



Halachos of
PREPARING FOOD
ON SHABBOS
PART 1



Halachos of
PREPARING FOOD ON SHABBOS

Please note that the material presented is not meant to be a comprehensive guide to the halachos of Preparing Food on Shabbos. In any case of question or doubt a Rabbi should be consulted.

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Day 1

This month we will begin learning some of the halachos pertaining to preparing food on Shabbos. This topic is quite broad and encompasses many potential Shabbos concerns. This month we will cover halachos pertaining to *tochein* - grinding (days 2 - 13), *losh* - kneading (days 14 - 26), *tzoveya* - dying (days 27 - 28). We will round out the month (days 29 - 30) with miscellaneous halachos relevant to preparing food on Shabbos.

Day 2

One of the 39 melachos that are prohibited on Shabbos is *tochein* – grinding. *Tochein* can be defined as the act of breaking down a sizeable entity into little parts. Accordingly, one may not chop/dice fruits or vegetables into small pieces on Shabbos due to a concern of *tochein*.

Nonetheless, we will see that in many instances, reducing food to a smaller state does not constitute *tochein*. The details of this halacha will be discussed below.

שׁוֹ"ע ס' שכא ס"ב



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Day 3

It was previously mentioned that one may not cut up fruits/vegetables into “small” pieces on Shabbos due to a concern of *tochein*. This begs the question – what is considered “small”? Some poskim say if the pieces are cut somewhat larger than is typical than during the week, they are not considered “small.” Cutting up fruits/vegetables on Shabbos in such a manner would thus be permitted.

To illustrate: Chedva was preparing a salad for the Shabbos day meal. The salad called for cut-up peppers. Chedva carefully cut up the peppers into slightly larger pieces than what’s normal during the week in order to avoid any concern of *tochein*.

קובץ הלכות פכ"ט ס"א



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Day 4

Cutting up a vegetable into long thin strips is considered *tochein*. (Some opinions maintain that cutting into strips is not *tochein* because the food has not been cut by both its width and length.)

To illustrate: Ariella is making carrot salad for *shalosh seudos*. Ideally, she should not slice the carrots into long thin strips when preparing the salad.

ארחות שבת פ"ה ס"ד,
אגרו"מ ח"ד ס' עד טוחן אות ג'



Day 5

Some say that when *tochein* is done immediately prior to the commencement of the meal, it is not viewed as a constructive melacho act, but rather as part of partaking of the meal. This view maintains that the prohibition of *tochein* does not apply when performed immediately prior to the meal. Accordingly, one who is preparing for a meal right before it begins does not need to be concerned with the size of the pieces they are cutting. The minhag is to be lenient and not be concerned for *tochein* in such an instance.

Nevertheless, the Mishna Berurah writes that ideally one should not rely upon this opinion and should cut the pieces large even when preparing immediately prior to the meal. In a situation of need one may rely upon the lenient opinion (to be continued).

רמ"א ס' שכא סי"ב, מ"ב סקמ"ה,
אגרו"מ ח"ד ס' עד טוחן אות ב'



Day 6

We have learned that according to some opinions the prohibition of *tochein* does not apply to food prepared immediately prior to the commencement of a meal. What is considered “immediately prior to the commencement of a meal”? Certainly preparing the food for the meal before going to shul cannot be considered imminent. Some say that the window of time in which it usually takes to prepare a meal is considered “imminent,” and within this block of time, one need not be concerned with *tochein*.

To illustrate: Freidy was expecting guests for the Shabbos meal and did not want to leave all the food preparation for when she would return home from shul. Freidy therefore decided to prepare the Caesar salad before going to shul. When cutting up the peppers, she made sure to cut them somewhat larger than she would cut them during the week. After coming back from shul, Ariella got to work on the Israeli salad. She diced the cucumbers into tiny pieces without concern for *tochein*, because the meal was going to start shortly thereafter.

מ"ב ס' שכא סקמ"ה,
ארחות שבת פ"ה ס"ז



Day 7

For the next few days we will discuss a number of scenarios where the prohibition of *tochein* does **not** apply. The prohibition of *tochein* does not apply to food that did not grow from the ground. Thus, one may grind up meat, eggs, fish, etc. on Shabbos without concern for *tochein*.

