinion of ר"ת who argues on the S"א and says that wetting clean fabric is also forbidden. The S"א in סעיף י' writes that it is "טוב", or "a good idea," to shake the water off of your hands after washing them before drying them on a cloth. This suggestion is based upon the opinion of the יראים that wetting a fabric even בדרך לכלוך is prohibited. The S"א does not appear to be *passkening* completely like the יראים here (in which case it would be forbidden to wipe one's wet hands on a towel), but rather suggesting that adopting his position as a חומרא is worthwhile. The *Rama* argues and says that the custom is in accordance with the opinion of רבינו תם that any wetting that is done בדרך לכלוך is permitted. Therefore, wiping your hands on a cloth after washing them is permitted, since you dirty the cloth while drying your hands. The (שב-יט) 23 *passkins* like the S"א in סעיף ט' that adding small amounts of water to a clean garment is permitted, but anyone who is מחמיר like the יראים should be blessed (תבוא עליו ברכה).³ The משנ"ב סקמ"ח *passkins* that one should be מחמיר like the

¹ Small amounts of water = טופח ע"מ להטפיה, see משנ"ב סימן שח סקס"ג

² See (קנט סק"י) who explains לשיטתו (as we saw with the contact lenses), that ר"ת would permit wetting a new or completely clean garment since מלבן does not apply to completely clean clothing. In his opinion, ר"ת is only מחמיר with a garment that was worn a few times and still considered "clean". The (סכ"א) and the ביה"ל שו"ע הרב understand that ר"ת is מחמיר even with a new and completely clean garment.

³ See (ד"ה שיש עליו) who argues on this and writes that from the S"א in שלד-כד it is evident that the S"א is חושש for the opinion of ר"ת.

Rama that adding any amount of water to a fabric or garment, even a clean one, is prohibited unless it is done "בדרך לכלוך" – in a manner of dirtying.

To summarize, everyone agrees that pouring small amounts of water onto a stain to remove it is *אסור מדאורייתא*. Pouring a little bit of water onto a clean fabric is permitted according to the *S"A* and forbidden according to the *Rama* unless it is done בדרך לכלוך – such as drying one's hands. Additionally, even in situations where wetting a garment is permitted (i.e. it is clean according to the *S"A*, or it is being done בדרך לכלוך) everyone agrees that fully soaking clean fabric in large amounts of water is rabbinically prohibited lest you come to wring out the water.

	ר"י/א"ס	רבינו תם/ <i>Rama</i>	יראים
Slightly wetting a garment to remove a stain	אסור מדאורייתא	אסור מדאורייתא	אסור מדאורייתא
Slightly wetting a clean garment to make it look nicer	Permitted	מדאורייתא Forbidden because of כיבוס	מדאורייתא Forbidden because of כיבוס
Slightly wetting a clean garment בדרך לכלוך – in a manner that dirties it	Permitted	Permitted	מדאורייתא Forbidden because of כיבוס, the <i>S"A</i> writes that it is good to be חושש for this opinion (י' סעיף')
Completely saturating a clean garment in water to beautify it	Forbidden מדרבנן – lest you wring it out	מדאורייתא Forbidden because of כיבוס and מדרבנן – lest you wring it out	מדאורייתא Forbidden because of כיבוס and מדרבנן – lest you wring it out
Completely saturating a garment בדרך לכלוך	Forbidden מדרבנן – lest you wring it out	Forbidden מדרבנן – lest you wring it out	מדאורייתא Forbidden because of כיבוס and מדרבנן – lest you wring it out

Practical examples:

Drying one's hands on a towel: If the towel is clean the ר"י would permit, and רבינו תם would also permit because drying one's hands is considered "דרך לכלוך" – it dirties the towel. The *S"A* writes that it is best to first forcibly shake your hands before drying them in order to be חושש for the opinion of the יראים who forbids wetting garments even בדרך לכלוך. The *חומרא* (שב-כח) *ילקוט יוסף* writes that this is only a *חומרא*, but מעיקר הדין it is allowed. The *Rama passkins* like רבינו תם that you do not need to shake off your hands before drying them, because drying hands on a towel is considered דרך לכלוך.

Bathing a baby on Shabbos/YT: In a situation where bathing a baby is permitted, the ביה"ל ד"ה דלא *passkins* that you are allowed to place a towel on the bottom of the bath so the baby does not slip. This is permitted only with a clean towel because in this situation, we can rely on the ר"י quoted in the *S"A* ט' סעיף that wetting clean clothing is permitted. Furthermore, he explains that even רבינו תם

might agree with this conclusion because wetting the towel in such a fashion is considered **דרך לכלוך** since the towel is soiled in the bath water. Nevertheless, we must still explain why it is permitted to fully submerge a towel in the bathwater. True, there is no **איסור דאורייתא** of **כיבוס** (because it is clean/ **דרך** (לכלוך), but it should still be forbidden **מדרבנן** because Chazal forbade fully soaking a garment lest you wring it out. The **ביה"ל** explains that for a **סכנה** **שאינ בו** Chazal did not forbid soaking a garment (and in the next section we will see that there are two other cases where Chazal did not forbid fully soaking a garment).

