

Customs during the month of Nissan:

It is customary to give Tzedaka, “Ma’ot Chitim” – “Kimcha DePischa” for the needy. The ReMa wrote: Anyone who lives in a city for twelve months has to give Tzedaka to the charity connected to that city for “Kimcha DePischa”. The “Acharonim” added in the name of “Sefer Mitzvot Katan,” that the obligation today is to give to the city charity after 30 days of living in that city.

“Tachanun” is not recited. We do not fast unnecessarily (with the exception of Ta’anit Bechorot and a fast that is undertaken following a dream. According to the Sepharadim, you can fast personal fasts).

Many take upon themselves the custom of reading the “Chanukat Nesi’im” in the siddur every day for the first 12 days of the month.

We bless “Birkat Hallanot” on two fruit trees whose flowers are beginning to bloom: “*Baruch atah Adonay Elohaynu melech haolam shelo chasar b’olamo klum u’bara bo b’riyot tovot v’elanot tovim l’hanot bahem b’nay adam.*” There are some who customarily recite longer versions of the tefilot that appear in the different siddurim of the different Jewish backgrounds (*Eidot*).

It is customary not to eat Matza from Rosh Chodesh Nissan until the night of the seder- so that we are excited/hungry for eating the Matza on seder night. It must be noted that the actual prohibition is really just eating Matza on Erev Pesach and therefore, in the Israeli army, where they “kasher” their kitchens early and feed the soldiers Matza even before Pesach, it is fine for the soldiers to eat Matza during the month before Pesach as long as the soldiers are careful not to eat Matza on Erev Pesach itself.

Shabbat HaGadol

The Shabbat before Pesach is known as “Shabbat HaGadol” for many reasons (it’s worth taking a look at the wonderful article that appears at the beginning of this booklet, written by HaRav Rafi Kadosh).

The ReMa says that it is customary to read the Hagada at Mincha (not specifically at Mincha, but during the afternoon hours) of Shabbat Hagadol from the words “Avadim HaYinu” until the words “LeChaper Al Kol Avonoteinu”. The Mishna Berura explains that we read the Hagada at this point because the miracle began during Shabbat HaGadol, when they tied the lamb to the bed, which is the beginning of the Geulah (redemption). However, the GrA did not engage in this custom because it says in the Hagada, “Yachol MeRosh Chodesh...” which ends by saying that the you read the Hagada when there is Matza and Maror resting in front of you.

It is customary to hear the speech given by the Rav on Shabbat HaGadol. (One of the explanations for why this Shabbat is called “Shabbat HaGadol” is because the “Gadol” (Important Rav in the city) gives a speech on that Shabbat.)

Cleaning the House for Pesach

Cleaning for Pesach takes a substantial amount of time and requires having an order of priorities from a Halachic standpoint – knowing what is important and what can be ignored. There is, of course, the notion of respecting the holiday whereby the house is clean and tidy for the holiday. Pesach is no different from any other holiday in this regard. The Halachic cleaning that must be done requires cleaning in places where chametz may be found and would be significantly relevant from a Halachic standpoint.

It is prohibited to have even a small crumb of Chametz in a place where it might enter into food on Pesach. Chametz in places where the Chametz would not enter food on Pesach carries with it the prohibition of “Bal Year’eh UBal Yimateze” – ‘you shall not see or find’. This prohibition is specifically relating to a “Kezayit” (measure of an olive) of Chametz in one area, or a “Kezayit” of Chametz that is made up of Chametz that is gathered together and put in one area. (For example, lots of crumbs throughout the house that when swept together, creates a “Kezayit” of Chametz in one area.)

The Kitchen

In light of the stipulations about the kitchen, one must be stringent to clean the kitchen thoroughly, so that not even one crumb of Chametz is left. The same goes for oily/fatty remnants of Chametz that can stick to the hands or other things on Pesach. Therefore, one must be very stringent in cleaning the refrigerator and the freezer as well as in all of the cracks and crevices of these appliances. One should use cleaning detergents that spoil the remnants of Chametz, if any are there. One must stringently clean tables and all surfaces that one uses over Pesach, as well as chairs used while eating.

In the section “Halachot of Kashering Utensils” you can find the correct way to Kasher your dishes and other kitchen utensils.

Any dishes/implements used for Chametz have to be put away in a place that will not result in a person coming to use them over Pesach by accident. The Shulchan Aruch wrote that one should hide these dishes and implements in a place that s/he is not used to accessing. In line with this principle, those who store their dishes in the kitchen cabinets, have to close the cabinets in such a way that no one will open them on Pesach out of habit, with masking tape and other such tools. (One can also cover the handles in such a way that they will be very uncomfortable to use and this will serve as a reminder that Chametz utensils are stored inside.)

Aside From the Kitchen, What Else Should Be Cleaned?

Aside from the kitchen, the whole house must be swept. The eating areas must be cleaned well (tables as well as chairs) as well as the walls that are near the areas where people eat if they have been dirtied with Chametz. One must also clean out the pockets of clothing if Chametz goes in them (adults and children).

Cleaning the Car

Cleaning the car has to be very thorough. Very often, especially in a family car which has little children in it, Chametz can be found. It is therefore very important to vacuum the whole car with a vacuum cleaner, including underneath the seats and the rugs.

Vacuum Cleaner

When one is done cleaning for Pesach, one must empty out the vacuum cleaner. Sometimes cleaning the car and other areas can result in a Kezayit of Chametz accumulating in the vacuum cleaner.

Broom

There are those who hold the custom of replacing the broom head for Pesach out of fear that crumbs can be stuck in the broom and can fall into the kitchen. This is the correct custom to uphold. Those who do not uphold this custom should clean the broom on Erev Pesach very well.

Children's Games and Books, etc.

If there might be Chametz in books and games, clean them. If there probably isn't Chametz in them, there is no obligation to clean them. However, do not put books and games that are played with during the year on the Chametz table, on the table during Pesach. (This is the law regarding books, benches and anything else which is put on a table that is used for food during the year.)

Foods That Are Kosher for Passover

Pesach is a holiday in which every family has their own customs with regards to what is brought into the home and what is not. Therefore, every family should be sure to uphold their own customs, as long as these customs have a reputable reason and source. If you have any questions about any custom, you should consult a Rabbi.

Purchasing Food

Kosher for Passover Certification on the Back of the Package: When purchasing food for Pesach, it is important that one is careful that the package has a printed Kosher for Passover certification on it. The Israeli Chief Rabbinate puts out a warning every year that one must not purchase/acquire items which have a kosher for Passover certification printed on a sticker rather than on the package itself out of fear that some stickers may have inadvertently been put on the wrong packages; packages of food that are not kosher for Passover.

Purchasing Meat for Passover: The rabbis who codified the laws of Passover decided that when one purchases meat for Passover, one should not say that “the meat is for Pesach” as it may seem as if the person sanctified the meat and dedicated it as meat for the Passover sacrifice (even though we are not buying a complete animal).