To illustrate: The Goldberg family likes their liver ground fine. Mrs. Goldberg may grind up the liver (using a fork) on Shabbos without being concerned for *tochein*.*

* Note: At times, preparing liver on Shabbos may raise other halachic concerns (such as *losh* - kneading) besides for *tochein*. See below regarding *losh*.

שו"ע ס' שכא ס"ט



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Day 8

One is permitted to grind up food that has already undergone the grinding up process. Thus, it is permitted to crumble challah, crackers, cookies etc. on Shabbos. For this reason, one may also grind up a pill on Shabbos* (to be continued).

* Note: Generally speaking, taking medicine on Shabbos is prohibited. See Halacha Yomi month 18.

רמ"א ס' שכא סי"ב,
ארחות שבת פ"ה סי"ט סכ"ב



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Day 9

It was previously mentioned that food that was previously ground up is not subject to the prohibition of *tochein*. Nonetheless, this leniency has a limitation. Any food that has become completely solidified and does not retain any trace of its original state of granulation, may **not** be ground down on Shabbos. Thus, one may not grind up hard candies or chocolate on Shabbos. Although these foods were previously ground up, because in their new form, no trace of that state remains, the prohibition of *tochein* is applicable.

ספר ל"ט מלאכות ע' 469,
ארחות שבת פ"ה סכ"א



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Day 10

Food that was cooked and became **very** softened is not subject to the restriction of *tochein*. Thus, a potato that cooked in the cholent and became very soft may be mashed on Shabbos without concern for *tochein*.

ארחות שבת פ"ה ס"ט



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Day 11

There is a dispute among the poskim whether or not mashing bananas and the like constitutes *tochein*. Some poskim say that mashing such fruits/vegetable creates a solid mass, not small individual pieces and therefore is not considered *tochein*. Others contend that mashing is prohibited under the melacho of *tochein*. Ideally, one should follow the second view. Nonetheless, in the event that the food is so soft that were one to grab one end of the food the other end of it would not come along, one may certainly be lenient and need not be concerned for *tochein* (to be continued).

אגרו"מ ח"ד ס' עד טוחן אות ב',
שש"כ פ"ו ס"ז



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Day 12

It was previously mentioned that there is a question if one may mash a banana and the like on Shabbos, and that one should ideally refrain from doing so. However, it **is permitted** to mash such fruits/vegetables on Shabbos in a backhanded manner i.e. using a spoon/handle of a fork etc. Mashing with the teeth of a fork does not constitute a *shinui* even if one regularly mashes using a blender.*

* Note: Typically, doing a melacho act in a backhanded manner is prohibited. This halacha is an exception to the general rule.

ארחות שבת פ"ה סי"ח



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Day 13

We have learned a number of scenarios wherein *tochein* is permitted. However, even in instances that *tochein* is permitted, one **may not** use a grater or any other utensil designed for grinding. An egg-slicer does not fall under this category and is permitted to be used on Shabbos.

מ"ב ס' שכא סקמ"ה, שש"כ פ"ו ס"ג



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Day 14

Thus far we have discussed halachos of food preparation that relate to the melacho of *tochein*. We will now shift our attention to issues concerning the melacho of *losh* - kneading. The melacho of *losh* can be defined as combining small particles into a unified solid state using a liquid medium (as is achieved when kneading a dough). The process of *losh* involves two steps: a) the liquid coming into contact with the small particles and b) the mixing together of the small particles with the liquid, causing them to form a unified mass. Practically speaking, performing **either one** of these steps on Shabbos is prohibited.

We will begin our discussion of *losh* with cases that do not pose a problem of *losh* and will then discuss cases which are indeed subject to *losh* and how to go about food preparation in such instances.

מ"ב ס' שכא סק"נ, שו"ע ס' שכא סט"ז



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Day 15

As noted previously, *losh* is defined as the act of combining **small** particles together to form a unified solid mass. One **is** permitted to use a liquid medium to combine **large** chunks of food together, provided that the chunks remain distinct.

To illustrate: One may mix large chunks of potato together with mayonnaise on Shabbos. Because each chunk of potato remains distinct, doing so is not considered *losh*, since no unified mass has been created.

ח"ב ס' שכא סקס"ח



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Day 16

We have previously learned that *losh* is defined as combining small particles into a unified solid state using a liquid medium. Consequently, it is permitted to add a liquid to a solid mass if it causes the solid mass to loosen. In such an instance, adding the liquid creates the opposite effect of *losh*; the mass is loosening as opposed to becoming unified, and thus doing so poses no halachic problem.

