

How to Dispose of Your *Chametz*

A *VERY* Brief Overview for SFW Students

Pesach 5775

The following is a brief outline of some crucial information that you will need as you get ready to rid yourself of *chametz* this Pesach. Remember: this is **only an outline**.

In addition, you must get used to - and feel comfortable with - asking competent *halachic* authorities any questions you may have. This includes people in SFW, the Rabbi of your shul, etc.

I. General

1. Prior to Pesach, you are required to remove all *chametz* from your dorm room or any other premises under your jurisdiction. This means that you are responsible to remove any *chametz* in your dorm room (i.e. drawers, cabinets, boxes, pockets, etc.), your *makom* in the Beit Midrash, in your luggage in the storage room on 4th floor, in an apartment you may own, or in any other premises under your jurisdiction.
 - a. Even if you will not be at SFW during Pesach, since you were here within 30 days of the *chag*, the obligation to remove all *chametz* before Pesach applies.
 - b. There are a number of methods that we employ to ensure that *chametz* is removed from our possession: ***Bedikat Chametz, Mechirat Chametz, Bitul Chametz, and Biyur Chametz***. Due to the severity of the issue of *chametz* and due to our year-round "comfort" with *chametz* (since it is permissible all year round!), **we employ all three methods** to dispose of our *chametz*.
 - c. If you have absolutely no *chametz* that you own and/or are responsible for, you will not do *mechirat chametz* (you have none to sell). However, just to be certain that you have not forgotten about any *chametz* that you own, you must still perform *Bedikat Chametz* and *Bitul Chametz*.
2. If you and your roommate(s) own *chametz* together, one of the roommates must be given permission by the other(s) to dispose of the *chametz* or destroy it.

II. בדיקת חמץ

1. General

- i. We are required to perform *bedikat chametz* on the evening of the 14th of Nissan as soon after *tzeit hakoachavim* as possible.
- ii. You must check all places that you own and/or have jurisdiction over where *chametz* may have possibly been brought. As mentioned above, this may include your dorm room (i.e. drawers, cabinets, boxes, pockets, etc.), your *makom* in the Beit Midrash, your luggage in the storage room on 4th floor, in an apartment you may own, or in any other premises under your jurisdiction.
- iii. A bracha is recited before the *bedika* ("..... *al biyur chametz*") and the *bittul* is recited afterward (see below).
- iv. Care should be taken not to speak during the *bedikah* unless it is regarding matters relevant to the *bedikah*.
- v. In our dormitory, only a flashlight is used during the *bedikah*; a candle may NOT be used in the dormitory. (Rav Moshe Feinstein, Rav Aharon Kotler, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt"l and others all allowed flashlights to be used for the *bedika*.)
- vi. If it is your family *minhag* to do so, you should place pieces of bread around your room. Similarly, if it is your family *minhag* to use a feather and spoon, you should use them as well.
- vii. If a person forgot or was unable to perform the *bedikah* on the evening of the 14th, she must perform it on the 14th by day as soon as she remembers. In this case, a flashlight would also be used and a *bracha* is also recited.

2. Leaving the Dorm Early

- i. If you will be leaving your dorm room before the night of the 14th of Nissan, you should appoint your roommate or another suitable person to be your *shaliach* to search your room. In that case, she would perform the *bedikah* for you on the 14th at night and make a *bracha*. However, you would say the *bittul* that night since the *chametz* is yours, not hers.
- ii. If no *shaliach* is available, you must do a *bedikah* in your dorm room and any other premises under your jurisdiction on the night before you leave the dorm before Pesach. This is done without a bracha. Regarding the *Bittul Chametz* after an early search, see below III, 4.

III. ביטול חמץ

1. Another method to dispose of *chametz* is *bitul*, nullification. That is, we declare the *chametz* ownerless.
2. We perform the *bitul* twice: once after the nighttime *bedikah* of the 14th where we nullify only unknown *chametz*, and also on the morning of the 14th where we nullify all *chametz*, both known and unknown.
3. There is a debate as to whether the nighttime *bitul* is recited when the *bedikah* is performed early (see II, 2 above). We follow the the p'sak of Sha'alvim and HaRav Yechezkel Yaakovson shlit"z: whenever you perform the nighttime *bedikah* you recite the *bitul*. In other words, if you performed the *bedikah* early you recite the *bitul* after that *bedikah*.
4. The daytime *bitul* is always performed on the morning of the 14th of Nissan regardless of when you did the *bedikah*.
5. You may perform the *bitul* anywhere, even far away from your *chametz*. However, wherever you are when you declare the *bitul* on the 14th in the morning, keep your dorm room and any other premises under your jurisdiction in mind.
6. The *bitul* may be recited in any language that you understand. If you say it in the Aramaic, be sure you understand what you are saying and find an accurate English translation which, if needed, should be read as well.