Legumes (*Kitniyot*):

With regards to the consumption of legumes on the holiday, there are many different customs:

- Most Sepharadim allow the eating of legumes, however they sift through the legumes many times before using them.
- The Ashkenazim and those that came from North Africa customarily prohibit the eating of legumes. Many who came from North Africa refrain only from eating full legumes, such as rice.
- Ashkenazic Customs – refrain from eating legumes, however some allow the use of legume-based oils because it wasn’t included in the decree against legumes. There are also those who refrain from using legume-based oils. Anyone who does not know if their family’s custom is to prohibit the consumption of legume-based oils is permitted to use these oils on Pesach. (If someone took the prohibition onto himself, he can do “Hatarat Nedarim”/”Nullification of Vows” and then use these oils.) Even those people who do not eat legume-based oils on Pesach should know that today, Canola and Cottonseed oils are not legume-based even though the kosher certifications say that they are “kosher for Passover for those who eat legumes.” It is therefore permissible to buy Canola-based mayonnaise, tuna fish in canola oil, etc. But one must check the list of ingredients to be certain that these are the only legumes in the product.
- Legumes are permitted for someone who is ill and for someone who is young and needs them – for example, in baby formula.
- A legume mixture is permitted, but it should not be allowed if it has been deliberately mixed, in order to allow the legumes. Therefore, it is not permissible to purchase products that contain legume mixtures.
- - The prohibition of eating legumes begins as soon as the prohibition of Chametz begins, and it is not permitted to eat legumes on Pesach eve until the holiday begins.
- A partial list of basic foods that fall under the category of prohibited legumes: rice, corn, beans, soy, chickpeas, sunflower seeds.

Kosher for Passover Certifications-

The different food companies handle the certifications on their products differently. Generally, the classifications below apply to a majority of the food companies. But, you must always be aware of and look for the “fine print.”

“כשר לפסח למהדרין” - Kosher for Passover Mehadrin – This is kosher for everyone, unless it is specified that the product contains legumes.

“כשר לפסח לאוכלי קטניות” – Kosher for Passover for those who eat Legumes – With a large portion of these products, there are actual legumes in the product. Sometimes, however, there are no legumes in the product and you can check the ingredient list to decide.

“כשר לפסח מכיל לפתית” – Kosher for Passover, Contains Lecithin- This product contains canola, which in the past some people considered a legume, however many Rabbis have permitted its use, such as HaRav Yaakov Ariel, shlita, and HaRav Dov Lior, shlita.

“כשר לפסח לאוכלי מצה עשירה” – Kosher for Passover for those who eat Egg Matza – Jews of Ashkenazic descent are prohibited from eating Egg Matza (which is a matza dough made with flour mixed with fruit juices and eggs) out of fear that it is absolute Chametz. HaRav Mordechai Eliyahu zt”l believed this. HaRav Ovadya Yosef allowed the eating of egg matza some years, but it is not Mehadrin.

Chametz Products

In general, the prohibition of not seeing or finding Chametz on Pesach, applies to actual Chametz – such as: Bread, Pasta, Cous cous, Toasted Israeli Cous Cous (Petitim), Cookies, Cereals that are made from the five types of grains, Beer, Whiskey and more.

This prohibition is also in place for mixtures of Chametz, so long as the food is edible. Anything that is not suitable for consumption does not fall under the prohibition of not seeing or finding Chametz on Pesach and can remain in the house over Pesach.

The Sale of Chametz

The sale of Chametz was instituted for those people with a business who have a lot of Chametz products; without this sale, the owner would have been at a significant financial loss. Nevertheless, selling Chametz also includes individual people, even at the outset (*LeChatchila*). These days, when food products are more complex than what they were in the past, it is very possible for a person to be unaware which products contain Chametz and which do not. Therefore, selling one’s Chametz is the right approach. Despite this view, many people held the custom of not selling absolute Chametz, if there is no concern of financial loss.

When one burns the Chametz at *Biur Chametz*, there is no issue of “Bal Tashchit”/“wasting food” and therefore it is not problematic to burn this Chametz at this time. It is preferable to give your Chametz to

a charity before Pesach so that they can sell the Chametz products and give the money to the needy after the holiday.

What does the Sale of Chametz Have to Contain?

All types of Chametz and mixtures of Chametz should be included in the sale. Additionally, anything that may contain Chametz, like flour, should be sold (because these days, flour is not necessarily Chametz and so whoever does not sell Chametz on Pesach does not have to throw out the unused flour but rather should include it in their sale). It was also customary to include medications and other such tinctures that contain Chametz. With the exception of Egg Matza, there is no need to sell products that will not be used on Pesach as long as they are Kosher for Passover, according to a specific source (such as legumes).

Preparing Those Who Live in the House for Pesach

Aside from preparing the home for Pesach, we must remember to prepare the people who live in the home for Pesach. One must enter into the Seder night and be prepared to tell the story of our leaving Egypt in a happy and relaxed state and not in a state of fatigue and restlessness. We must be in a similar (calm) state when we engage in the Mitzva of “VeHigadeta LeVincha” – “You Shall Tell Your Son”. We must prepare ourselves before the Seder:, review the Hagada beforehand, prepare surprises for the children and make sure not sit through the Seder exhausted from all of the cleaning you have done.

Bedikat Chametz - Searching for Chametz

Before one begins Bedikat Chametz, s/he must sweep the entire house.

“אור לארבעה עשר בודקים את החמץ לאור הנר” – Before the night of the fourteenth of Nissan begins, one starts searching for Chametz without any distractions. This must be a serious and thorough search of all of the places where Chametz can be found. In this search any places where Chametz could be found unintentionally are included. Therefore, you must open all of the doors to the kitchen cupboards, even those that have already been closed for Passover; it is possible that someone inadvertently put Chametz there. The two most essential areas that need to be included in the search are the cupboards where food is stored throughout the year as well as the cupboard that contains the food products that were purchased for Passover, as it could happen that Kosher for Passover food could get mixed up with Chametz food on the supermarket shelves and someone could unintentionally purchase a product that is not labeled as Kosher for Passover. Places that have already been cleaned for Pesach must be searched to make sure that no Chametz was brought in there accidentally after the places had been cleaned.

As such, one must search his workplace, his car and if there is a warehouse or storage room that Chametz is brought into, that should be checked as well. The Gabbai must search the synagogue for

Chametz and anyone who is responsible for any sort of institution is responsible for searching that place (preschools, schools, offices, etc.).

The search must be done by candlelight. There is no prohibition to additional light being used during the search. If other lights help make the search easier, they can be lit during the time of the search. This was the customary practice of many great Rabbis. It is not advisable to check one's car by candlelight due to safety concerns and so a car, therefore, should be searched with the help of a flashlight.

Before one commences the search, one makes the blessing "Baruch...Al Biur Chametz." One should not speak between reciting the blessing and the start of the search. Many are careful not to speak about topics unrelated to the search until the search is completed, so as not to forget areas during the search.

Hiding the bread should be done with 10 pieces of Chametz that are hard and at least the size of a K'Zayit (olive) in different areas throughout the house that are places where Chametz is brought into throughout the year. It is recommended to wrap the pieces of Chametz in aluminum foil so that it doesn't make crumbs. The rationale behind the custom of Bedikat Chametz is so that the Bracha you make does not become a Bracha LeVatala (an unnecessary Bracha) – by finding the bread, the Bracha has a purpose. There are those who do not wrap pieces of bread and look for them because the Bracha that is recited is really on the searching and on the burning of whatever Chametz is left, the next day, and therefore it would not be a Bracha LeVatala because the Bracha addresses the two actions that are being done.

Once the searching is completed, the following is recited: "Kol Chamira VeChami'A De'Ika Birshuti Dela Chamitai U'Dela Biartay U'Dela Yedana La, Livatel U'Lehevei KeAfra Dar'A."