To illustrate: One may add water to salad dressing so that its consistency should not be so thick. In such a case, adding water merely serves to make the dressing looser and therefore does not constitute *losh*.

ביה"ל סי' שכא סט"ו ד"ה יכול,
ארחות שבת פ"ו ס"ה



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Day 17

It is permitted to mix powder that dissolves in water with water on Shabbos. In such an instance, no unified mass is formed whatsoever, rather the powder merely dissolves into the water. For this reason, one may mix instant coffee or baby formula into water on Shabbos.*

* Note: This is permissible when there is no concern of *bishul* – cooking.

שש"כ פ"ח סכ"ג



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Day 18

As noted previously, *losh* is defined as the act of combining small particles together to form a unified **solid mass**. It is permitted to mix two condiments together if the combination of the two produce a very loose mixture, not a solid unified mass (similar to the halacha that one may add powders into water, as discussed above). Thus, one may mix ketchup with mayonnaise or jam with yogurt etc. because the result is a very loose mixture, and is not considered *losh*.

ספר ל"ט מלאכות ע' 547
עפ"ד חזו"א ס' נח סק"ו



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Day 19

We have previously learned that *losh* is defined as combining small particles into a unified solid mass using a liquid medium. One may mix toppings into yogurt on Shabbos, or sprinkles into ice cream without concern for *losh*. Doing so is not considered *losh*, because the small particles are not becoming joined together to form one unified mass.

קובץ הלכות פ"ל סל"ז



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Day 20

Over the last few days we discussed scenarios that do not pose a problem of *losh*. We will now begin to discuss scenarios that do potentially raise a concern of *losh* and how to go about preparing such food on Shabbos in a permissible manner.

The halacha distinguishes between three types of mixtures regarding the prohibition of *losh*:

A) Thick mixtures. A thick mixture is defined as any mixtures that is not runny and is too thick to pour. Examples of this are dough, thick cake icing, thick oatmeal, etc.

B) Thin mixtures. A thin mixture is a mixture that pours easily. Examples of this category are ketchup, applesauce, salad dressing, etc.

C) Fluid mixtures. A fluid mixture is a liquid mixture that has no "body" whatsoever. Examples of this are instant coffee, hot chocolate and baby formula, etc.

Creating a thick mixture on Shabbos is prohibited on a Torah level, whereas creating a thin mixture is only prohibited *m'drabanan* (Rabbinically). For this reason, certain leniencies apply to creating thin mixtures that do not apply to making thick mixtures. We will begin by discussing preparation of thin mixtures, followed by the halachos of thick mixtures.

חזו"א ס' נח סק"ט



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Day 21

A **thin mixture** (see above) may be prepared on Shabbos by employing a *shinui* (irregular method) when creating the mixture. It was previously mentioned that the process of *losh* occurs in two stages: a) the liquid coming into contact with the small particles and b) the mixing together of the small particles with the liquid, causing them to form a unified mass. We have learned that practically speaking, performing **either one** of these steps on Shabbos is prohibited. As such, one who wishes to prepare a **thin mixture** on Shabbos should employ a *shinui* while performing **both** of these two stages. The details of this halacha will be expounded upon below.

שו"ע ס' שכא סי"ד, סט"ז, מ"ב שם סקס"ו



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Day 22

We previously learned that one may prepare a thin mixture on Shabbos by employing a *shinui* **both** in bringing the liquid together with the small particles and by using a *shinui* when mixing the mixture. How is the *shinui* performed at the first stage? On Shabbos, one must combine the liquid with the solid in the reverse order than is usual during the week. Thus, if the usual method of combining the liquid with the solid is to first pour in the solid and then add the liquid, on Shabbos the order must be reversed. The liquid must be poured in first and the solid particles added second. If one is unsure what the usual method is, they may prepare the food in the opposite order of the directions written on the packaging of the food. In the event that there is no regular order how the combining is done during the week, one should first pour in the solid and subsequently add the liquid.* Even after one has performed a *shinui* while combining the liquid with the solid, a *shinui* **should also be employed** when stirring the two together. The details of that *shinui* will be discussed below.

* Note: When adding a liquid to a solid, one must take care to pour all the liquid in at once, not slowly. If the pouring is done slowly then the mixture that is initially created will be thick, whereas the permissibility described above applies only to creating a thin mixture as noted.

