

PASSOVER GUIDE

2021/5781



Friends,

Last year at this time we were getting ready for what we thought would be the single strangest Passover in our lifetimes. I recall believing the next major holiday or observance would be normal. Unfortunately it wasn't, and as I write these words, we're getting ready to embark on what is sure to be another strange Passover. With that said, strange doesn't mean bad or inferior... it just means different. And as such, it's important to remember the importance of Passover and the special place it has in our hearts. Passover 5781 shall be a great one in spite of the real world complexities and complications all around us.

Attached to this letter, you will find the OVS Passover Guide for 5781. This Guide is meant to answer questions regarding foods we can and cannot eat during the eight days of Passover, and how to prepare our homes. **During Passover there are three rules we follow regarding *chametz*, food items that are leavened or have the potential of being leavened:**

- 1. We may not consume any *chametz***
- 2. We may not own any *chametz***
- 3. We may not see any *chametz***

These rules make Passover a complicated celebration, and a misunderstood one. The guidelines on the following pages should help alleviate some anxiety associated with preparing for this wonderful holiday.

Preparing for Passover should not be mistaken for "spring-cleaning" or for an intensive purging of everything edible in our homes. Rather, preparing for Passover is a ritual act of cleaning our homes of forbidden items for the duration of the holiday. Furthermore, Passover cleaning is not something that needs to take place in every single room of our homes... rather we must clean rooms that likely had food in them at one time or another. It's also a time to prepare ourselves to celebrate one of the greatest gifts humankind knows... the gift of freedom. Just as important as it is to prepare our homes to cook and enjoy the holiday, it's equally important to prepare incredible Seders. The Seders should enable all participants to truly relive the moment of freedom from slavery and to discuss this privilege.

OVS is a Sephardic synagogue and a good number of our families are Sephardic Jews. During Passover, Ashkenazic Jews adopt an added stringency not to eat *kitnyot*, legumes and other items. The reasons for this prohibition are many, but the reality is it's the rule for Ashkenazic Jews. Interestingly, not all Sephardic Jews have the custom of eating *kitnyot* on Passover. In this guide, I will stipulate where there are differences in practice between Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews.

Passover begins this year on Saturday night, right after Shabbat, thus requiring some changes to the normal laws and customs of the holiday. The rituals we would normally perform the night before, are moved back to Thursday night and the Fast of the First Born is moved to Thursday as well.

Here are some important dates and times for this coming Passover:

- 1. Ta'anit B'chorim - Fast of the First Born: March 25 8:30 am (following Morning Minyan)**

This commemorates their deliverance from death during the tenth plague in Egypt. It is customary for first-born sons to participate in the meal served in celebration of a mitzvah, such as a Brit Mila (circumcision) or Siyum (the completion of a tractate of the Talmud). Those attending these events on the eve of Passover celebrate with the partaking of refreshments and are then exempt from this fast. (This will likely be done on Zoom)

- 2. Bedikat Chametz (Search for Chametz): March 25 7:53 pm (as close to nightfall as possible)**

A final search for Chametz is conducted after nightfall. Customarily, 10 pieces of bread or any other type of Chametz are placed in various rooms of the house and the search is conducted by candlelight (feel free to use a flashlight) using a feather and/or wooden spoon to gather the Chametz.

- 3. Last time for Eating Chametz: March 27 11:00 am**
- 4. Last time for Annulling Chametz: March 27 11:46 am
(declaring it no longer in your possession)**

This is the time by which you burn your remaining Chametz found the night before during Bedikat Chametz. However, since this year *Erev Pesach* takes place on Saturday night after Shabbat, we are not able to burn the remaining chametz and instead throw all of our remaining Chametz out in a garbage can outside (preferably one not owned by a Jew) and then recite the *bitul chametz* formula found in your Hagaddah.