"All leaven and anything leavened that is in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, whether I have observed it or not, whether I have removed it or not, shall be considered nullified and ownerless as the dust of the Earth."

This statement must be said in the language that the speaker understands.

After Bedikat Chametz, the Chametz that was collected should be put in a hidden place so that it does not get scattered about.

Whoever leaves their home for Pesach before the night of Bedikat Chametz, must check for Chametz on the last night they are in their home. They do not, however, make a blessing on the search. If someone leaves their home 30 days before Pesach and does not intend on returning to their home before Pesach, s/he does not have to do a search at all. The "Bitul Chametz," (Nullification of Chametz) is sufficient.

The Halachot of Pesach Eve

From Erev Pesach until after the holiday, Ashkenazim have the minhag of not saying “Mizmor LeToda” in davening, as on the Korban Toda (sacrifice) there are ten different breads that are Chametz and they were not permitted to be sacrificed from Erev Pesach (Pesach Eve) until after the holiday.

The Fast of the Firstborn (Ta’anit Bechorot)

Firstborns fast on Erev Pesach. According to the Shulchan Aruch, even women firstborns should fast. The ReMa wrote that it was not customary for firstborn women to fast. The ReMa writes, when the firstborn is still young, the father fasts for him, and if the father is also a firstborn, the mother instead fasts for her son.

There are many people who break their fasts at a Seudat Mitzvah where a tractate (*Masechet*) is completed, in the morning, after Shacharit.

Times of the Day

	Sephardim	Ashkenazim
Last time you are permitted to eat Chametz	10:13	10:39
Last time to burn the Chametz as part of “Bi’Ur Chametz”	11:28	11:40

After “Bi’Ur Chametz” one must say:

“Kol Chamira VeChami’A Delka Birshuti Dechamitei U’Dela Chamitei’ DivArtei U’Dela Biartei’ Livatel U’Lehevei Hefker KeAfra De’Ar’a.”

“All leaven and anything leavened that is in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, whether I have observed it or not, whether I have removed it or not, shall be considered nullified and ownerless as the dust of the Earth.”

Even those who are not home and do not have any Chametz to burn, should say the version above for the nullification of Chametz before the last time you may burn Chametz as part of Bi’Ur Chametz is reached.

Melacha (Creative Work) on Pesach Eve

From Chatzot (mid-day), one should not engage in any Melacha (creative work). Chatzot was the time that the Passover sacrifice was offered. The Melachot that are prohibited include all of the work that someone does for a salary as well as laundry and all of the other Melachot that are not permitted on Chol HaMoed. (You should refer to the upcoming section that relates to the Laws of Chol HaMoed.) Small Melachot, such as fixing something small on a piece of clothing that is to be worn over the holiday, is permitted.

Even before Chatzot one should not start any new Melachot on Erev Pesach, aside from sewing, haircuts and laundry. Melachot that were started before Erev Pesach as well as the Melachot that one is allowed to begin on Erev Pesach must be finished by Chatzot.

Reciting the Order of the Korban Pesach (Passover Sacrifice)

Some have the custom of reciting the order of the Korban Pesach as it appears in the Haggada, after midday (Chatzot).

Eating on Erev Pesach

On Erev Pesach one does not eat Matza at all, so that we will eat Matza at night with an appetite/hunger for it. This does not apply to Egg Matza according to the Sepharadim that allow it on Pesach because with this type of Matza, one may not fulfill the obligation of eating Matza at the seder. Because of this, it can be consumed during the day. One can be lenient with regards to dishes that are cooked with a mixture containing Matza Meal on Erev Pesach, however it is on condition that the flavors of the dish are stronger than the flavor of the Matza. (This excludes one who makes Kneidelach/Matza Balls in plain water, without soup and meat and a lot of vegetables.)

Eating After the Tenth Hour (The last quarter of the day)

After the tenth hour of the day, one should not eat food in order to be satiated by them and one should not eat egg Matza at all. (There are those who take upon themselves a stringency - from 6.5 hours of the day. Everyone has to decide for himself that if they eat from this hour, will it interfere with the appetite s/he has for Matza at the Seder?)

The Halachot of Kashering Dishes

The Use of a Vessel-

With all things related to kashering dishes and utensils (vessels), one must decipher between the different uses of the vessel.

1. Vessels that are used directly on the fire, without liquids in them –Need *Libun*.
2. Vessels that are used on the fire when they are filled with liquid – Need *Hagala*.
3. Vessels that aren't used directly on the fire but they contain boiling liquids within them – Need *Irui*.

Ashkenazim hold like the ReMa who holds that one should Kasher a vessel in accordance to the most extreme use it is used for. For example, a baking dish that is used primarily for cooking foods with a large amount of sauce but one time was used to bake something without sauce, it should be Kashered with *Libun Chamur*. The Sepharadim hold like the SHulchan Aruch which says to Kasher the vessel in accordance to what the vessel is used for the majority of the time, thus this baking dish would be Kashered with *Hagala*.

The rule: כבולעו כן פולטו – How it goes in is how it should come out

In the tractate of Avoda Zarah 75b, the Gemara determined the following principles of koshering vessels:

IF [AN ISRAELITE] PURCHASES COOKING-UTENSILS FROM AN IDOL-WORSHIPPER, THOSE WHICH ARE CUSTOMARILY CLEANSED BY IMMERSION HE MUST IMMERSE, BY SCALDING HE MUST SCALD, BY MAKING WHITE-HOT IN THE FIRE HE MUST MAKE WHITE-HOT IN THE FIRE. A SPIT AND GRILL MUST BE MADE WHITE-HOT.

The Law of “Ben Yomo” – a vessel that was used in the past 24 hours with food of its given type:

Since the prohibition of “HaBilua” (‘swallowing’/absorbing) the flavor of a food into a vessel when it is in a Ben Yomo status, gives a ‘good’/active flavor (which means that the ‘flavor’ of what was cooked in the past 24 hours can transfer to the vessel) and only after the Ben Yomo status has expired does it give off a ‘stale’ flavor (at which point the ‘flavor’ cannot be transferred to the vessel), you must be sure that the vessel is not Ben Yomo (has not been used in the past 24 hours so that the flavor cannot transfer). Alternatively, you can make sure that there is something that makes the flavor of the water ‘stale,’ such as soap, so that any flavor that comes out of the vessel into the water won’t be ‘active’ and thus won’t be able to transfer.

At the public *Hagala* that takes place next to the Moetza Datit of Efrat, we are strict that people only bring vessels to be koshered that are not *Ben Yomo*. Please be sure that this is the case with your specific vessels before you come to *Hagala*.

Cleaning Before Kashering:

Before Kashering a vessel, it must be cleaned, including the dirty area under the vessel’s handles. (One can go easy on the cleaning of items that go through *Libun* if the fire burns the dirt off completely.)

For the Kashering of vessels that are hard to clean, such as ovens, it is recommended to use harsh cleaning agents, which will make all the remnants of food ‘stale’ from a Halachic perspective, so that there won’t be any Chametz left there.

Vessels that are cracked that can't be cleaned- the Chametz that is in the crack can be burned – but if it's not possible to burn it then the vessel can't be Kasher.

Materials that are Problematic to Kasher:

Ceramic, Porcelain:

Ceramic items do not emit what it absorbs and ceramic items are therefore not Kasherable.