Spraying disinfectant spray on clothing to protect against COVID: In China and many places around the world, “disinfection tunnels” have been built throughout city streets to disinfect the masses from COVID. It works by *shpritzing* disinfecting liquid on the passerby, **see video:** bit.ly/disinfectingtunnel. Are you allowed to enter one of these tunnels on Shabbos (assuming that it is always on and you are not electronically triggering them to turn on)? According to the **S”A** who *passkins* like the **ר”י**, walking through the tunnel with clean clothing is permitted since **כיבוס** does not apply to clean clothing. According to the **Rama** who *passkins* like the **ר”ת** that wetting clean clothing is forbidden, it would seem to be forbidden. However, the **שו”ע הרב** (שב-כא) (24) explains that “**דרך לכלוך**” also includes wetting a garment that you are wearing when you would prefer to keep it dry. This is the reason that you are allowed to walk outside in the rain even though your clothes get wet. Since you would prefer to use an umbrella and not get your clothing wet, it is considered **דרך לכלוך** when the rain falls on them (as opposed to sprinkling water on a shirt to remove wrinkles, which is considered **כיבוס** **דרך** and is forbidden). Therefore, according to the **שו”ע הרב**, you would be allowed to walk in this disinfection tunnel since the wetting of your garment is considered **דרך לכלוך**.

Although there is no prohibition of **כיבוס דאורייתא** to walk through the disinfection tunnel, we must still determine whether any rabbinic prohibition exists of wetting your clothing “**שמא יסחוט**” – lest you wring out your garment. The **משנ”ב** **סימן שח סקס”ג** *passkins* that if your clothing is saturated to the level of **טופח על מנת להטפיה** – the fabric is wet enough that when your hand touches it, it will have enough moisture left on it to wet the next thing you touch, the **גזירה** of Chazal of **שמא יסחוט** applies that you might come to wring it out (but see also **משנ”ב** **סימן שא-סקקע”א** and **משנ”ב** **סימן שב-סקנ”א**). Therefore, if your clothing would not be saturated with moisture to the level of **טופח על מנת להטפיה** after walking through the tunnel, you would be allowed to walk through. If your clothing is saturated to the level of **טופח על מנת להטפיה**, it would seem to be problematic because of **שמא יסחוט**. Nevertheless, the **משנ”ב** **סימן שש”כ** (מ-ו) *passkins* that fully soaking clothing of a sick person in a disinfectant liquid is permitted if the patient is sick with a contagious disease and you wish to prevent further contamination. The reason is that your intention is not to clean the clothing, but to disinfect it. In **פרק טו-ד** the **שש”כ** qualifies that you are only allowed to soak the clothing in disinfectant liquid, but not in any products regularly used during laundering, such as bleach or detergent. Therefore, if someone was exposed to a COVID patient, such as a doctor or nurse in the hospital, it would certainly be permitted to walk through one of these disinfecting stations on Shabbos. However, if you just want to walk through the tunnel for an added level of protection, the **שש”כ** might not be **מקיל**. It should be noted that the WHO does not recommend spraying indoor or outdoor spaces (and especially people) with disinfectant (see here page 2: bit.ly/WHOspray). There is an Israeli water-based disinfectant spray product that is approved for use, see here: bit.ly/CovidTunnel. This *halacha* is applicable with the clothing of people with other

contagious diseases such as Hepatitis, Ebola etc., where soaking them on Shabbos with disinfecting material is permitted, but with detergent is forbidden.

H. Wringing Out Liquid from Fabric

In the past two sections we discussed the prohibition of soaking fabric in water. In section E. we discussed the prohibition of scrubbing fabric (even without water). Bez"ח, in this section we will discuss the prohibition of סחיטה – wringing out water from fabric, and the additional safeguards that Chazal enacted to ensure that you do not wring out a garment. We will learn the ראשונים, delve into the S"א/Rama, and then learn all the practical applications of these דינים, such as cleaning up spills, drying dishes, using baby wipes and more!

We mentioned at the beginning of section F. that wringing out water from a fabric – סחיטה, is the last stage of laundering and is forbidden because of מלבן. This is the opinion of the רמב"ם (פ"ט-יא) (25). However, רבינו תם (26) in Tosfos adds that wringing out water from a garment is also forbidden because of מפרק – squeezing juice out of fruit, which is the תולדה of דש. מפרק is only biblically forbidden when you plan on using the liquid that was squeezed out (as is the case with juicing). Whenever we discuss סחיטה, we need to look at its two facets of מלבן and מפרק. Therefore, if you are squeezing a fabric to clean it and also to obtain the liquid that is absorbed, you are transgressing the prohibitions of both מלבן and מפרק. However, if you are squeezing fabric to clean it and do not need the absorbed liquid, you are only violating מלבן and not מפרק.

