

Warm Challah, Warm Rice, Warm Shnitzel for Shabbos Lunch – HOW?

One is forbidden to cook on Shabbos. Today we will discuss the halachos regarding REHEATING foods which are already fully cooked.

The halacha is that “*ain bishul achar bishul*,” that an item which is cooked has no prohibition of cooking it again. For example, one may place noodles into a pot of chicken soup that is off the fire, since it is already cooked. Similarly, we say, “*ain afiyah achar afiyah*,” there is no prohibition of baking (i.e. of dry heat cooking) after something has already been baked. HOWEVER, this only applies to DRY, FULLY COOKED FOOD. With regard to a liquid which has cooled (e.g. chicken soup), most poskim say that there is a prohibition of cooking and one cannot reheat the liquid on Shabbos at all.

NOTE: Sefardim are more stringent with regard to liquids than Ashkenazim. Whereas Ashkenazim can reheat a liquid which is still warm and suitable as a warm drink, Sefardim may not reheat any liquid which is less than *Yad Soledes Bo*.

How May One Reheat Dry Cooked Foods?

There is a rabbinical prohibition to reheat even dry cooked foods on Shabbos in the normal fashion. This prohibition is for 2 reasons:

1. Placing food on a fire or in an oven, looks like cooking
2. You may come to raise the temperature or “stoke the flame” to expedite the cooking process.

Therefore, we will permit reheating foods if neither of these conditions apply. If one can reheat food in a way that it does not look like cooking, then that would be permitted. Below are examples of permitted ways to reheat DRY, FULLY COOKED foods on Shabbos. These ways are all permitted since they do not look like cooking.

1. POT ON TOP OF POT
 - a. One may reheat a dry, fully cooked food by placing it on top of another pot that is on the fire.
 - b. If the pot is directly on the fire, it must have food inside. (This is as opposed to a hot plate, which we will discuss below.)
2. NEAR A FLAME
 - a. One may place a dry, fully cooked item near a flame (but not onto a flame) in order to heat it up.
3. IN A KLI RISHON
 - a. As mentioned in an earlier class, a cooked item (but not a baked item), may be placed directly into a pot of hot food that is not on the flame to heat it up
 - b. However, this *kli rishon* will not be allowed to return to the fire, even if it otherwise would be permitted.
4. BLECH
 - a. One may place a dry, fully cooked item directly onto a blech BUT only in the area of the blech where it is guaranteed not to become *yad soledes bo*. (This means not near the flame.)
 - b. However, Sefardim MAY place dry, cooked foods onto a blech, even directly over the flame. (By blech, I mean a metal sheet that is placed on top of a stove before Shabbos.)
5. ELECTRIC HOT PLATE
 - a. Since an electric hot plate has no knobs, we are not concerned regarding the issue of raising the temperature of the fire.
 - b. The question remains whether one may put food directly on this sort of hot plate on Shabbos. Although some poskim are lenient, it is better NOT to place food directly onto the hot plate, but rather to place an upside-down pan on the hot plate (before Shabbos) and THEN put the food on top of it to reheat. This way it certainly does not appear like cooking. The pan does not have to be very high, but it should be noticeable (so that a cookies sheet would not be ideal).

- c. Sefardim may put the food directly onto the hot plate.

Definition of a Dry Food

It is normal for foods to have some liquid. At what point is it “too wet” to be considered dry?

If the liquid is just to moisten the food and does not accumulate, then the food is considered dry. However, if there is a significant amount of gravy, then that gravy is liquid and may not be reheated on Shabbos.

However, Sefardim are praised for being stringent in this matter. Alternately, a Sefardi may ask a non-Jew to place the “moist food” onto the hot plate. (Only in this instance is it permitted to ask a non-Jew to do a form of cooking on Shabbos.)

Returning Food to a Fire: Chazara

Although one may never place food directly onto a flame, there are certain circumstances in which food which was on the flame when Shabbos began, may be returned to the fire and reused again at a later meal. The halachos are as follows.

5 conditions must be met:

1. The flame must be covered (by a blech).
 - a. This includes ovens, crockpots and other appliances (except for nonadjustable hot plates/platas, which do not require a blech).
2. The Food Must Be Fully Cooked.
 - a. We define fully cooked as food that has been cooked to the point where it would be eaten by most people without further cooking.
 - b. Partially cooked foods (even if they are *maachal ben derusai*) may never be returned to a blech.
3. The Food Must Still Be Warm
 - a. For Ashkenazim this means it could be enjoyed as a warm food or drink. Once it is cooled, it may not be returned to the blech.
 - b. Sefardim may only return a liquid to a blech, if the liquid is still yad soledes bo. (However, if a Sefardi is eating in an Ashkenazi’s home, he may eat the food that was reheating in accordance with Ashkenazi psak.)
4. The Pot Must Still Be In Hand
 - a. One’s hand must remain on the pot for the entire time that it is off the blech.
 - b. You do not need to hold the pot suspended in mid-air; rather, you may rest it on the counter, as long as you hold on to it.
 - c. One may not put the food on the floor or in a refrigerator, since this indicates that you intend to permanently remove the item from the fire.
 - d. Sefardim do not require this condition, BUT may not place the food on the floor or in the refrigerator.
5. You Must Have Intention to Replace the Pot
 - a. One’s original intention in removing the pot must have been to put it back on the blech. If one had not particular intention, then he may return it to the blech, as long as he did not specifically intend to remove it permanently.
 - b. Sefardim do not require this condition.

If not all 5 conditions are met, then:

The first 3 are non-negotiable. They are absolutely required. The latter 2 (pot in hand and intention to return it) are required *lechatchila*, but *bidieved*, if only 1 of those 2 conditions are adhered to, then it is permissible. Examples:

- a. If one mistakenly removed a pot before Shabbos and intended to replace it on the blech before candle-lighting, in case of necessity, one is permitted to return it, as long as the first 3 conditions are met.
- b. If one rearranged the blech on Shabbos, and inadvertently put down the pot, then one is permitted to return it. Also, if one lifted a pot and intended not to return it, but while the pot is still in his hand, decided to return it, then he is permitted.
- c. If the fire went out, then food may be transferred to another blech, as long as it is still warm (and all the other conditions are met).
- d. If one mistakenly removed the wrong pot from the blech, and put it down, and then realized it was the wrong pot, he may return it (as long as the first 3 conditions are met).
- e. Moreover, if neither of the last 2 conditions apply, then in a case of genuine need (meaning a pot of essential food), the pot can be returned (*bidieved*).