Glass:

-Sepharadim – Because they are very smooth, they don't absorb anything and it is therefore enough just to wash them off.

- Ashkenazim – Because they are made from sand, some are concerned that they have the ruling of ceramic vessels, and it is therefore difficult to permit Kashering them although it is permissible if they go through *Hagala* three times when there are no other dishes that are able to be used. Some preeminent Rabbis in Israel ruled that one may not Kasher glass on Pesach for use with heat; and from the outset (*LeChatchila*), it is correct to suspect the severity of the issue with regards to Chametz on Pesach.

Enamel:

It is prohibited to Kasher anything made of enamel.

Timing of Kashering Vessels:

According to the Ashkenazim: One may not do *Hagalat Kelim* on Pesach, so one must perform *Hagala* before Pesach because Chametz on Pesach is prohibited, in any amount. We are careful not to Kasher anything that contained in a 'stale' flavor even if 24 hours have passed since the vessel was used. One is allowed to do *Libun* on Pesach because the *Libun* itself burns out all of the Chametz that is in the vessel.

According to the Sepharadim: One is allowed to kasher in every way on the holiday itself but one must be certain that the vessel is not *Ben Yomo* and not to do *Hagala* together with vessels that have different stringencies with regard to how much 'flavor' they can absorb (such as vessels that absorbed flavor in the *Kli Rishon* together with vessels that absorbed flavor in the *Kli Sheni*).

The Different Methods of Kashering:

Libun Chamur- Place the vessel in fire until the vessel becomes red hot and sparks spark off of it. In reality, it is not recommended to do *Libun Chamur* to any vessel because the vessel will get ruined. It is best to purchase a new vessel for use on Pesach.

Libun Kal – Place the vessel in the fire in such a way that if a piece of straw were to touch the outer 'wall' of the vessel, the straw would burn. (This can be tested by placing some tissue on the outer 'wall' and seeing when it turns black.)

Hagala – Place the vessel into boiling, bubbling water. After *Hagala*, the vessel should immediately be placed in cold water (However, this should not be done into a glass vessel out of fear that the glass will explode and the dangers that come along with that.).

For vessels that don't directly go on fire, it is permissible to do *Irui* from a *Kli Rishon* at the time that it is boiling, or to do *Hagala* inside a *Kli Sheni* – in accordance with the way the vessel is used.

The Vessel	Cleaning	<i>Libun Chamur</i>	<i>Libun Kal</i>	<i>Hagala</i>	Comments
Pot	X			X	You must clean all of the cracks. You must take the plastic handles off and clean underneath them and do <i>Hagala</i> for the handles separately from the pot.
Pan	X		X - Ashkenazim	X- Sepharadim	
Skewer	X	X			
Stovetop	X		X – By turning on the burners		Ashkenazim cover the bottom of the stove for Pesach out of fear of " <i>Nitzuk Chibur</i> " in the event that some of the food spills over. One must make sure that the knobs are cleaned very well.
Induction Stove	X	X			Turn on all areas where the stove heats up on the highest heat for half an hour. (Pay attention –

					<p>Some of the new models don't work unless a pot is on top and if this is the case, during Kashering, a pot must be placed on the stove.)</p> <p>For areas on top of the stove that do not get hot, it is not possible to Kasher, so you must cover those areas with thick aluminum foil.</p>
Stovetop Grates	X		X	X – According to Rav Ovadya Yosef's method	<p>Ashkenazim: Also cover with aluminum foil.</p> <p>(The easiest way to do <i>Libun Kal</i> at home is to put the grates into the oven and heat the oven to the highest temperature and keep it at this high temperature for half an hour.)</p>
Oven	X		X		<p>Heat the oven to the highest temperature for half an hour.</p> <p>After the oven has been</p>

					<p>Kashered, Ashkenazim prefer to cover the glass with aluminum foil during baking over Pesach.</p> <p>A toaster oven cannot be Kashered for Pesach.</p>
Baking Pans	X	X (It's not worth doing this as it will destroy the pans.)			
Food Processor-Mixer	X		X – Hagala on the different parts of the mixer.		<p>The 'body'/frame of the mixer should be wrapped in plastic wrap.</p> <p>There are some who do not Kasher the pieces of the mixer that were used for kneading dough.</p>
Bowls	X			X	Do not Kasher bowls that were used to knead dough.
Glass Drinking Cups for Cold Beverages	X				<p>Ashkenazim soak the cups in water for 72 hours, and the water must be changed every 24 hours.</p> <p>Sepharadim just wash the cups.</p>

Wine Cups	X			X – For Ashkenazim	For Sepharadim, washing the cup is sufficient.
Cutlery	X			X	<p>If it is not possible to clean the handles or if there are nicks, they may not be kashered.</p> <p>One must be very careful while performing <i>Hagala</i> that the items being kashered are not next to each other so that water can get in between them.</p>
Marble	X		X- If pots are taken off of the stove and put on the marble	X- If pots are not put straight from the fire onto the marble	<p><i>Libun</i> is done with a red hot (boiling) stone (HaRav Ariel suggests to do that with an iron) and boiling water.</p> <p><i>Hagala</i> via <i>Irui</i> from a <i>Kli Rishon</i> while it is boiling.</p> <p>Instead of this, one can clean and cover the marble with a thick covering (such as plywood).</p>
Sink	X			X	Pour boiling water while it

					<p>is boiling.</p> <p>It is also correct, in addition to the boiling water, to put a plastic basin in the sink or a sink rack for under the dishes.</p> <p>Do not use boiling water in the sink on Pesach. (If one has to pour something boiling hot into the sink, you should mix it with cold water so that the water will be tepid).</p>
<i>Plata</i> for Shabbat	X		X		<p>After cleaning the <i>Plata</i> on all sides and from all directions, including the legs and the electrical cord, heat it up so it will be completely hot for half an hour. Some also cover the <i>Plata</i> with Aluminum Foil.</p>
Dishwasher	X			<p>X – By turning on the empty machine on the longest cycle on the highest heat with cleaning detergents.</p>	<p>Clean every corner of the machine very well, as well as all of the rubber strips. Empty out all filters.</p>

					<p>There are those who do not Kasher dishwashers because there are a few Halachic issues with it: It is difficult to clean it completely and properly, the Kashering is done with spraying hot water and not with <i>Irui</i> on every area of the machine. It is best to be stringent here, if possible.</p>
Microwave	X			<p>X- Hagala is done by boiling water in a cup with soap in the microwave.</p>	<p>Kashering a microwave is problematic from a Halachic standpoint and so even though it is being Kashered, it is customary to be stringent and not use it on Pesach without two coverings. (A plastic bag is considered a covering.)</p> <p>It is preferred not to use the glass plate that is in the microwave. The ruling</p>

					regarding this is the same as the rulings for glass, and it varies according to different opinions.
Table	X			X- Only if hot items are placed directly on the table. Or, for Ashkenazim, also if hot soup has spilled on the table.	If you cover the table with a covering that is not permeable to liquids, one does not need to perform <i>Hagala</i> .
Refrigerator	X				Make sure to clean the whole fridge well, including the rubber piece and all the different crevices. Many customarily cover the shelves in addition to the cleaning.
Barbeque	X	X			It is preferable to purchase a new grate.
Hot Water Urn and Electric Water Kettle	X			X	Clean the build-up of Lyme scale and boil while full. While it is boiling, pour water out through the spout. If you put Chametz on the cover of the urn to heat

					it up, you have to kasher the cover with <i>Libun</i> .
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Important note regarding Kashering Dishes: Dishes that were Kashered in a more lenient way are not considered Chametz to those who hold that Kashering should be done in the more stringent way. Therefore, Ashkenazim are permitted to eat on Pesach in the homes of Sepharadim and eat the food that was cooked in these dishes.