As mentioned in the previous section and in the Rama ט' סעיף ט' that Chazal forbade completely soaking a garment in water (even in circumstances where wetting a garment is permitted, such as a clean garment according to the S"א) lest you come to squeeze it out, which could possibly violate two איסורים דאורייתא. Furthermore, the Rama in סימן שא-מו passkins that you are not allowed to carry or handle wet clothing lest you come to squeeze it out. However, there are three circumstances where Chazal were not גוזר and allowed you to deliberately soak your garments (assuming there is no prohibition of כיבוס, i.e., it is a clean garment or it is דרך לכלוך). Firstly, the S"א in סימן שא-ה passkins that for the sake of a מצוה you are allowed to saturate your garment. Therefore, walking through a river to learn Torah from your Rav is permitted even if your pants will get completely soaked.⁴ Secondly, as we saw in the ביה"ל ד"ה דלא, soaking a garment for a סכנה בו שאין חולה שאין בו סכנה is permitted, and that is why you are allowed to place a clean towel in a bath so that the baby does not slip.⁵ Thirdly, the Rama in סימן שא-מו passkins that if you do not care that your garment gets entirely soaked, Chazal did not forbid getting it wet.⁶ In other words, people will only be tempted to wring out a garment if they do not want it

⁴ This applies only if there is no biblical prohibition of כיבוס, either because your garments are clean (S"א) or because walking in the river is considered דרך לכלוך (Rama).

⁵ Here too, there is no prohibition of כיבוס, either because the towel is clean (S"א) or because placing a towel in the bath water is considered דרך לכלוך (Rama).

⁶ See previous note; the same is true here as well.

to get wet, but if you do not mind that the garment is wet, you are allowed to soak it. For example, it is permitted to soak a towel whose main purpose is to absorb liquid.

The S" A in **סניף יב** *passkins* that you are not allowed to dry a cup with a regular cloth because you will come to wring it out once it gets wet. The **סקנ"ט-ס** **משנ"ב** explains that using a towel to wash your dishes is permitted since the towel is designated to dry dishes and you do not care about the towel getting wet (i.e., there is no rabbinic decree that you will come to wring it out) and there is no prohibition of **כיבוס** (either because it is a clean towel or because wetting it through drying dishes is considered **לכלוך** (דרך לכלוך)). However, the **משנ"ב** says that you are not allowed to dry a very narrow cup, because when drying the cup, you will inevitably cause the absorbed water to be squeezed out of the towel. This would be forbidden because of **מלבן**, though not because of **מפרק** since you do not intend on using the water. (The **סקנ"ט** **משנ"ב** explains that it is forbidden even according to the opinions who hold that soaking a clean garment is permitted, because squeezing liquid out of a fabric is forbidden with all types of fabric.)

To summarize, squeezing water out of a fabric is forbidden because of **מלבן**, and if you plan on using that water it is also forbidden because of **מפרק**. Chazal also forbade soaking and handling wet clothing lest you come to wring out the water. However, for the sake of a **מצוה** or for a **חולה שאין בו סכנה** it is permitted. Additionally, if it is a type of garment that you do not care if it gets fully saturated, Chazal allowed you to wet it and move it because they were not worried that you would come to squeeze out the water. Similarly, if only a little bit of water is absorbed in a garment, you are allowed to move it because there is no **חשש** that you would come to wring out the garment. All of these exceptions to the rule are only permitted if there is no separate prohibition of **כיבוס** (i.e., you are wetting a clean garment (S" A), or the wetting is being done **בדרך לכלוך** (*Rama*)).

Bez" H, we will now apply what we learned in the previous two sections.

Practical Examples:

Water fight: Having a water fight on Shabbos is forbidden (even if there is no problem of **כיבוס**, i.e., you are wearing clean clothing (S" A) or it is considered **לכלוך** (Rama)) due to the **חשש דרבנן** of **חסיטה** that you might come to wring out your clothing.

Drying Dishes: How is drying your dishes allowed if the towel gets completely wet? It seems that you are transgressing an **איסור דרבנן** of fully soaking the garment (lest you squeeze it) and an **איסור דאורייתא** of **שרייה** (soaking a garment). The **סקנ"ט** **משנ"ב** writes that there is no **איסור דרבנן** of soaking your towel lest you come to wring it out since the purpose of the towel is to dry your dishes and its getting wet does not bother you. There is also no biblical prohibition of **שרייה** either because the towel is clean (S" A) or because it is getting wet **בדרך לכלוך** (*Rama*). However, drying the dishes with an undershirt or other fabric that you care about is forbidden lest you squeeze out the water (and possibly because of **מבטל כלי מהיכנו**). The **סקנ"ט** **משנ"ב** adds that drying a narrow glass is forbidden even with a dish towel since the towel will definitely squeeze out some water. Although with regards to using a dish towel Chazal were not worried that you would come to wring it out (because the wetness of the towel does not bother you), deliberately squeezing out the absorbed water is forbidden. When drying a narrow cup, since the water will certainly get squeezed out of the towel, it is views as if you intentionally did so.

Similarly, if the drying towel becomes completely saturated you are no longer allowed to use it for any dishes lest you come to squeeze out some water.

Drying your hands on a very wet towel: This is very common in *Yeshivos* in Israel where they have a communal towel on a rack outside the bathroom and the entire Yeshiva dries their hands on the same towel (for months on end). If this towel is completely saturated, it is forbidden to dry your hands on it because you will inevitably squeeze out some water. This is based on the משנ"ב סק"ס that drying a narrow glass is forbidden lest you squeeze out water from the towel and the פסקי תשובות (סימן שב, writes this explicitly.

