



The Nefesh Project

נפש



# Passover Guide

5781/2021

## Pesach this year - still different!

Pesach is the first holiday ever celebrated by the people of Israel, with the first seder taking place the night before our ancestors even left Egypt. Ever since, it has marked the annual remembrance of the Exodus, the freedom that we must always continue to strive for as human beings and specifically as Jews, and the arrival of spring.

This year, we are still living through the isolation of a global pandemic. With the arrival of vaccines, we can begin to hope that, long before next Pesach, we will see a return to normal life, including getting together with friends and family for our seders. This year, we are still required to be careful; next year, if conditions allow, may we enjoy the company of many guests at our seders.

To help all of our members get ready for Passover, we're sending each of you a **Pesach gift bag** containing matzah, a Haggadah to help you make your seders interesting, grape juice, and some chocolate from Israel as an afikomen gift (it's dairy, so don't have it with a meat meal). **If you can help deliver gift bags, please call Helena in the office!**

And to help you prepare for the holiday, here's a guide for how to clean and kasher your homes, what foods are in and out for Pesach, how to donate to Leket Israel to help feed hungry people in Israel, and a reminder of our first-ever shul second seder on livestream.

**If you have any questions about preparations for Pesach, feel free to call or email me.**

**Are you a firstborn?** Join us at minyan on Zoom, Thursday morning, March 25 for a brief study session and *siyum* following prayers.

**And join us at our first-ever 2<sup>nd</sup> night Pesach seder via livestream at [edmontonbethshalom.org/livestream.html](https://edmontonbethshalom.org/livestream.html)!**

Bettina, our children, and grandchildren (one of whom we're still waiting to meet in person when travel becomes safe) join me in wishing you a *chag kasher v'sameach*, a kosher and happy holiday!



Rabbi Steven Schwarzman

# Selling your hametz



## What?

Jews are prohibited from using or even possessing any hametz (leaven) during Pesach. We clean our homes and, just to make sure, we also transfer ownership of any remaining hametz to a non-Jew for the duration of Pesach. This form authorizes the rabbi to sell your hametz for Pesach this year. **From noon on the day before Pesach (March 26, 2021) until 10 pm on the night after Pesach ends (April 4, 2021), the hametz will not belong to you, and you can't eat it.**

## How?

If you would like the rabbi to sell your hametz, mail, fax, email, or hand-deliver this form back to the synagogue. Note the deadline below!

## What's different this year?

This year, Pesach starts on **Saturday** night. That means that we search for hametz on **Thursday** night and recite the usual formula in the Haggadah renouncing hametz. On **Friday** morning, we burn or otherwise dispose of any remaining hametz - but without a brakhah. Friday is also the last time you can authorize me to sell your hametz for you.

On **Shabbat**, it's not yet Pesach, but we can't get rid of hametz any more. So what do we do? Instead of challah on Friday night and Saturday lunchtime, and instead of regular matzah, which we're not supposed to have until the seder on Saturday night, use **egg matzah** for motzi on Shabbat. It's not hametz, and it has a different taste than regular matzah. Problem solved! On Shabbat morning is when we say that second formula (the daytime one) to renounce any remaining hametz.

## When?

Completed forms must arrive at the synagogue **no later than Friday, March 26, at noon by mail, fax, email, or hand-delivery.**

The rabbi will arrange a hametz buy-back on Sunday night, April 4, after the holiday is over at 9:15 PM. Please do not use your hametz before this time. It won't be yours until then!

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## Authorization

I hereby authorize Rabbi Steven Schwarzman of Congregation Beth Shalom to sell all hametz that may be in my possession on the eve of Passover, wherever it may be: at home, place of business, car or elsewhere, in accordance with the requirements and provisions of Jewish law.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address(es): \_\_\_\_\_

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# Making your home kosher for Passover

The Torah tells us, “Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread; on the very first day you shall remove hametz (leaven) from your houses (Exodus 12:15).” This is the basis for the laws of Pesach. Five grains can become hametz when not prepared specifically for Pesach: wheat, oats, barley, spelt, and rye.