Halachot of Seder Night

Before Shabbat Commences	<p>Salt water must be prepared before Shabbat. If one forgot to prepare it before Shabbat, he should prepare a small amount.</p> <p>We light candles and make the blessing of “Lehadlik Ner Shel Shabbat VeYomTov” as well as “Shehechyanu”.</p>
Before the Seder	<p>Even though we don’t eat before the Seder so that we will start the Seder night with an appetite for eating Matza for the Mitzva, it is recommended to feed the children something to eat before the Seder so that they will be satiated and calm when it comes time to hear the story in the Hagada.</p> <p>The table should be set while it is still day time so that the Seder can begin promptly after everyone returns from the Beit Knesset.</p> <p>Do not begin Kiddush before the stars come out.</p> <p>In terms of arranging the Seder plate, there are many different customs and they can be found in the early pages of your Hagada.</p>
Kadesh	<p>This is a positive commandment of Shabbat and Yom Tov.</p> <p>It begins with “VaYehi Erev VaYehi Boker Yom Shishi”.</p> <p>We add the blessing of “Shehechyanau.”</p> <p>There is a custom for everyone at the Seder to pour wine for Someone else so that we will be</p>

	<p>seen as free people who are waited upon. There are some whose custom it is to only do this for the head of the household.</p> <p>The first cup is drunk while reclining to the left.</p> <p>For all of the cups of wine that are drunk at the Seder, the majority of the cup or the full cup must be consumed. Each cup has to contain at least a <i>Revi'it</i> – 86 mL – of wine.</p> <p>If one should not drink wine from a medical standpoint, the Ashkenazim hold that s/he can mix 1/6 of wine to 5/6 of water – and bless “Bore Pri HaGafen.”</p> <p>It is a Mitzvah to use red wine at the Seder.</p>
<p>Urchatz</p>	<p>You wash your hands without making a blessing, but the custom of the Gr'A is to make a blessing.</p> <p>There is a custom for everyone to wash someone else's hands to show that we are free people.</p>
<p>Karpas</p>	<p>A vegetable is dipped in salt water or vinegar/ The size of the vegetable is a piece whose size is no bigger than a KeZayit (olive size) and it is eaten without making a <i>Bracha Acharona</i>.</p> <p>It is okay to let children eat more than a Kezayit (olive size) and to tell the story of Passover with them being calm and with full stomachs. There are some who say that even the adults can eat more than a Kezayit-size of the vegetable and then make a <i>Bracha Acharona</i> – “Bore Nefashot.”</p>
<p>Yachatz</p>	<p>The middle Matza is broken into two pieces. The larger piece is taken and hidden for the Afikoman. The custom of stealing the Matza one from another is in place so that the little children won't fall asleep and so that they will keep asking the questions of the Seder.</p>
<p>Magid</p>	<p>It is a positive commandment to tell the story of how the Jews left Egypt on the night of the 15th of Nissan – During this part of the Hagada we fulfill positive commandments from the Torah. It is important that you have a lot of patience for the story of the Hagada, for the questions the children have and for the discussion the adults have about the exodus from Egypt.</p>

	<p>It is a Mitzvah to hand out sweets to children (It says in the Mishnam “Kaliyot VeEgozem” - cakes and nuts) so that the children participate in the Seder and ask questions.</p> <p>At the start of Magid (the telling of the story), the Seder plate is removed from the table so that the children will ask why the food is being removed as they have not finished eating yet. We also pour the second cup of wine at the start of the reading of the Hagada so that the children will ask why we are pouring another glass of wine. At the start of the telling of the story of the Hagada, the Seder Plate is returned to the table.</p> <p>The telling of the story is from “HaLachma Anya” and on.</p> <p>The Hagada has to be said in the language that is understood by those at the table and if there is a need to read it in English, it should be done so. Additionally, the Hagada should be explained to the children in a way that they can understand it.</p> <p>The second cup of wine is drunk while reclining to the left. If one did not recline while drinking, one must drink another cup of wine while reclining.</p> <p>The <i>Mechaber</i> and the <i>ReMa</i> disagreed about whether a blessing should be said over cups number two and four or if it should not be said because the Mitzva was fulfilled with cups number one and three. Therefore, Ashkenazim bless each of the four cups of wine and the Sepharadim do not bless the second and fourth cups.</p>
Rachtza	<p>Hands are washed with a blessing for the meal. From the washing of the hands until the eating of the Korech sandwich, one should not speak if it is unrelated to the eating (such as asking for more lettuce or Matza).</p>
Motzi	<p>The two full Matzas are held with the broken one in between them. The blessing “HaMotzi Lechem Min HaAretz” is recited.</p>
Matza	<p>A blessing is made over eating the Matza.</p> <p>One must eat two Kezayits (olive size) of the top and middle Matzot while reclining – one is for “Hamotzi” and one is for “Al Achilat Matza”.</p>

	<p>(Usually there is not enough Matza for all of the Kezayits you will need for all those around the table, so you will have to add additional Matzot.)</p> <p>If one did not lean while eating the Matza, he must eat again while leaning (at least one Kezayit, if not two).</p> <p>The Kezayit should be eaten in the time allotment of “Kdei LeAchilat Pras” – at the outset (<i>Lechatchila</i>), it’s within 4 minutes. If it takes longer to eat it, one should not stop and speak or do anything else; s/he should just eat continuously.</p>
Maror	<p>A Kezayit of Maror must be eaten. (It is a bitter vegetable – The majority of the population eats Romaine lettuce for Maror but one fulfills the Mitzva even if s/he eats a different bitter vegetable.)</p> <p>The Maror gets dipped into the Charoset and the Charoset gets shaken off so as not to overpower the taste of the Maror.</p> <p>The Maror is eaten without reclining.</p>
Korech	<p>A Kezayit of Maror is put between a Kezayit of Matza, from the third Matza. It is eaten together in remembrance for what Hillel did in the Beit HaMikdash; that he wrapped up the Korban Pesach, the Matza and the Maror together and ate it.</p>
Shulchan Aruch	<p>Eating a Yom Tov meal.</p> <p>Ashekenazim and some Sepharadim have the custom not to eat roasted meat at the Seder, including full roasted casseroles – basically, foods that are fried in a frying pan.</p> <p>One should be cautious not to eat or drink too much (wine) so that s/he won’t eat the Afikoman in a state of being ‘stuffed,’ to the point where you can’t eat another bite.</p> <p>Many hold the custom to eat a hard-boiled egg at the Seder. This purpose of this custom is to remember the destruction when they would give the sacrifice of the Korban Pesach. The destruction is remembered in that the egg is a round object.</p>