Cleaning up spills off of hard surfaces: The פסקי תשובות (שב-לא) (27) writes that cleaning up a mess with a towel that is designated for cleaning messes is permitted. There is no violation of כיבוס since you are wetting the towel בדרך לכלוך and there is no חשש סחיטה since it is a garment that is meant to get wet and you do not care about its being wet. When wiping up the spill, you should be vigilant to do so gently, as the S"A in סעיף ט' writes, while making sure that you do not squeeze any absorbed liquid from the towel. However, if it is a big spill and the towel will become fully saturated, you are not allowed to use the towel because you will inevitably wring out the absorbed water when handling it, and you might come to wring it out in order to finish cleaning the spill (see also ספר ל"ט מלאכות (מלבן-הע' (ג-38). Therefore, if there is a big spill it is best to use a large towel, or many towels at a time and lift them up slowly, making sure not to squeeze out any absorbed liquid. The best suggestion would be to use a squeegee to gather the water and then use a towel to clean up the small amount of wetness that is left.

When cleaning up a spill, does it make a difference whether you use a cloth towel or paper towels? The שש"כ (כ"ג-ז) (28) writes that it is best to clean up messes with disposable (pre-cut) paper towels. The reason for this is based on Rav Moshe (29) in ח"ב-ע) who explains that since the paper towels are used once and thrown out, no one wrings them out to clean them, so there is no problem of מלבן. There is also no חשש סחיטה when completely soaking them since they are disposable and not reusable. Additionally, even if some water does get squeezed out when handling it, it is a דבר שאינו מתכוון (since water does not always get squeezed out) which is permitted, though intentionally squeezing out water would be forbidden.

Cleaning up spills off of absorbent material such as tablecloths/couches: Here too, there is no issue of כיבוס on the towel since the spill ruins the towel (i.e., it is בדרך לכלוך), and there is no חשש סחיטה since you do not mind that the towel/paper-towel is getting wet. Therefore, the פסקי תשובות (שב-לא) (30) writes that when liquid spills on the tablecloth, you are allowed to gently place a towel/paper-towel on the spill and allow it to absorb the spill that is resting above the tablecloth. However, pressing a towel/paper-towel on the tablecloth is forbidden because you are squeezing out the spill from the tablecloth, thereby cleaning it, which violates the prohibition of סחיטה. The same applies to a spill on the carpet or absorbent furniture.

The פסקי תשובות adds that if an expensive drink (such as whiskey) spills, you are not allowed to soak it up using a towel with intent to squeeze it out after Shabbos, because we are worried that you may do so even on Shabbos.

To summarize, cleaning a spill of any type with clothing is forbidden lest you come to wring it out. Cleaning a spill on a hard surface is allowed if a towel is used, provided the towel does not get fully saturated, at which point there would be a **חשש שמא יסחוט**. Additionally, you should not press the towel down too firmly when cleaning the mess off the hard surface and you should not grip the towel too firmly. Both these actions are forbidden due to concern that some liquid may be squeezed out of the towel. Cleaning a spill on fabric is also permitted, but you are only allowed to place the towel on top of the spill; pressing down on it is forbidden.

Soaking a towel to be placed on the head or belly of someone suffering from a high fever: We learned in section G that the **ל"ד ד"ה דלא** allows placing a clean towel in a baby's bath in order that the baby does not slip. There is no prohibition of **כיבוס** because the towel is clean or because it is considered **דרך לכלוך** and there is no **חשש שמא יסחוט** because Chazal were not **גוזר** for a **סכנה** בו שאין חולה שאליו. The same allowance would apply in this case. If a child or adult is suffering from a high fever, you are allowed to soak a towel with water and place it on their forehead or belly. However, if possible, it is best to use paper towels, as we saw above that the **שש"כ** and Rav Moshe suggest that there might not be any prohibition whatsoever of **כיבוס** and **שמא יסחוט** with regards to paper towels.

Dish brush/sponge: The **שש"כ** (31) *passkins* that you are not allowed to use a sponge to wash your dishes on Shabbos. Although there is no **כיבוס** because it becomes wet **לכלוך**, it is still forbidden because of **מפרק** – you are squeezing out water from the sponge and using that water to clean the dishes. The **שש"כ** writes that even using a sponge that remains underneath the water the entire time that you clean the dishes is forbidden because you might come to squeeze out the water from the sponge. In other words, although there is no prohibition of **מפרק** to squeeze a sponge under water (because the water gets reabsorbed in the sponge), it is still forbidden lest you squeeze the sponge when it is not in the water.

The **שש"כ** (32) *passkins* that it is permitted to use what we call a “Shabbos dish brush” with synthetic hairs (bristles) that are spread apart one from another. In the footnote he explains that any material that does not absorb liquid, does not expand when coming in contact with water, and has noticeable space between the bristles may be used on Shabbos. **RSZA** explains that the water trapped in between the bristles is similar to water in a pipe (and not absorbed in the fabric), which may be emptied out. But exactly how much space is needed in between the bristles for usage of the brush not to be considered **סחיטה**? The answer to this is unclear, but if the bristles are as close together as a toothbrush, it may not be used, as **Rav Moshe** in **ח"א-קיב** *passkins* that squeezing water out of a wet toothbrush may be considered **סחיטה** (see also **יג-סקצ"ח**). *Lema'ase*, you should ask your Rav what is considered acceptable.