We prepare for Passover by removing all hametz from our possession. There are three steps in this process.

**The first step is the easiest:** we eat down our supply of bread, cookies, cereal, pasta, and so on. The less that remains, the less there is to clean!

**The second step is to clean** our homes, offices, cars, and anyplace else where we normally have hametz. Note: this is not a general spring cleaning. If you want to wash your windows, do that after Pesach. There’s no hametz on the glass. Focus instead on where food normally lives: the kitchen, the dining room, under the couch cushions, and anyplace else where you cook or eat and hametz might be lurking. The windows and the attic can wait till another time (unless you eat there).

**And the third step is to *kasher*** the kitchen for Pesach use.

Steps one and two you know how to do, so what follows are guidelines for step three.

## Utensils and dishes

The term *kashering* means making something kosher, in this case for Passover use. If something is new and has never been used, you don’t have to kasher it.

1. **Pots** made of metal can be kashered by filling them with water, bringing the water to a boil, and causing the water to flow over the sides of the pot. Handles and lids should be immersed in boiling water also. Teflon and porcelain enamel pots cannot be kashered.
2. **Cutlery** and other items made of metal can be kashered by a thorough cleaning and a five-second immersion in boiling water (using one of the pots you kashered). Plastics can also be kashered this way if they won’t be damaged.
3. The Ashkenazi custom for kashering **drinking glasses** is by soaking them in water for 72 hours. (Change the water after every 24-hour period). The Sephardi custom is to simply wash the glassware with soap and hot water.
4. **Baking dishes** used during the year cannot be kashered for Pesach.
5. **Chinaware, enamelware, earthenware, and porcelain** cannot be kashered. **Fine china** that has not been used for a full year is considered kosher and parve, and can be designated for either meat or dairy use (but not both, obviously!) going forward.
6. **Pyrex** used for cooking cannot be kashered. All other Pyrex (used for mixing cold food) can be kashered like glassware.

7. **Dishtowels** and **tablecloths** to be used during Passover should be laundered normally with detergent and water before the holiday.

8. **Oven-safe metal utensils** may be kashered in an oven at high heat; see below for how to kasher an oven.

## Appliances and surfaces

1. **Refrigerators and freezers** should be cleaned. It isn't necessary to cover the shelves. No kashering is needed.

2. **Ovens** should be thoroughly cleaned. After cleaning, heat the oven at the highest setting for thirty minutes. Or, if you have a **self-cleaning oven**, just put it through the self-cleaning cycle. Clean the **stovetop** based on the manufacturer's instructions. Then heat the burners to maximum heat for thirty minutes.

3. **Microwave ovens** should be scrubbed and cleaned. Then boil a cup of water in the microwave until most (but not all) of the water has evaporated.

4. **Small appliances**: If the parts that come into contact with hametz are removable, they can be kashered in the appropriate way (for example: if metal, follow the rules for metal utensils). All exposed parts should be thoroughly cleaned. **Toasters and toaster ovens** can't be kashered. **Dishwashers** can be kashered by running empty through a complete cycle with detergent.

5. **Tables, shelves, and counters** should be cleaned. Some people cover all such surfaces during the entire week of Pesach, though this is not required.

6. **Kitchen sinks**: Clean metal sinks and then pour boiling water over all surfaces. Porcelain sinks cannot be kashered. If you have a porcelain sink, thoroughly clean all surfaces and use a kosher-for-Passover sink rack.

## Food!

Food for Pesach falls into four groups: prohibited foods, foods that are naturally kosher for Passover and don't need certification, foods that don't need certification if you buy them before the holiday starts, and foods that need kosher-for-Passover certification no matter when you buy them.

### Prohibited foods

Prohibited foods – even if they are kosher the rest of the year – include bread, cakes, biscuits, cereal, crackers, pasta, and alcohol and vinegar made from these five grains: wheat, barley, oats, spelt, and rye. All of these are hametz unless specifically marked kosher-for-Passover.