<p>Tzafoon</p>	<p>We eat the Afikoman Matza while reclining.</p> <p>Everyone must eat a Kezayit of Matza.</p> <p>There are those who are more stringent and they eat two portions of a Kezayit size of Matza.</p> <p>Eating the Afikoman has to be done before midnight. This year, it must be eaten by 12:43 am.</p> <p>If no one finds the Matza that was hidden for the Afikoman, you can take a different Matza. Many times Matzot have to be added anyway so that everyone is able to eat a KeZayit of Matza.</p> <p>If Birkat HaMazon was recited without eating the Afikoman, one must do “Al Netilat Yadayim” again and eat from the Afikoman. And if the third cup was already drunk, you will have to go back and drink that cup again. But, if Shmura Matza was eaten during the meal, after Korech, there is no reason to go back and wash hands again, in the event that one forgot.</p> <p>After eating the Afikoman, no other food should be eaten.</p>
<p>Barech</p>	<p>We add “Retze” (for Shabbat) and “Ya’aleh VeYavo”.</p> <p>After Birkat HaMazon, the third cup is drunk while reclining.</p>
<p>Hallel</p>	<p>According to the Rema, at the outset (<i>LeChatchila</i>), one should complete Hallel before Chatzot.</p> <p>After Hallel, the fourth cup is drunk while reclining. (There are some who divide Hallel into two parts – the fourth cup after “Yehallelucha...” without finishing Hallel and the fifth cup at the end of Hallel HaGadol.)</p> <p>After the cups of wine of the Seder have been drunk, one is only permitted to drink water.</p>
<p>Nirtzah</p>	<p>We sing the songs of Seder night.</p> <p>We should involve ourselves in the laws of Pesach and the miracles of the exodus from Egypt until we are overcome with sleep.</p>

	At Kri'at Shema Al HaMita only the first Parsha is read.
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Halachic Amounts on Seder Night:

Revi'it of wine: 86 cc

Kezayit (for Matza and Maror): Ashkenazim – 21 cc

With the machine-made Matzot, one can be lenient and go with the Rabbinical agreement that a third of a Matza is considered a KeZayit and when you eat two Zaytim together, such as in “Motzi Matza,” - you must eat 2/3 altogether even though one of the Kezayit pieces of Matza was De’Orayta/a Torah-given obligation.

Sepharadim: Approx. 30 grams (Some are lenient and hold the Rabbinic approach of a KeZayit which is 18 grams.)

The Halachot of Chol HaMoed

The days of Chol HaMoed by definition confuse us. On the one hand, it is Mo’ed /festive as opposed to a regular weekday (chol). One must understand that the correct understanding of Chol HaMoed is a weekday that is still festive and the festival has to be seen in the context of being on a weekday. Therefore, there are practical Mitzvot that are connected to the holiday that are very much relevant on Chol HaMoed, such as prayers, dress and even the commandment of eating Matza (according to the Gr’A). The Gemara relates to the days of Chol HaMoed as “Mikraei Kodesh”/”Holy Days” and these days, therefore, have prohibitions against doing Melacha (creative work) as will be delineated. With regards to the severity of the prohibition of doing Melacha on Chol HaMoed, our Rabbis were divided whether or not these prohibitions are Torah-based (the view of the Ra”Sh and the Ri”Az and Mordechai and this is how “Beit Yosef” held) or Rabinically-based (the view of the Rambam).

Respect and the Mitzvot of Chol HaMoed

Dress	One should wear respectable clothing. The Mahari”L wore Shabbat clothing.
Joy through Eating and Drinking	One must show respect for Chol HaMoed through eating and drinking special items as is done on Yom Tov. While there is no direct obligation to eat Matza, there is a preference for one to eat Matza every evening and every day.

	Because eating and drinking are the essential elements of the Mitzvah of happiness of this holiday, one must be sure to make each person happy however is suitable to that specific person. Children should be made happy in a way that is suitable to them (such as with sweets and games). Adults should be made happy in a way that is most suitable to them (nice clothing).
Prayers	We add Ya'ale VeYavo, Hallel, Torah reading and Musaf.
Eating Matza	According to most Rabbis, the obligation to eat Matza applies to the Seder night. And after Seder night, you can eat other foods. According to the Gr"A, there is a mitzvah of eating Matza on all of the days of Pesach and he believes that one should eat a Kezayit of Shmura Matza each day.
Torah Learning	Holidays were given to Bnei Ysirael so that they can learn Torah. According to the Talmud Yerushalmi, the main reason that Melacha is not permitted on Chol HaMoed, is to free up time for Torah learning.

Melachot (Creative Work)

There are five types of Melacha that are permitted on Chol HaMoed-

1. **"Davar Ha'Abed"** – If you did not do it you will be at a loss (not just prevention of profit)
2. **"Tzorchei Moed"** – For the purpose of "Ochel Nefesh" one is allowed to even do "Ma'aseh Oman"/"Professional Work" but for other needs that one might have during Chol Hamoed, "Maaseh Hedyot" /"Layman's Work" is permitted.
3. For a **worker that doesn't have what to eat on the holiday.**
4. For the **needs of the many**
5. **"Maaseh Hedyot", even for the needs of an individual**

Shaving	It is a Mitzva to shave on Erev Chag
	The Shulchan Aruch ruled that one should not shave on Chol Hamoed, even someone who shaved before the chag. The concern is that one should not enter the Chag not having shaved because he thinks he will shave during his free time over the holiday. Just like this ruling, many of the Rabbis in our time follow this, that one should not shave on Chol Hamoed. Although, some of the Acharonim (later sages) did permit shaving on Chol Hamoed for someone who is careful to shave every day . In this case, there isn't permission to

	<p>shave on Chol Hamoed, rather there is an obligation to have reverence for Chol HaMoed – if a person regularly shaves his beard but doesn't on Chol Hamoed, it would seem as if the person is treating the holiday with contempt rather than reverence. Therefore, those who shave regularly during the year, are obligated to shave every day of Chol HaMoed and cannot choose to shave on some of the days and not on others. This is how Rav Soloveitchik held. Trimming one's moustache is not prohibited on Chol Hamoed.</p>
Nail Cutting	<p>The ReMa and the Shulchan Aruch disagree about nail cutting. The Shulchan Aruch allows it and the ReMa prohibits it, unless it is for the mitzvah of immersing in the Mikve.</p>
Laundry	<p>One should not launder clothing during Chol HaMoed.</p> <p>One may launder young children's clothing that get soiled readily. But the machine should not be loaded with articles of clothing that are not needed for Chol HaMoed. If one runs out of clean hand towels, one is permitted to launder them.</p> <p>One is allowed to iron clothing on Shabbat.</p>
Moving to a New Home	<p>It is prohibited to move to a new home during Chol HaMoed, aside from some extenuating circumstances that are listed in the Halachot (such as moving from a rental home to a home that is owned by your family).</p>
Fixing a Car at the Mechanic	<p>One should not fix their car at the mechanic over Chol HaMoed, even if you want to use the car over Chol HaMoed because it is considered a "Maaseh Oman" (professional work) and this kind of work is not permissible, even if it is for Chol Hamoed itself.</p>
Commerce	<p>It is prohibited to engage in commerce on Chol HaMoed – buying and selling. Therefore, it is not appropriate to go out and buy special items on Chol HaMoed. This does not apply to buying food items or presents for the Afikoman and other such purchases. It is always best to make all purchases prior to the start of the holiday.</p> <p>If there is a sale where the merchandise is cheaper than usual, you are permitted to take advantage of the situation and shop.</p>
Renovations and Fixing Things in the Home	<p>One may not build on Chol HaMoed. One may not renovate a home on Chol Hamoed, unless by not doing so one would incur a significant loss (such as replacing the lock on the front door).</p>