Walking in wet socks: On a rainy day, it is not uncommon to accidentally step in a puddle and completely soak your socks. Are you allowed to walk with wet socks knowing that you are squeezing water out of them? The **ארחות שבת** (33) (יג-סב) allows you to continue walking home even though you are squeezing out some water with every step. He explains that there is no prohibition of **מפרק** either because the absorbed water that leaves your sock goes to waste or because it gets reabsorbed in your sock. Similarly, this is not considered **דרך ליבון** – the normal way to launder, since the water gets reabsorbed in your socks. Additionally, even if the water does not get reabsorbed, it is a **פסיק רישא דלא** that takes place through a **שינוי**. The **ארחות שבת** (סג) writes that for the same reason, you are

also allowed to walk on a wet carpet if it is unavoidable, even though water will inevitably be squeezed out. This is very common in shuls that place an absorbent mat or towel at the entrance to the shul on a rainy day. If the mat/towel is completely saturated, stepping on it is technically permitted, but it is best to avoid it.

Baby wipes: The use of baby wipes on Shabbos is a highly debated topic among the *posskim* of our generation and much has been written about it. We will mention some of the main points/issues that have been raised by the *posskim*. We noted above that the prohibition of סחיטה can include two biblical prohibitions – כיבוס and מפרק. When squeezing out absorbed moisture from a baby wipe to clean a baby, there is obviously no prohibition of כיבוס because the wipe gets very dirty in the process. However, there is a serious question of מפרק – you want the absorbed moisture in the wipe to be squeezed out because it helps you clean the baby (and it is almost impossible to clean a baby with a regular dry tissue). Are you allowed to use baby wipes on Shabbos?

The (יג-מו) **ארחות שבת** (34) *passkins* that since you benefit from and use the absorbed moisture in the baby wipes you are not allowed to use them on Shabbos because this violates מפרק. This is also the opinion of the (ח"י-כה) **מנחת יצחק**. According to these opinions, the prohibition would include all types of wipes, including disinfecting wipes. These *posskim* would suggest that you spray the baby's bottom with water and then use a tissue to clean it up. This is permitted because you are not squeezing out the water from the tissue; on the contrary, you are only cleaning up the water that you spritzed. Furthermore, even if the tissue gets fully saturated, Rav Moshe and the שש"כ allowed the use of completely wet disposable tissues, napkins and paper towels.

What would be the reasons to permit? We will first learn a few סברות that can be used to be מקיל and then delve into the opinions of the modern-day *posskim*. The first consideration is to determine whether we are dealing with an איסור דאורייתא or an איסור דרבנן. The **רמב"ם** (שבת פ"ח-ז) (35) as well as the majority of ראשונים (see **תוס' רי"ד** שם; **רשב"א** קז א; **רמב"ן** שבת קז א) *passkin* that the prohibition of מפרק/דש applies on a דאורייתא level only to גדולי קרקע (items that grow from the ground).⁷ The **רמב"ם** also adds that מפרק/דש is only forbidden מדאורייתא if you squeeze out liquid the size of a גרוגרת – a dried fig. Many baby wipes are made with synthetic material and the amount of liquid that could be squeezed out is usually less than a גרוגרת. Therefore, the prohibition of using baby wipes made of synthetic material on Shabbos is a question of an איסור דרבנן. (You should check the ingredients of your baby wipes as some do have natural material mixed in.)

Another important consideration for ruling leniently is that the prohibition of מפרק applies only if you squeeze out liquid that is absorbed in the fabric. Most baby wipes are completely saturated with moisture and much of their water actually rests on top of the wipe rather than fully absorbed inside of it. Therefore, if you only use the moisture settled on top of the wipe and not what is absorbed within it, it would be permitted. Furthermore, even if some of the absorbed moisture emerges when using the wipe, it is a דבר שאינו מתכוון and not necessarily a רישא if you wipe gently. Additionally, even if you argue that it is a רישא, it would be ליה לא ניחא ליה if the surface of the wipe is wet enough that any squeezed-out moisture from within the wipe does not help you. Some also add that the cleaning a baby

⁷ The **משנה** on the **רמב"ם** explains that milking a cow is still considered by the Gemara to be an איסור דאורייתא because animals are also considered "גדולי קרקע".

with wipes is לצורך הקטן – for the needs of a child, because it prevents the pain and discomfort that would be involved if you were to use regular tissues. To summarize the halachic considerations we have just outlined, it would seem that if the wipes are made out of synthetic material and most of their moisture rests on the wipe rather than within it, using them would be a דבר שאינו מתכוון or a ספק פסיק of an איסור דרבנן for the sake of a חולה, which should be sufficient grounds to permit. These are some of the סברות that the *posskim* use to allow the use of baby wipes on Shabbos. Many of the modern-day *posskim* have written about the use of baby wipes on Shabbos and we will now learn some of these rulings and תשובות inside.