5. Candle Lighting: Saturday Night:	March 27	8:43 pm
6. Candle Lighting: Sunday Night:	March 28	8:44 pm
7. Candle Lighting: Friday Night:	April 2	7:40 pm
8. Candle Lighting: Saturday Night:	April 3	8:44 pm
9. End of Holiday: Sunday Night:	April 4	8:45 pm

Chametz is permitted after approximately 9:15 pm when dining out and after 9:45 pm when eating at home.

Suggestions to make your Passover experience more meaningful:

- Do everything in your power to stay healthy and to stay safe
- Heed the warnings of our elected officials and medical professionals
- Resist the temptation to put Passover on the back burner
- We are celebrating freedom and not slavery, so keep it fun and keep it meaningful. Do not become a slave to the holiday.
- Ask questions, and don't allow decorum to get in the way of fully experiencing the Seders.
- Eat lots of fruit, and less matzah than you have in the past. Matzah is hard on the stomach and fruit negates this.
- Add something that represents freedom to you to your Seders, and show it to everyone participating.
- Try telling the story of Passover in a new way this year. The Hagadah is a guide book, and embellishing and expanding the narrative is a mitzvah.
- Buy a new Hagadah for this year if possible.
- The most important way to make this year's Seders meaningful, is to go into the Seders, and the holiday, with an open mind and allow yourself to experience Passover 5781 as if it were your first Passover ever.

On behalf of Carrie, Ayelet and Galit, I want to wish each of you a Chag Kasher v'Sameach, a Happy and Healthy Passover,

Rabbi Josh Hearshen

INTRODUCTION

Passover is not just about the food we eat. It's also about the environment in which the food is prepared and where it comes from. During the year, we have laws that govern our food that still allow for a certain level of give and take and some allowances to be made. The laws of Passover on the other hand leave little room if any for give and take and instead we're obliged to only eat foods we know have had no contact with chametz at all. This is why we need to prepare our homes and our kitchens for Passover and why the ingredients we use often need to have special certification on them. This should serve as a guide for how to kasher your house for Passover.

The general principle used in kashering is that the way the utensils absorb food, is the same way they can be purged of that food, (פולטו כך כבולעו Ke-volo kach pol'to). This principle operates on the basis of the quality or intensity of how the items absorb food. Things used for cold food can be kashered by rinsing since no substance has been absorbed by the dish or glass. Items used on a stove absorb food and thus need a stronger level of action, namely expelling the food into boiling water, called (הגעלה) hag'alah). The most intense form of usage is directly on a fire or in an oven and these utensils require the most intense method of kashering, namely (ליבון) libbun), which burns away absorbed food.

METALS

To kasher pots, silverware, and utensils wholly of metal, and not used for baking, thoroughly clean the item with soap and water, then, following a strict 24-hour waiting period during which they are not used, immerse the items in water that is at a rolling boil (הגעלה – hag'alah).

For pots and pans, clean handles thoroughly. If the handles can be removed, do so for an even more thorough cleaning. To effect (הגעלה) hag'alah), the item must be completely exposed to the boiling water. Pots and pans are either immersed in a larger pot of boiling water (may be done one section at a time) or filled with water brought to a rolling boil. A heated stone is then dropped into the pot so the boiling water overflows to cover the sides of the pot. A safer alternative might be let the water boil over the sides of the pot.

In the case of silverware, every part of each piece must be exposed to water at a rolling boil. Following this (הגעלה) hag'alah) process, each utensil is rinsed in cold water.

Metal bakeware used in a fire or in the oven must first be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned and then subjected to direct fire or an oven at its maximum setting. Metal baking pans and sheets require (ליבון) libbun) at very high temperatures which may warp them. This may result in a reluctance to submit the vessel to the required temperature. Thus using a blow torch or putting it in an oven during self-cleaning are two ways to accomplish this purging (ליבון – libbun). *This is a complicated and a potentially dangerous procedure and may result in discoloration or warping of the metal being purged. Exercise caution when performing (ליבון) libbun).*

A metal kitchen sink can be kashered by thoroughly cleaning and scrubbing the sink (especially the garbage catch), letting 24 hours pass during which only cold water is used, and then carefully pouring boiling water to fill the sink. A porcelain sink cannot be kashered, but should be thoroughly cleaned, then Pesach dish basins and dish racks must be used, one each for dairy and meat.