	<p>There are some things that are allowed as they are “Maaseh Hedyot”/”Laymen’s Work” – if they are necessary for Chol HaMoed – and if they are not performed by a skilled professional.</p>
Alterations on Clothing and Shoes	<p>It is prohibited, even if done by a non-Jew, to alter clothing and/or fix shoes, although the Gr”A permits it if it is done with a <i>Shinui</i>/a change for the sake of Chol HaMoed.</p> <p>For the sake of Chol HaMoed, the Shulchan Aruch permits alterations in a way that is performed by a layman and is clearly not done in a nice way.</p> <p>One is permitted to make Tzitzit on Chol HaMoed.</p>
Melachot (Creative Work) that is Permitted	<p>One may not receive remuneration for Melachot performed on Chol HaMoed, even if they are Melachot that one is allowed to perform on the holiday, with the exception of “Davar HaAbed” (A Melacha where if it is not done, one will suffer a loss) unless it is with regards to a worker who does not have what to eat over the holiday.</p>
Melacha Performed by a Non-Jew	<p>Any Melacha that is prohibited during Chol HaMoed is also not allowed to be performed for you by a non-Jew.</p>
The Needs of Many People	<p>When it comes to the needs of many, The ReMa made a restriction (<i>Syag</i>) that permits the things that are needed for the body (such as arranging roads, the Mikve and removing obstacles), but not work such as building a synagogue and the other things needed for the performance of Mitzvot.</p>
Writing	<p>One should not write on Chol HaMoed. Typing on a computer is also considered writing although when it comes to things that aren’t easily made permissible to do on the holiday, it is easier to make an allowance for computer writing than it is for handwriting. Writing a “Davar HaAbed” (a Melacha that if it is not done, one will suffer a loss) is permitted, such as writing bills, for if one does not write a bill, debts and payments may be forgotten.</p> <p>One can scribble a signature – like when one must sign the credit card receipt at the supermarket.</p> <p>All writing that must be done by hand, should be done with a <i>Shinui</i>/a change in the way that it is executed. For example, one should write with less legible handwriting or write on top “With a change because of Chol HaMoed” or words should be written with the less dominant hand.</p> <p>The bulk of the prohibition is on calligraphic</p>

	<p>writing and block lettering – even writing this way with a <i>Shinui</i> doesn't help and therefore one cannot practice writing Sta"m (Sofer -Torah font) on Chol HaMoed.</p> <p>Writing questions and answers about Torah and all words of Torah that might be forgotten if not written down, are permissible to write.</p>
Body Care	<p>Women are permitted in all areas of body care and cosmetics, as their usual practice dictates.</p>

The Seventh Day of Pesach and the Shabbat that Immediately Follows

Eiruv Tavshilin

On Erev Chag, one must make an Eiruv Tavshilin. On Erev Chag, one takes Matza and a cooked item (from the outset, a cooked egg) that you are planning on eating on Shabbat, and you say the version that appears in your Siddur.

You Bless: "Baruch ata...Melech HaOlam Asher Kideshanu...Al Mitzvat Eiruv"

After the Bracha, you say "Through this Eiruv, it shall be permissible for us to bake, cook, put away a dish to preserve its heat, kindle a light, prepare and do on the holiday all that is necessary for Shabbat – for us and all the Jews who dwell in this city."

The ReMa says that the above should be said in the language that the speaker understands.

Despite the wording, one person's Eiruv does not cover someone else, unless the second person purchased the food that is being used to make the Eiruv. If someone inadvertently forgot to make an Eiruv, as a one-time thing, he can rely on the Eiruv that is made by the Rav of the city.

If accidentally, some of the Eiruv dish was eaten before Shabbat, one may not cook a new dish for Shabbat from the moment that the Eiruv was eaten. But one may continue cooking a dish that had already been cooking when the Eiruv was eaten. If a KeZayit of the dish remains, the Eiruv is acceptable for use.

Candle Lighting for the Holiday

In the past, it was customary to light candles upon return from the Beit Knesset. Because we do not rely on the lights of the candles to light up the room today, rather we use electric light, we should no longer follow that practice and candles should be lit before the Chag starts. And, only for Shabbat, when there is no other choice, one lights candles on Yom Tov itself, which was made possible with the Eiruv Tavshilin that was made. Whoever did not light candles before the start of the holiday should place the candles on the dining table and should light the candles there so that the lights of the Yom Tov candles can be enjoyed.

The Blessing of “Shehechyanu”

At candle lighting and during Kiddush, we do not say Shehechyanu because this day is not a Chag in and of itself and we already made the blessing on the first day of the holiday.

Customs of the Seventh Day of Passover

On the eve of the seventh day of Pesach, there are those who customarily recite *Shirat HaYam*, in order to remember the splitting of the Red Sea that happened at midnight on this day.

After reading the Torah, the Ashkenaz community customarily recites *Yizkor* and commits to giving charity in remembrance of those who have passed away. The source for *Yizkor*’ Remembering the souls’ who are no longer with us is in Sifri. It says, “An atonement for your nation - this is the life which you redeemed – These are the dead and they need to be atoned for.”

Warming Up the Food for Shabbat

Even though we have made an Eiruv Tavshilin - At the outset, warming up food for Shabbat must be done early enough that the food items will be warm enough that they can be eaten from while it is still Chag. Therefore, **it is incorrect to put the cooked food up for Friday night dinner close to candle-lighting**. For this reason, those who are not permitted to eat Kitniyot on Pesach, are not allowed to cook or warm up legumes for Shabbat. If this was only realized after the fact, if one did not heat up their food close to nightfall, s/he is allowed to act according to the lenient opinions.

Showering for Shabbat

Washing the whole body on Shabbat and on Yom Tov in a bathhouse is prohibited because of the ruling that was put into effect due to water being heated up by the attendants there on Shabbat which is prohibited.

1. We do not wash ourselves in bathhouses and it is therefore difficult to say this ruling applies to us. And this is precisely how the Shulchan Aruch holds. The ReMa wrote that it should be prohibited even outside of a bathhouse, like in our showers. But it seems that he wrote this because of the opinions of the *Rishonim* (early Rabbis) who dealt with the prohibition of heating up water for the whole body because it is not the same for every person (will be explain in the following lines).
2. In the past, the custom was held not to heat up water for the whole body, but it was okay for the face, hands and legs because heating up water to wash the whole body was not something that was equal and fair to every person – which means that everyone would do this sort of thing (wash face, hands and legs) but only the very pampered would heat up the water for themselves for their entire bodies.

Today, washing the entire body in warm water is something that is fair and equal to every person and we all bathe in preparation for Shabbat. Therefore, it is permissible to heat up water on Yom Tov for the purpose of washing one's self before Shabbat. One is allowed to bathe in hot water on the Yom Tov that is connected to Shabbat even if the electric hot water boiler (דוד חשמלי) is working during the time of the shower.

If a timer is used on Yom Tov to heat up the water with an electric hot water boiler (and not just the דוד חשמלי), it is best to make sure that the heater is off via the timer, with enough time before Shabbat to prevent any mishaps of using hot water that is prohibited on Shabbat. As such, after the timer has turned off the boiler, you may raise and lower the little time markers on the timer so that it will not turn on again on Shabbat by itself.

When bathing on Yom Tov, one must be careful to use liquid soap and not bar soap and to make sure not to squeeze out one's hair and underarm hair and all other body hair with the towel. (You may go over the hair very lightly with a towel so that it can soak up the water.)