The (שש"כ יד-לז) *passkins* that using baby wipes that are made of (toilet) paper (as opposed to those made from cloth) could be permitted if you do so gently without forcibly pressing down on the wipe. The (ח"א:יד) **מנחת אשר** (37) also agrees that baby wipes may be used on Shabbos and extends the פסק to wipes made from organic material. He explains that baby wipes are specifically made in a manner where the moisture sits on top of the wipe and is not fully absorbed in the wipe itself in order that only small amounts of moisture are left on the baby, and that moisture can dry instantaneously. The manufacturers specifically design the wipes not to dispose of too much liquid for two reasons. The first is that you would need a different clean wipe to dry the baby and the second is that the baby can develop a rash from the extra moisture (if a dry wipe is not used). Therefore, if you use a wipe gently, only the water that rests on the exterior surface of the wipe goes on the baby and not the moisture absorbed in the wipe itself. Additionally, even if some moisture is extracted from the wipe, it is not noticeable and would be permitted. Furthermore, even if you are using slight pressure it could still be permitted because your intention is not to squeeze out the water but to better clean the child. In other words, even if the water does come out, it is a דבר שאינו מתכוון since it was not inevitable (i.e., it is not a פסיק רישא) and was not your intention. Rav Asher Weiss adds that intentionally squeezing out the wipe is prohibited. (It is unclear if Rav Weiss would permit the use of disinfecting wipes on Shabbos, as is common in many shuls during the week due to COVID, since those might be made specifically to absorb large amounts of water and dispense them during usage).

The (שב-לא) **ילקוט יוסף** (38) writes that some are מקיל to use baby wipes and they have sufficient basis upon which to rely. In the footnote he quotes his father Rav Ovadya Yosef, who was also מקיל when needed for the sake of a baby and when used gently.

We mentioned above that Rav Moshe in (ח"ב-ע) **או"ח** writes that there is no concern for **חסיטה** when using disposable paper towels. The (ח"ו:קצד-ג) **רבבות אפרים** (39) writes that he heard Rav Moshe cited by others as permitting all types of baby wipes on Shabbos, and this is the *pssak* that he personally relates to anyone who asks him about it. He concludes that Hashem should forgive him if he is mistaken, but he thinks that he is correct.

To summarize, the use of baby wipes on Shabbos is hotly debated. The **מנחת** and **ארחות שבת** forbid, claiming that it could even be an איסור דאורייתא if the wipes are made with cotton or other material that comes from the ground. The **ילקוט יוסף**, **מנחת אשר**, and **שב"כ** are inclined to permit and the **כ"ל/ילקוט יוסף** add that great care should be taken to wipe gently and softly in order to ensure that you do not squeeze out any moisture. We have only briefly touched on the issues that arise when using baby wipes on Shabbos, and much more can be written about this topic. *Lema'ase*, ask your LOR.

Below is a summary chart of all the cases discussed above. **The goal of the chart** is to show that whenever approaching a new situation, you need to determine whether the prohibition of שרייה applies (both the prohibition of כיבוס of איסור דאורייתא and the prohibition of סחיטה) and whether the prohibition of מפרק applies (both the prohibition of כיבוס and the prohibition of מפרק).

	שרייה – soaking		סחיטה – squeezing		Conclusion
	כיבוס – laundering	שמא יסחוט	כיבוס	מפרק	
Plastic tablecloth, gloves	Permitted - plastic has status of leather (scrubbing is forbidden)	Permitted - since they don't absorb, there is no prohibition of סחיטה	Permitted - since they don't absorb there is no prohibition of סחיטה	Permitted - since they don't absorb there is no prohibition of סחיטה	Soaking is permitted, forcibly scrubbing is prohibited
Hard contact lenses, Plastic containers	Permitted - because מלבן does not apply to hard plastic	Permitted – they don't absorb	Permitted – they don't absorb	Permitted – they don't absorb	Soaking and scrubbing permitted
Soft contact lenses	Saline solution – permitted Regular lens solution – מחלוקת	Permitted - it is almost impossible to squeeze liquid out of lenses (see full אור in תשובה quoted above)	Permitted - it is almost impossible to squeeze liquid out of lenses	Permitted - it is almost impossible to squeeze liquid out of lenses	Forcibly scrubbing is prohibited. Soaking in saline permitted, soaking in lens solution is a מחלוקת
Drying hands on towel	Permitted - towel is clean (S"A) or water is going on towel בדרך לכלוך (Rama)	Permitted - if it doesn't get fully saturated. If fully saturated prohibited lest you accidentally squeeze some out	Intentionally squeezing out liquid from towel is an איסור דאורייתא	No problem of מפרק because water is going to waste	Permitted when towel is not fully saturated
Towel in baby bath so baby doesn't slip	Permitted - towel is clean (S"A) or water is going on towel בדרך לכלוך (Rama)	Permitted – Chazal were not גוזר for a חולה	Intentionally squeezing out liquid from towel is an איסור דאורייתא	No problem of מפרק because water is going to waste	Permitted

	שרייה – soaking		סחיטה – squeezing		Conclusion
	כיבוס – laundering	שמא יסחוט	כיבוס	מפרק	
Entering a disinfecting spray tunnel	Permitted – your clothing is clean (S”A) or water is going on clothing בדרך לכלוך (Rama)	Permitted if your garment is not טופח על מנת להטפוח; even if it is, it is permitted for the sake of preventing the spread of disease (שש”כ)	Intentionally squeezing out liquid from your clothing is an איסור דאורייתא	No problem of מפרק because water is going to waste	Permitted
Water fight	Permitted – your clothing is clean (S”A) or water is going on clothing בדרך לכלוך (Rama)	Prohibited – you might come to wring out your clothing	Intentionally squeezing out liquid from your clothing is an איסור דאורייתא	No problem of מפרק because water is going to waste	Prohibited
Drying dishes with towel (same as drying hands with towel)	Permitted - towel is clean (S”A) or water is going on towel בדרך לכלוך (Rama)	Permitted - if towel doesn’t get fully saturated, but drying narrow cups is prohibited lest some water squeeze out. If towel fully saturated prohibited because some water will definitely be squeezed out	Intentionally squeezing out liquid from towel is an איסור דאורייתא	No problem of מפרק because water is going to waste	Permitted, unless drying narrow cups or the towel is fully saturated

