

Cheaper, Faster, Better Passover

A Beginners Guide for 2006/5766



Passover is one of the most joyous times of the Jewish year. While preparation requires effort, understanding what is required can make the task cheaper, faster, better and easier, and allow you more time to prepare for the spirit of the Holiday.

CLEANING THE HOUSE *Getting rid of the stuff*

We clean our homes, apartments and offices to ensure that all *chometz* we own is removed or sold before Pesach. *Chometz* is any food made from grain (beer, bread, crackers etc.) Kabbalah teaches that we get rid of spiritual *chometz* too (bad habits, selfishness, cynicism). Jews of European decent also do not eat *kitnios*, rice, corn, and legumes and their by-products. Dust isn't *chometz*, but a cookie left in your pocket is. So we clean every place that a child or lazy bachelor could leave *chometz*. Start by vacuuming the whole house, sweeping, checking pockets, back-packs, purses, and other living areas. Check closets, cupboards, bookshelves, and under couch cushions. If *chometz* fell into a place where it is unreachable by a dog or child you are not required to get to it. This cleaning ensures that we will not have the prohibited amount of *chometz* in our possession on Passover (1oz of edible *chometz*). Remember that your cleaning is also for the sake of preparing for the Festival and you may hire someone to do the cleaning for you if you are short on time.

KOSHERING THE KITCHEN *Making it stuff free*

We treat *chometz* in the kitchen very seriously because we don't want to accidentally eat even a morsel of *chometz* on Passover. First, put away your *chometz* dishes and utensils for the duration of Passover. Second, carefully clean the kitchen as you would normally. After the kitchen is clean, we make it kosher for Passover. Wash down counters and tables where you will place food with a cleaning agent, and cover them with decorative paper, shelf liner or vinyl. Clear out your pantry to make room for Passover foods. Clear out your fridge and cover shelves with wax paper or plastic inserts. Some parts of the kitchen require special attention.

- ❑ Ovens: Self-cleaning ovens - just run one cycle. After it cools, cover inside of oven door with tin foil. Other ovens should be cleaned, let stand for 24 hours, and then put on high for one hour.
- ❑ Stovetop: Clean out dropped food from under burners and broiler. Boils pots of water over every burner on high for ten-fifteen minutes to *kasher* the grates, make them kosher for Passover.
- ❑ Stainless sinks and faucets: Clean, don't use with hot foods or liquids for 24 hours, then pour boiling water over sink starting from drain upwards. Ceramic sinks: Use a plastic container placed inside because they cannot be *kashered*.
- ❑ Microwaves that are plastic should not be *kashered* unless it's your only oven. Metal microwave ovens must be cleaned, let stand for 24 hours, then boil a cup of water inside for a few minutes.
- ❑ Pots, cutlery, plates and cups: It's ideal to own two sets, dairy and meaty, only for Passover use. If you cannot then follow these instructions: Wash metal pots, cutlery, and serving utensils, let stand for 24 hours, then immerse in continuously boiling water. Teflon coated pots and all frying pans are (nearly) impossible to *kasher* for Passover – buy a new one. China, ceramic and porcelain cannot, under most circumstances, be koshered for Passover use.
- ❑ Glass: Utensils made of Corningware, Pyrex, Duralex, and Correlle may be *kashered*, if needed, as metal pots (see above). Regular glass must be soaked for three consecutive 24-hour periods in cold water, changed daily.

BEDIKAS CHOMETZ *Checking for the stuff*

It is a Mitzvah to check for *chometz* before the Festival. By the light of a candle, check your home, office, garage, on the night of the thirteenth of Nissan, which this year is April 11th, 2006. Ten pieces of *chometz* wrapped in foil are placed around the home before the search. During the search, check every room in the house, collect any leftover *chometz* and destroy it in the morning. The ceremony is described at the beginning of every Hagadah.

MECHIRAS CHOMETZ *Selling the stuff*

Any *chometz* that you do not dispose of must be sold to a gentile for the duration of Passover. This is done through a qualified Rabbi who acts as your agent. Sell online at Torah.org or Chabad.org or locally with a qualified Rabbi, a few days before Passover. These items can be kept in your home in a closed and secure place. They can be used a few hours after Passover.

WHAT TO BUY/EAT *How to get new stuff*

Buy all fresh fruits and vegis, eggs, kosher milk, meat etc before Passover. Look for special Passover certification and products at major supermarkets. There are many customs for Passover about which foods we refrain from. Ask your parents, or your Rabbi what custom you should follow. The following reliable organizations certify kosher products year round and for Passover. They have websites with detailed and helpful information about kosher for Passover products: CRC, OU, Star-K, OK. Not all products need a special "P", as is detailed in these on-line guides to their supervised products. Passover cookbooks have helpful recipes for traditional and new Kosher for Passover dishes.

CELEBRATE *Party time*

Now that the house is ready and stocked for Passover, enjoy the retelling of the Exodus from Egypt, Matzoh, Four Cups of wine, and these eight days of celebration. *Have a joyous and kosher Passover!*

This is according to Ashkenazi custom. Sephardic customs do vary.
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