שו"ע ס' שכא סי"ד, סט"ז, שש"כ פ"ח ס"ט,
הלכות שבת במטבח ע' 150



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Day 23

We previously learned that one may prepare a **thin mixture** on Shabbos by employing a *shinui* **both** in bringing the liquid together with the small particles and by using a *shinui* when mixing the mixture. Yesterday we discussed the method of *shinui* at the first stage. How is the *shinui* performed at the second stage (i.e. the stirring of the batter)? On Shabbos one must mix the batter in an irregular manner. Examples of this are: a) with their hand b) with the handle of a spoon c) with a knife d) in crisscross motions. One who elects to stir in crisscross motions should ideally remove the spoon etc. from the batter following each set of back and forth (to be continued).

מ"ב ס' שכא סקס"ח,
אגרו"מ ח"ד ס' עד טוחן



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Day 24

We previously learned that one may prepare a **thin mixture** on Shabbos by employing a *shinui* **both** in bringing the liquid together with the small particles and by using a *shinui* when stirring the mixture, and we discussed what constitutes a *shinui*.

Let us illustrate the application of the halachos discussed above in regards to preparing a **loose mixture** of baby cereal. If during the week one usually first pours the cereal into the bowl and then adds water to it, on Shabbos one should first pour the water into the bowl and then add the cereal to it. Once the cereal has been added, one may mix the cereal in an awkward manner, such as by using the handle of a spoon.

מ"ב ס' שכא סקס"ח



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Day 25

We have discussed the proper procedure for preparing thin/loose mixtures on Shabbos. Generally speaking, these methods of *shinui* **do not suffice** to allow a thick mixture to be prepared on Shabbos. Thus, one should take care to prepare their thick mixtures before Shabbos begins. Nonetheless, in three instances it is indeed permitted to employ the aforementioned methods of *shinui* in order to prepare a thick mixture on Shabbos.

A) if the mixture would become spoiled if prepared before Shabbos

B) if the thick mixture is needed for a young child (and the child will not eat a loose mixture)

C) one forgot to prepare the thick mixture before Shabbos.

When preparing a thick mixture on Shabbos, the *shinui* of stirring with the blade of a knife is not valid. One must stir with their hand or in crisscross motion as described above.

שעה"צ ס' שכא סקפ"ד, שש"כ פ"ח סי"א



Day 26

It is the practice of many people to freely prepare tuna and egg salad on Shabbos without concern for *losh*. This practice is based on certain considerations that are beyond the scope of our learning. Many poskim question the permissibility of doing so, due to concerns of *losh* based on concepts discussed above. According to these opinions, one should employ the shinuim enumerated above when preparing such salads (i.e. putting the mayonnaise in the bowl before the tuna and mixing in a crisscross manner etc.) One should consult with a Rov regarding actual practice.

ארחות שבת פ"ו סי' מ'-מ"א ובהערות שם,
וע"ע ספר ל"ט מלאכת לש הערה 87



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Day 27

We will now turn our attention to the melacho of *tzoveya* – dying. It is permitted to mix foods together on Shabbos even if doing so will cause the color of the food to change.

To illustrate: Chocolate syrup may be added to milk on Shabbos, even though doing so will invariably turn the white milk brown (to be continued).

מ"ב ס' שכ סקנ"ו



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Day 28

It was previously mentioned that it is permitted to mix foods together on Shabbos even if doing so will cause the food to change colors.

Nevertheless, ideally one should refrain from adding an ingredient to a food deliberately **for the sake** of causing it to change colors.

To illustrate: One should not add yellow food coloring to lemonade for the purpose of making the lemonade look very yellow.

מ"ב ס' שכ סקנ"ו



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Day 29

It is permitted to read a cookbook on Shabbos. Although one may read a cookbook and mentally **think** about what recipes one would like to make, one may not **say** that they are planning on cooking such and such food after Shabbos or are planning on making a certain recipe, if doing so requires doing melacho. Because a cookbook may be read on Shabbos it is not considered muktzah.

ספר הלכות מוקצה ע' 183



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Day 30

It is prohibited to read a menu on Shabbos.

ארחות שבת פכ"ב סקנ"ד



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Halachos of
PREPARING FOOD ON SHABBOS



Mazel Tov on
completing a month
of Halacha Yomi!