	שרייה – soaking		סחיטה – squeezing		
	כיבוס – laundrying	שמא יסחוט	כיבוס	מפרק	Conclusion
Using a towel to clean spills off of hard surfaces	Permitted - towel is clean (S”A) or water is going on towel בדרך לכלוך	Permitted - if towel does not get fully saturated	Permitted - if cleaning gently and making sure not to squeeze water out of towel	No problem of מפרק because water is going to waste	Permitted when done gently
Using a towel to clean spills off of fabric	Permitted - towel is clean (S”A) or water is going on towel בדרך לכלוך	Permitted - if towel does not get fully saturated	Applying pressure to the towel is forbidden because you are wringing out the tablecloth/fabric	No problem of מפרק because water is going to waste	Placing a towel/paper-towel on spill is permitted because towel absorbs excess liquid. Applying pressure is forbidden because you are squeezing out liquid from tablecloth
Soaking a towel to place on head of someone suffering from a high fever	Permitted - towel is clean (S”A) or water is going on towel בדרך לכלוך	Permitted – Chazal were not גוזר for a חולה	Intentionally squeezing out liquid from towel is an איסור דאורייתא	No problem of מפרק because water is going to waste	Permitted (not allowed to squeeze towel when finished)
Dish brush	Permitted – brush is being dirtied	Permitted – if the bristles are synthetic with visible space between them	Doesn’t apply since brush is getting dirtied	Permitted – if the bristles are synthetic with visible space between them	Permitted – if the bristles are synthetic with visible space between them
Walking with wet socks or walking with shoes on a wet carpet	Doesn’t apply – because you didn’t pour the water on socks/carpet	Permitted – because סחיטה doesn’t apply (see next boxes to the right)	Permitted – since the water is reabsorbed in socks/carpet it is not considered דרך ליבון	Permitted – the squeezed-out liquid is going to waste or is being reabsorbed in socks/carpet	Permitted – once you get home it is best to remove socks, and it is best to avoid stepping on wet carpet

	שרייה – soaking		סחיטה – squeezing		Conclusion
	כיבוס – laundrying	שמא יסחוט	כיבוס	מפרק	
Baby wipes	Doesn't apply – wipe is being dirtied and you didn't soak it	מחלוקת	Doesn't apply since wipe is being dirtied	מחלוקת	Ask your Rav

I. מכה בפטיש on Clothing

So far in this סימן we have been discussing the prohibition of כיבוס – the beautification of your garment by removing an absorbed stain. The סימן also discusses other *halachos* that pertain to fixing/improvement of clothing on Shabbos, which we will learn about in the following two sections.

The S”A in **ביה”ל** *passkins* based on the (עה:) שבת גמרא that if your new garment has pills (small balls of fabric, also known as lint balls) or strings that have been left over from the initial sewing and you remove them because they bother you, you are transgressing the **מכה** of איסור דאורייתא “the culmination of the מלאכה” (i.e. completing the garment, see משנ”ב סק”ט). The **ביה”ל** adds that even if your new garment has many lint balls, removing some of them is also forbidden. He explains that every job has a final stage, and even partially completing the final stage is forbidden. Therefore, since the final stage of sewing a garment is to remove the excess pills, removing some of them is also forbidden.

The clothing that we buy today is made at a very high standard and does not usually have leftover pills. If so, are there any practical ramifications of this *halacha*? In many new suits, the vents (back flaps) are sewed shut, and in some the brand name of the suit is stitched on the sleeve. The **שש”כ** (40) *passkins* based on the above S”A that removing these stitches is an איסור דאורייתא of **מכה** since the stitching bothers you and the suit is fully ready for wear upon its removal. The **שש”כ** adds that even if there is chalk left on your pants from the tailoring, you are not allowed to remove it on Shabbos because of **מכה בפטיש**.

There are some *posskim* who forbid removing a tag from a new garment if you would not wear the garment without removing it. The reason is that the removal of the tag is considered **מכה בפטיש** since it makes the garment wearable (see **חוט שני**, שבת ח”ב- עמ’ רלב). However, the **שש”כ** (41) *passkins* that you are allowed to remove a price tag that is attached with a plastic string on Shabbos) but if the tag is sewn in, you are not allowed to remove it because of **קורע** – ripping). He explains that the reason it is permitted is because the garment was already “finished” and the tag was added afterwards. Therefore, the removal of the tag is not considered **מכה בפטיש**.