GLASS

Glass dishes used for eating and serving hot foods are to be treated like any dish used for eating and serving hot food. Kashering is effected by cleaning and immersing in boiling water (הגעלה hag'alah). Glass cookware is treated like a metal pot for kashering (see paragraph on metal, above). The issues regarding glass bakeware are complex. Some authorities allow it to be kashered and others do not. Drinking glasses or glass dishes used only for cold foods may be kashered by a simple rinsing. Some follow the custom of soaking them for three days.

PLASTICS

With very few exceptions, plastic cannot be kashered due to its porous nature and its inability to withstand high heat.

CERAMIC DISHES

Ceramic dishes (earthenware, stoneware, china, pottery, etc.) cannot be kashered. However fine china that was put away clean, and that has not been used for over one Jewish calendar year, may be used after thorough detergent and hot water washing. The china is then considered pareve and may be designated for meat or dairy use.

OVENS AND RANGES

Every part of the appliance that comes in contact with food must be thoroughly cleaned. This includes the walls and the top and bottom of the oven. Then the oven or range should be heated to the highest setting. The oven should be heated at maximum heat for an hour; the range top until the elements turn red and glow. Then parts of the range top around the elements that can be covered should be covered, (usually with aluminum foil). After a general and careful cleaning, self-cleaning ovens are put through the full cleaning cycle while empty. Following this process, the oven should be again cleaned to remove any ash. If the oven was very dirty to start, two cycles may be needed to assure a thorough cleaning.

Smooth, glass top electric ranges require kashering by (ליבון) libbun) and (ערוי) iruy) – pouring boiling water over the surface of the range top. First, clean the top thoroughly, and then leave it untouched for 24 hours. Then turn the coils on to maximum heat until they are red hot. Shut off the elements and then carefully pour boiling water on the surface area over and around the burners. The range top may now be used for Passover cooking. Induction stovetops only generate heat when a pot with the appropriate composition of metals is placed on the surface, therefore the method traditionally used for kashering stovetops needs to be slightly adjusted. The tempered glass surface of an induction stovetop should be kashered in four steps:

1. Thoroughly clean the surface. Not just with a damp sponge, but with a cleaning agent designed specifically for the purpose of cleaning tempered glass stovetops. If necessary, follow manufacturer's instructions for removing food stuck to the surface by using a razor blade should be followed.
2. There are two types of induction stovetops:

- a) For induction stovetops with discrete burner areas: Completely clean chametz pots that work on your induction stovetop and that match as closely as possible the maximum radius of each burner area. Leave the clean pots and the clean induction stovetop untouched for 24 hours. When the 24 hours have elapsed, partially* fill the prepared pots with water and place on their size-matching burners. Turn up the temperature to the maximum for each burner until the water in each pot is vigorously boiling. This will generate enough heat to kasher each burner area. Turn off each burner as it reaches this maximum temperature.
 - b) For induction stovetops in which the entire surface is available as a burner surface: Completely clean one or more metal square or rectangular baking pans made of a metal that work on your induction stovetop. Leave the clean pans and the clean stovetop untouched for 24 hours. When the 24 hours have elapsed, partially fill the baking pan/s with water. Think about the surface of your stovetop like a grid. Place your prepared pan/s starting at one corner of your induction stovetop surface and turn up the temperature to the maximum heat until the water in each pan is vigorously boiling. This will generate enough heat to kasher the area under the pan. Turn off the stovetop. Wait for the pan/s to cool. Shift the pan/s to the next contiguous area of the grid of your stovetop and repeat the heating-to-boiling process as many times as necessary until you have kashered the entire area of the stovetop.
3. When cool, thoroughly douse the entire surface with boiling water and then dry with a clean cloth. *Partially filling the pots with water will protect the pots from burning when placed on the induction burners. If it is your desire to kasher these pots for Pesach, simply fill them to the brim, proceed to bring the pots to a boil as described above, allowing the boiling water to spill over the brim of the pots. The pots and the stovetop burners are now all simultaneously kashered, however this method does not kasher baking pans.