IV. מכירת חמץ

1. It is permissible to sell *chametz* to a non-Jew before the *issur* of *chametz* goes into effect on the day before Pesach. What you may sell, what you must sell, and when you must sell it is addressed below.
2. Our minhag is not to sell *chametz gamur* unless it involves significant loss.
3. You have the opportunity – if you so choose - to appoint Rabbi Goldsmith as your *shaliach* to sell your *chametz*.
4. You will be asked to fill out a form that gives Rabbi Goldsmith the right to sell *chametz* on your behalf. The document also gives Rabbi Goldsmith full power and authority to appoint a substitute in his stead to sell your *chametz*.
5. The location and general description of all *chametz* sold must be delineated on the form described in shiur.

V. FOOD ITEMS

The following is a **PARTIAL** list of common **FOOD ITEMS**, in alphabetical order, about which you may have questions this Pesach.

1. Of course, **any food that contains wheat, barley, rye, oats or spelt is chametz.**
2. **Kitniyot** (e.g. beans, corn, peas, rice, etc. or products containing them, corn or soy oil, corn syrup, dextrose, legumes, etc.)
 - i. Sephardim - you may eat kitniyot and, of course, own and derive benefit from them.
 - ii. Ashkenazim - you may not eat kitniyot but you do not need to sell or destroy them
3. **Coffee:**
 - i. Regular, unflavored ground coffee - may be used on Pesach without special certification
 - ii. Decaffeinated Coffee - often decaffeinated coffee is decaffeinated by means of ethel acetate, which is derived from either *kitniyot* or *chametz*. Therefore you may not own or drink decaffeinated coffee unless it has special Pesach certification.
 - iii. Instant coffees often contain maltodextrin, which is derived from either corn (*kitniyot*) or wheat (*chametz*). Therefore you may not own or drink decaffeinated coffee unless it has special Pesach certification
4. **Dried fruits** - Dried fruit are usually treated with oils derived from kitniyot and therefore require special Pesach certification for Ashkenazim. They need not, however, be sold.
5. **Nuts**
 - i. Raw nuts in their shell may be eaten without a special Pesach hashgacha. Shelled nuts that list BHA or BHT (preservatives) in the ingredients may use kitniyot: they do not need to be sold, but need a special Pesach hashgacha if you are of Ashkenazi descent.
 - ii. Peanuts - There are various minhagim regarding the use of peanuts and peanut products. Ask your Rabbi if you are unsure what your minhag is.
6. **Quinoa** - The OU has determined that Quinoa is not *kitniyot* and may be eaten as long as there is proper certification.
7. **Tea** - All tea requires special Pesach certification EXCEPT unflavored, regular (i.e. non-instant, caffeinated) tea bags which may be used on Pesach without special certification.
8. **Vinegar**
 - i. The question of vinegar is a difficult one (see, for example, Mishnah Berurah 447:14). Unless it is clearly *chametz* (e.g. malt vinegar), a question should be asked. In general, we dispose of all vinegar unless it is labeled as Kosher for Pesach. (For example, wine vinegar and apple cider vinegar are made from wine and apple cider which aren't *chametz*. However, due to the possibility that the equipment

used and/or the processing aids are *chametz*, we only use them if they are labeled as Kosher for Pesach.)

9. **Water** (i.e. Bottled Water) - may be used on Pesach without special certification

VI. NON-FOOD ITEMS

The following is a **PARTIAL** list of **NON-FOOD ITEMS**, in alphabetical order, about which you may have questions this Pesach. It is only a partial list and contains only a brief description of the halacha. As a general rule, we usually follow the OU's halachic guidelines.