Ashkenazi custom has been to add the following foods (called kitniyot) to the above list: rice, corn, millet, and legumes, i.e. beans and peas, including soy, even though none of these are actually hametz. Sephardi custom generally permits kitniyot.

Kitniyot do not have to be removed from the home and do not render dishes unkosher for Passover. Baby formula that is kosher year-round may be given to infants even if it contains kitniyot. Vegans and others with special dietary needs may use kitniyot without qualms. Some Conservative Jews no longer omit kitniyot from their diet on Pesach. Caution: it is not simple outside of Israel to know whether processed foods that are kitniyot actually contain hametz. If you eat kitniyot on Pesach, stick to unprocessed foods.

## Permitted foods

The following fresh and unprocessed foods require no “Kosher le Pesach” label at all:

Fresh fruits and vegetables	Eggs (whole)
Kosher fish and meat (except ground beef)	Baking soda
Pure, unflavored black, green, or white tea (not herbal, and not decaf)	Whole, ground, or instant coffee (not flavored, and not decaf)
Olive oil (extra-virgin only)	Whole (not ground) spices and nuts

The following foods require no “kosher le-Pesach” label **if purchased before Pesach**:

Milk, butter, cottage cheese, cream cheese, plain yogurt, and kosher hard cheese (but not lactaid or “dairy substitute” products)	Frozen, uncooked fruit or vegetables with no additives (for kitniyot, see above)
Quinoa marked gluten-free	Pure fruit juices with no additives
Sugar, uniodized salt, pepper, natural spices	Cocoa – only 100% pure, no additives

The following processed foods require a “Kosher le-Pesach” label even if bought before Pesach:

All baked products, including matzah, cakes, cookies, matzah flour, cereal, pasta, farfel, and matzah meal	Fruit juices-canned or bottled Sodas
Canned fish; ground meat	Wine, liquor, vinegar, ketchup
Oils, margarine	Dried fruits, candy
Ice cream, chocolate milk, yogurt, sour cream, dairy substitute products	Brown sugar or confectioner’s sugar
Decaffeinated, flavored, or herbal coffees and teas	Frozen processed foods

## **Medicines**

All prescription medicines may be taken in any form. Topical medicines and cosmetics may all be used.

## **Pets**

Pets don't have to observe Pesach, but their owners do. There are three options for pet owners (and note that animals are free to eat kitniyot): 1) you may feed your pet food that does not contain hametz; 2) you may give your pet to a non-Jew for Pesach who will feed it the pet's normal food; or 3) you may sell the pet along with your hametz and feed it its regular food on behalf of the new owner, making sure to keep the pet foods and utensils away from the kitchen. If you choose this option, be sure to note it on your form to sell your hametz.

## **Non-food items**

Detergents and other household items that are not edible may be used for Pesach and do not require any Passover certification. This includes items such as foil, plastic wrap, candles, coffee filters, laundry items, dish detergent, oven cleaner, paper and plastic goods, unused sponges, soaps, cosmetics, and the like.

# First-Ever Online Beth Shalom Second Seder!

Join us for the first-ever  
Beth Shalom Online  
Second Seder  
led by Rabbi Steven Schwarzman  
and Bettina Schwarzman  
Sunday evening, March 28, 7pm  
on the Beth Shalom Livestream  
[edmontonbethshalom.org/  
livestream.html](https://edmontonbethshalom.org/livestream.html)

Haggadahs, Matzah, Grape Juice,  
and Afikoman provided by  
the Nefesh Project at Beth Shalom

**Happy  
PASSOVER**



# **Let all who are hungry (come and) eat!**



Even during the pandemic – and in fact, especially now – we need to remember the words of the Haggadah: “Let all who are hungry come and eat.”

We can’t invite the hungry into our homes this year. But we can, and must, continue to feed them.

Please consider donating to Leket Israel, Israel’s national food bank, to help hungry Israelis – Jews, Arabs, and others – eat on Passover and beyond the holiday.

**You can donate online, and receive a Canadian tax receipt, at [leket.org/en](https://leket.org/en)**

**And please also support the hungry here in Edmonton through one of several local charities.**