Convection ovens are kashered like regular ovens. Make sure you clean thoroughly around the fan.

REFRIGERATORS AND FREEZERS

Refrigerators and freezers should be thoroughly cleaned with detergent. If there are places where food can be stuck (e.g. cracks or difficult corners to reach), these areas should be covered.

MICROWAVE OVENS

Those that have no convection option should be thoroughly cleaned. Then an 8-ounce cup of water is placed inside and the microwave is turned on until the water almost disappears (at least 6 of the 8 ounces is gone). The cup should be moved midway through the process so that the area under the cup is exposed to the steam. Heating to complete dryness may damage the oven. A microwave oven with a browning element cannot be kashered.

DISHWASHER

A dishwasher needs to be cleaned as thoroughly as possible, including the inside area around the drainage and filters. After 24 hours of not being used, the dishwasher is run empty (with racks in), with soap in the dispenser and in the main dishwasher, and set on the highest heat for the purpose of kashering. If the sides of the dishwasher are made of enamel or porcelain, the dishwasher cannot be kashered for Pesach.

OTHER ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

Other electrical appliances can be kashered if the parts that come in contact with חמץ (chametz) are metal and are removable, in which case they may be kashered like all other metal cooking utensils. If the parts are not removable, the appliances cannot be kashered. I recommend small appliances be used that are strictly for Pesach whenever possible, thus avoiding the difficulty of kashering these appliances.

WORK SURFACES

Tables, closets and counters should be thoroughly cleaned and covered for Pesach. The coverings can be contact paper, regular paper, foil or cloth that does not contain חמץ (chametz) (e.g. been starched with chametz starch). Note that covering material should be made of material that is not easily torn. Many counter top surfaces can be kashered simply by a thorough cleaning, a 24 hour wait and ערוי (iruy) – pouring boiling water over them). To have ערוי (iruy) be effective for kashering, the surface must have no hairline cracks, nicks or scratches that can be seen with the naked eye.

- Plastic laminates, limestone, soapstone, granite, marble, glass, Corian, Staron, Ceasarstone, Swanstone, Surell and Avonite surfaces can be kashered by ערוי (iruy)
- Wood without scratches is also kashered by ערוי (iruy)
- Ceramic, cement or porcelain counter tops cannot be kashered by ערוי (iruy)

The potential effectiveness of ערוי (iruy) depends on the material the counter is made of. A full list of counter materials that can be kashered (according to their decisors) may be found on the website of the Chicago Rabbinical Council (CRC).

SINKS

Sinks can only be kashered if they are stainless steel. They are kashered by not using them for 24 hours and then scrubbing them with cleaner. After scrubbing, you kasher them by pouring boiling water over the entire surface. If you have a sink that is not stainless steel, you should use a wash basin to cover the sink and put a hole in the bottom for water to drain out.

FOOD

Now that we have covered the cooking and house items, it's time to turn to the food we eat during the holiday. One of the great critiques of Passover is that the food is not good. The problem often comes from people purchasing prepared, packaged items like Passover cereal. The reality is that if we make delicious food from scratch the rest of the year, we can do the same during Passover!

Passover food has two variations. In the Sephardic world there is a custom to eat *kitniyot*.