Legumes and Chametz on the Shabbat that immediately Follows Passover

On Shabbat, everyone is permitted to eat legumes without cooking them, such as cornflakes or any food that is in a can. Eating legumes that are kosher for Passover in Pesach dishes is allowed even for Ashkenazim.

The Rabbis discussed eating Chametz that had been sold to a non-Jew on this Shabbat, and in specific cases, it was permitted. In this vein, our Rabbi, Rabbi Riskin, shlita, asked for the following to be clarified to everyone: **The sale that is done in Efrat has been sold to a non-Jew and is in his possession. It will not revert to being ours again until after Shabbat has concluded.**

Israelis who are Outside of Israel for Pesach

Israelis who are outside of Israel for Pesach do not need to keep the custom of the additional day of the holiday that those outside of Israel celebrate (Yom Tov Sheni Shel Galuyot); they just can't do any Melacha in any public forum. Therefore, an Israeli outside of Israel on Pesach does not have to have a second Seder, yet if they do participate in a second Seder, they are not permitted to make the different blessings that are to be made at the Seder. Instead of this, they should make Havdala on wine, besamim and a candle.

On the eight day of Pesach – the Israeli celebrating Pesach outside of Israel should light Shabbat candles (and not Shabbat and Yom Tov), should pray quietly the prayers of a regular Shabbat, should not recite Hallel, and should not go up to the Torah to make a blessing for the portion that is read on Pesach because this person is not obligated in these Mitzvot. He can listen to the Torah reading of Pesach even though he will miss hearing Parashat HaShavua – Parshat Shmini. During Kedusha, he should say the *Kedusha* of Chag with everyone.

The Halachot of Sefirat HaOmer

We begin counting the Omer from Motzaei Yom Tov Rishon of Pesach.

It is a Mitzvah for everyone to count the Omer for himself, which is learned from the Pasuk, “U’Sefartem LaChem...” – That there will be a counting for each and every person.

Everyone must count the number of days as well as the number of weeks. For example: “HaYom **Shiva Yamim** Shehem **Shavua Echad.**”

Because this is a time-bound Mitzva, women are exempt from counting Omer. Sepharadi women do not make any blessings over time-bound Mitzvot. Asheknazi women do make the bracha, and this is how the Magen Avraham held. The Mishna Brura held that women should not make the bracha, out of fear that they will not be able to keep it up during the entire counting of Sefira. The accepted and more popular custom is like the Magen Avraham, women who are interested are permitted to count Sefira with a Bracha.

The counting has to be done while standing.

The timing of Sefira is when the stars come out, at the outset (*LeChatchila*). And that is the correct custom. Someone who davens in a place where they counted at twilight, , before the stars came out, if he counted with the people there, then he has fulfilled his obligation, but it is better to count there without a Bracha with the intention of counting again at night with a Bracha.

One who forgets to count at the start of the night can count at any point during that night with a Bracha. If someone forgot to count at night, he should count the next day without a Bracha, and even if he remembers at twilight at the end of the day, he should count then. Whoever forgot to count one day completely, or said the wrong number in his counting which resulted in his counting wrong, from thereon out, he should count without a Bracha.

From twilight, one must take care not to think about how many days it is in the counting of the Omer. If he did think about the number, that evening, he should count without a Bracha. But, if he didn’t think about the number of weeks, he can count with a Bracha (aside from the first six days). One can say what he is up to that evening in the counting as long as he says that this is not his obligatory count, and then he can still count with a Bracha later.

Half an hour from the time of Sefirat HaOMer, one should not begin eating. He should wait to eat until he counts.

The early sages disagreed on whether or not counting the Omer in our times is Rabbinical or Torah-mandated. We hold that the Mitzva is Rabbinic in nature and that is why some people do not say “Hineni Muchan U’Mezuman LeKayem Mitzvah Aseh....” In practice, one can say that, but to have in

mind that he is fulfilling a Rabbinic-mandated Mitzva, as it says the Pasuk, “SheKatuv BaTorah U’Sefartem LaChem...”

How one relates to the days of Sefira vacillates between happiness and mourning.

The Kabbalists see these days as a sort of Long Chol HaMoed that falls between Yom Tov of Pesach and Yom Tov of Shavuot. They therefore customarily practice the customs of what is prohibited and so they don’t shave for the duration of the fifty days.

The ‘regular’ Poskim see these days as days of mourning and that is why weddings don’t take place at this time and why people don’t get haircuts or shave during this time. From Pesach until “Parus HaAtezeret” was the time that 12,000 pairs of Rabbi Akiva’s students died, over the course of 33 days. According to the Shulchan Aruch, you need 33 full days, until the morning of the 34th day of the Omer to fulfill the definition of this period of mourning. According to the ReMa, some of the day counts as the whole day so it is permitted to shave already on the 33rd day of the Omer.

Because of the treatment of these days as days of mourning, throughout the generations, practices of Aveilut were added to these days such as not listening to music that would bring one to dance in dances. Some are stringent and don’t listen to regular music, this is music that doesn’t bring one to dance, but it seems correct not to prohibit listening to music during Sefirat HaOmer.

There are some people who customarily shave before Shabbat, even during Sefirat HaOmer, to honor Shabbat. There are Halachic opinions to back up this approach. But the most common custom is not to shave at all until the 33rd day of the counting of the Omer.

During the days of Sefirat HaOmer, we do say “Shehecheyanu.”

What are the days during which we practice customs of mourning?

From when to when do we count the 33 days? The Sepharadi custom is set from Pesach until the 34th day of the Omer. The custom of the Ashekenazim differed in different places. There were some who started at Pesach and finished at Lag BaOmer. This is the more common custom in Israel. But, there were those who started the customs of mourning only after Rosh Chodesh Iyyar for 33 days – this custom is very common outside of Israel.

The ReMa comments that one should not be lenient with regards to the two different opinions and shorten the days just from Rosh Chodesh Iyyar until Lag BaOmer.

The ruling Rabbis from the previous generation held that one who is invited to a wedding that does not fall into what is permissible during his days of Sefira mourning, can attend.

Customs of Sefira and Yom HaAtzmaut

On Yom HaAtzmaut, it is a Mitzva to shave in honor of the holiday. One should, however, wait until the holiday starts before they start to shave and not shave the day before. On this glorious day, we do not mourn at all, as this is the holiday of redemption and the redeeming of our souls!

Completing the period of mourning: According to the ReMa, who does not seek to complete thirty three full days, there is no need to complete another day of mourning and therefore the person who shaves on Yom HaAtzmaut has to make sure that he follows the customs of mourning for an extra day after Lag BaOmer and only get a haircut on the morning of the 35th day of the Omer.

In the evening and during the day of Yom HaAtzmaut, davening should be festive. In the morning *Hallel* is completed and there is a custom to recite *Hallel* also at night. Not every place that recognizes Yom HaAtzmaut follows this custom.

It doesn't matter if Yom HaAtzmaut is celebrated on time, the 5th of Iyyar, or if the date was pushed off by the government, the day of the holiday is a national day of celebrating the miracle. Even if it falls out on a day that is not the actual date that the State of Israel was declared a state, one is permitted, and it is very befitting, for there to be joy and happiness. When Yom HaAtzmaut is celebrated on a day that is not 5 Iyyar, one does not say *Tachanun* on the 5th of Iyyar and on the day that the holiday is celebrated.