The (77 שב-הע’ 77) **פסקי תשובות** (42) explains that the prohibition of **מכה בפטיש** applies even if the garment was wearable before the final “act”. Additionally, **מכה בפטיש** does not only apply to new

items, but also to older items. However, something that commonly breaks or gets ruined and can be used in its ruined form is not subject to *מכה בפטיש* after being fixed since it is not considered as if you created or finished a *כלי*. On the contrary, you are only maintaining and restoring the item to its original use. Therefore, if a hat gets deformed, you may straighten it out. Similarly, **Rav Ribiat** in *ספר ל"ט* (1137 עמ') explains that the *S" A* only forbids removing excess lint and wool from new garments because their removal completes the garment. However, removing small lint/wool balls that are naturally created on older sweaters is permitted because it is considered merely restoring the former condition of the garment.

J. Folding Clothing

The *S" A* in *passkins סעיף ג'* based on the *גמרא שבת (קיג.)* that folding a garment on Shabbos is only permitted when the following five conditions are all met:

- 1) You are folding the garment to be worn later in the day
- 2) Garment is new
- 3) Garment is white
- 4) You do not have other clothing
- 5) Garment is being folded by one person.

The *משנ"ב סקי"ד* explains that if any one of these conditions is not met, the garment will get wrinkled, and folding it has the appearance of "*מתקן מנא*" – fixing it. Additionally, it seems that there is another issue with folding a garment even if criteria 2,3 and 5 are met (i.e., *מתקן מנא* does not apply), and that is the prohibition of *הכנה* – preparation from Shabbos to weekday.⁸ Based on this, the *משנ"ב סקי"ג* *passkins* that you are not allowed to fold a *טלית* on Shabbos (even if it is new and white) because you are preparing from this Shabbos to the next, which is forbidden (see *שש"כ פט"ו הע' קנה*).

The *S" A* concludes quoting a dissenting opinion that folding a garment not on its crease is permitted and adds that "this seems to be the *הלכה*" because it is evident that you do not care about fixing your garment (i.e., there is no *תיקון מנא*). What about the prohibition of *הכנה*? Are you allowed to fold a *טלית* against the crease and leave it for next Shabbos? The *משנ"ב סקי"ח* *passkins* that you are allowed to fold clothing not on their crease even if you will not use that garment on Shabbos. The *פסקי* (43) *תשובות (שב-ט)* explains that *הכנה* is prohibited because of *שלא לצורך* – unnecessary effort, and folding a garment not on its crease is not considered substantial effort. On the contrary, all you are doing is organizing and it is not considered as if you are preparing from this Shabbos to the next. However, he concludes based on the *משנ"ב סקי"ט* that it is best to be *מחמיר* not to fold at all on Shabbos.

To summarize, there are three opinions with regards to folding clothing. A) Folding a garment is prohibited unless the 5 criteria mentioned above are met, B) Folding against the crease is permitted C) It

⁸ See also *ערה"ש סקי"א* who understands that according to the *רמב"ם* there might only be one issue of *תיקון מנא*.

is best to altogether avoid folding clothing on Shabbos. It seems to be clear that everyone agrees that folding garments on their crease is forbidden. If so, why is it that many people fold their טלית on Shabbos? Why doesn't anyone tell them that what they are doing is forbidden? The **בית יוסף** (שב) (44) quotes the opinions listed in the S"A (that folding against the crease is permitted) and then he quotes the opinion of the **כלבו** who says that the folding we do today (even on the crease) is permitted. He explains that in earlier times, people folded their clothing specifically to remove wrinkles, but today everyone folds all of their clothing and folding is not considered מנא. The **ילקוט יוסף** (שב-קיפול) (45) acknowledges that the S"A does not *passkin* like the **כלבו**, but he quotes the **נתיבי ים** (45) who says that the custom to follow the **כלבו** predates the *pssak* of the S"A. He also quotes from other אחרונים who are מקיל. *Lema'ase* the **ילקוט יוסף** writes that you are allowed to fold a טלית against the crease, and those who fold it on the crease itself have on what to rely.

The **ערוך השלחן** (שב-יב) also writes that there are those who fold their טלית on the crease and they most likely rely on the **כלבו**. **RSZA** in (שב:ח-ט) (46) writes that he does not understand why folding garments today is considered "fixing" if all you are doing is preserving the current state of the garment. *Lema'ase* he is not מקיל because the משנ"ב is extra מחמיר and writes that it is best to avoid folding are garments even against the crease. The **שש"כ** (ט"ו-מח) *passkins* that folding clothing and tablecloths on the crease is forbidden, but hanging up your pants is permitted even if the crease aligns because your intention was only to hang up your pants. Additionally, he rules that folding garments that do not have a crease, such as socks and sweaters, is permitted.

להלכה, it seems that both *Ashkenazim* and *Sephardim* should ideally not fold a טלית or suit pants on the crease, but those who do have what to rely upon. Everyone agrees that folding against the crease is permitted, but the משנ"ב writes that it is best to avoid any form of folding on Shabbos. The **שו"ת ודרשת וחקרת** (על התורה ה' (ח"ב) עמ' תקא) (47) quotes the **מג"א** in the beginning of סימן ש' who cites the custom of the **מהרי"ל** to fold his טלית immediately on שבת מוצאי שבת in order to begin the week with a *mitzvah*. The **טעמי המנהגים** explains that folding your טלית on Motzaei-Shabbos is a סגולה that your wife will live a long life and be healthy. He explains that since your wife bought you the טלית you are showing her that you are taking good care of it and you are not looking for a new wife to buy you a new טלית.