The following are considered kitniyot:

- Beans
- Buckwheat
- Caraway
- Cardamom
- Corn
- Edamame
- Fennel Seeds
- Fenugreek
- Flaxseed (Linseed)
- Green Beans
- Hemp Seeds
- Lentils
- Millet
- Mustard
- Peas
- Poppy Seeds
- Rapeseed
- Rice
- Sesame Seeds
- Soybeans
- Sunflower Seeds
- Teff

The following are not considered kitniyot, but may require special consideration:

- Anise
- Carob
- Chia Seeds
- Coriander
- Cottonseed
- Cumin
- Guar Gum
- Locust Bean Gum
- Safflower
- Saffron

The following may be kitniyot and are therefore not used:

- Amaranth
- Peanuts

While eating kitniyot has become a custom for many Sephardic Jews, it was not always the case. Each different Sephardic group had their own approach to this custom. Ashkenazic Jews on the other hand, have not allowed *kitniyot* as an added stringency. As a result, the two different groups need to have their own guidelines. For the Sephardic customs please use the guide prepared by Rabbi Yehuda Boroosan found at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/f0250exxmyccx2/Rabbi%20Boroosans%202021%20Pesach%20Guide.pdf?dl=0>

For Ashkenazic customs please refer to the list prepared by the AKC at: https://kosheratlanta.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/AKC_2021-Pesach-Quick-Shopping-Guide_v3.pdf

You can also visit the AKC website for a searchable list.

The information in the guide was collected from the AKC, Rabbi Boroosan, Orthodox Union and the Rabbinical Assembly.

Important Dates & Times

March 25
8:30 am

Fast of the First Born
(following Morning Minyan)

March 25
7:53 pm

Bedikat Chametz
(Search for Chametz)
as close to nightfall as possible

March 27
11:00 am

**Last Time for
Eating Chametz**

March 27
11:46 am

**Last Time for
Annulling Chametz**
declaring it out of your possession

March 27
8:43 pm

**Saturday Night
Candlelighting Time**

March 28
8:44 pm

**Sunday Night
Candlelighting Time**

April 2
7:40 pm

**Friday Night
Candlelighting Time**

April 3
8:44 pm

**Saturday Night
Candlelighting Time**

April 4
8:45 pm

**Sunday Night
End of Holiday**

Chametz is permitted after approximately
9:15 pm when dining out and after 9:45 pm
when eating at home at the end of Passover.

SELLING CHAMETZ

During Passover we are not allowed to eat, see or own anything that is deemed to be Chametz. Instead of eating these types of foods, we are treated to eight days of enjoying delicious Passover foods. The question thus needs to be asked: What do we do with all of the foods we have that we will not be using during the holiday? Some people would say to throw it all away... that is practical for an opened box of Oreos, but not for our sealed items, all our spices... you get the point. Some people would say we should donate the items... This is a great and virtuous practice I hope many people will do as much as possible. But there will always be an enormous amount of non-Kosher for Passover items in our house. The way we deal with this issue is we sell all of our chametz to someone who is allowed to own it during the holiday, namely someone who is not Jewish. I will take care of this on your behalf. Please fill out the form below and send it back to the office so I can include you and your family in our communal sale. I will also be available at the synagogue, *by appointment*, to conduct this transaction in person. Contact Nicole at 404-633-1737 or nicole.feldman@orveshalom.org to make an appointment. Please note masks are required and social distancing will be observed for in person meetings.

Please return this form, via email to nicole.feldman@orveshalom.org, or in person, to the office by Thursday, March 25, 2021.

אג שמח

Rabbi Hearshen

MEKHIRAT CHAMETZ FORM

I, the undersigned, fully empower and permit Rabbi Joshua Hearshen to act in my behalf to sell all chametz possessed by me—knowingly or unknowingly—as defined by Torah and Rabbinic Law, and lease all places wherein chametz owned may be found. This transaction will be in effect for the duration of Pesach, which this year begins with sundown of Saturday, March 27, 2021 and runs through Sunday, April 4, 2021 at 9:45 PM.

Signature: _____

ALL WHO ARE HUNGRY, LET THEM ENTER AND EAT

I enclose (donate online) this gift of tzedakah made payable to the tzedakah fund, to be used for all people who are hungry or in need. Money collected will be used for me'ot hittin, food provisions donated to people both Jewish and non-Jewish who are in need of food each day.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____ STATE _____

Specific locations of Chametz in the building: _____

Approximate value: _____

TELEPHONE _____