1. **Aluminum foil & baking pans** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
2. **Antiperspirant** - see "Deodorant"
3. **Bags** (paper or plastic) - may be used on Pesach without special certification
4. **Body wash** - may NOT be used without Pesach certification but do not need to be sold. See NOTE at the end of this list.
5. **Bowl and tub cleaners** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
6. **Copper and metal cleaners** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
7. **Conditioner** - See "Hair Care Products"
8. **Contact Lens Care products** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
9. **Cosmetics** (except lipsticks, see below) - Solid cosmetics may be used on Pesach without special certification. Liquid cosmetics may NOT be used without Pesach certification but do not need to be sold. See NOTE at the end of this list.
10. **Cups** (paper, plastic or styrofoam) - may be used on Pesach without special certification
11. **Deodorant** - Solid and gel deodorants may be used on Pesach without special certification. Liquids may NOT be used without Pesach certification but do not need to be sold. See NOTE at the end of this list.
12. **Detergents** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
13. **Fabric protectors** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
14. **Gels** - See "Hair Care Products"
15. **Glass cleaners** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
16. **Hair Care Products** - All gels, sprays, mousse, lotions, conditioners, shampoos, shaving creams, shaving lotions and shaving gels hair removers and hair treatments - may be used on Pesach without special certification
17. **Isopropyl alcohol** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
18. **Jewelry polish** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
19. **Laundry detergents**- may be used on Pesach without special certification
20. **Lipstick/Lip Balm** - see "Oral Hygiene" below.
21. **Lotions** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
22. **Medicines (see below for Vitamins):**
 - i. Known and tested medications in the form of **creams, non-chewable pills** and **injections** may be owned, used and consumed on Pesach, even if they contain *chametz* or *kitniyot*, since they are inedible. This covers most medicines used by adults.
 1. If an equally effective chametz-free alternative is available, this should be used instead.
 2. The above may not include lactaid pills - even non-chewable. Please speak with a Rabbi to discuss.
 - ii. **Liquid medicines, chewable pills** (and **pills coated with a flavored glaze**) are edible and may contain chametz. Also **gelcaps** may present a problem because they may contain non-kosher edible gelatin. Therefore....
 1. If possible, they should be replaced – under the direction of a doctor – with a non-chewable, uncoated pill.
 2. If substitution is not possible they should be sold if you will not be put in danger (*sakanah*) or if you would not be put in possible danger (*safek sakanah*).
 3. If substitution is not possible and you are in a state of *sakanah* or *safek sakanah*, you may own and consume the medication. The same applies if the condition is not yet a *safek sakanah* but may deteriorate to that point. A Rabbi should be consulted as to whether it is preferable to purchase the medicine before or on Pesach, and as to how to dispose of the medicine once the danger passes.
 - iii. You should exercise extreme caution and consult with your doctor and Rabbi before making a decision not to take a medicine.
23. **Mousse** - See "Hair Care Products"
24. **Mouthwash** - see "Oral Hygiene" below.
25. **Nail Polish** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
26. **Napkins** (paper) - may be used on Pesach without special certification
27. **Oven cleaners** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
28. **Paper Towels** - see "Napkins"

29. **Perfumes** - Solid cosmetics may be used on Pesach without special certification. Liquids may NOT be used without Pesach certification but do not need to be sold. See the NOTE at the end of this list.
30. **Plastic containers** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
31. **Plates** (paper, plastic or styrofoam- may be used on Pesach without special certification
32. **Scouring pads and powders**- may be used on Pesach without special certification
33. **Shampoo** - See "Hair Care Products"
34. **Shaving cream, lotions and gels** - See "Hair Care Products"
35. **Skin cream and lotion** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
36. **Soaps** - Solid soap may be used on Pesach without special certification. Liquid soap may NOT be used without Pesach certification but do not need to be sold. See NOTE at the end of this list.
37. **Suntan lotion** - may be used on Pesach without special certification
38. **Toothpaste** - see "Oral Hygiene" below.
39. **Oral Hygiene** - These products DO require special Pesach certification
40. **Vitamins**
 Our custom is to dispose of (or sell) vitamins unless we are certain that they do not contain *chametz*. (One of the prime ingredients used in making many vitamins and other similar products is "glucose" (a.k.a. sugar), and glucose can be created from any starch, which means that these items may contain wheat (chametz), corn or rice (kitniot), sweet potatoes (kosher for Pesach) or something else, depending on what is available in the country where the glucose is being produced.)
41. **Water filters**- may be used on Pesach without special certification

NOTE REGARDING LIQUID PERFUMES, DEODORANTS, BODY WASH, ETC.

In this list, we follow the the p'sak of Sha'alvim and HaRav Yechezkel Yaakovson shlit"a: they may not be used but they do not need to be sold.

Some authorities (e.g. the OU) permit the full use of all liquid deodorants, perfumes etc. without special Pesach certification.

Other authorities (e.g. the CRC) maintain that any products with denatured alcohol (listed as SD, SDA, [or with a number or letter i.e. SD29C or SD40], SD Alcohol, Alcohol, Denatured Alcohol or Ethyl Alcohol) cannot be used on Pesach unless they appear on a reliable list.

Please ask a Rabbi at SFW, your shul Rabbi or any other competent halachic authority.

Wishing you not only a chag kasher but also a chag sameach!!