

Halacha Boot Camp - Hilchos Pesach

Rambam הלכות חמץ ומצה

שלש מצות עשה

1. Destroy Chometz on the day of the 14th
להשבית שאור מארבעה עשר
2. To eat Matzah on the night of Pesach
לאכול מצה בלילי הפסח
3. To tell over the story of the leaving Mitzraim
לספר ביציאת מצרים באותו הלילה

וחמש מצות לא תעשה

1. Not to eat Chometz on the 14th of Nissan after midday
שלא לאכול חמץ ביום ארבעה עשר מחצות היום ולמעלה
2. Not to eat Chometz all seven days of Pesach
שלא לאכול חמץ כל שבעה
3. Not to eat a mixture of Chometz
שלא לאכול תערובת חמץ כל שבעה
4. Not to own Chometz all seven days of Pesach
שלא יראה חמץ כל שבעה
5. Not to find Chometz in your possession all seven days of Pesach
שלא ימצא חמץ כל שבעה

One is forbidden to:

1. Eat Chometz
2. Eat a mixture of Chometz
3. Own Chometz (two תעשה s)
4. Derive benefit from Chometz
5. Additionally, one must destroy it

What constitutes Chometz?

Any of the five grains can become Chometz

The five grains are:

1. Wheat
2. Spelt
3. Barley
4. Oats
5. Rye

The process of becoming Chometz

Chometz refers to leavening or rising.

When any of these 5 types of grain come into contact with water they can become Chometz.

No other types of produce can become Chometz

If rice, beans, corn or any other type of produce is used to create a bread type of food, even if it rises and has the appearance of a leavened product it is not Chometz.

(The Ashkenazim have a minhag not to eat Kitnios because it could look like Chometz.)

How long does it take to become Chometz?

If any of the five grain remains in contact with water for 18 minutes, the mixture will become Chometz

Constant motion impedes the Chimutz process

If during those 18 minutes, one is constantly kneading the dough, this may impede the *chimutz* process, and prevent the mixture from becoming Chometz.

Heat speeds up the process

If the mixture of one of the 5 grains and water is heated, this will speed up the *chimutz* process, and may become Chometz instantly.

So too, if the mixture is covered with a moist towel, this will speed up the *chimutz* process.

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Punishment for eating Chometz on Pesach

One who eat Chometz on Pesach is **,rf chhj** (premature death)

Shiur – ,hzf (Olive)

The amount that an individual must eat to be **,rf chhj** is a **,hzf**

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If one eats even a small amount of Chometz on Pesach he violates a Torah prohibition.

vaeub .nj

There are two types of **vaeub .nj**

Type 1- process began but was halted

Type 2- Chometz that was never fit for human consumption

Examples: paper hanging paste made from flour and water.

Chometz not fit for a dog's consumption

Once Chometz is no longer fit to be eaten by a dog, a Jew may own and derive benefit from it.

For example, shoe polish and certain inks and dyes are made with Chometz; they may be kept and even used on Pesach.

The food must be not fit for a dog's consumption before Pesach begins.

If the food was fit for human consumption after the time for destroying it has begun (midday on Erev Pesach) then the food must be completely destroyed.

Eating Chometz not fit for a dog's consumption - Achsheveh

The Rosh Paskens that even though once a food item is no longer fit for a dog's consumption it is not considered Chometz, the Rabonon made a Gezarah against eating it. By eating this substance you are elevating to a food substance, it will look like you are eating Chometz. Therefore, one is not allowed to eat Chometz Gamur even if it is not fit for a dog's consumption.

Application – Medicine

If there is a life threatening situation, then one would be allowed to eat even Chometz Gamur if that was the only way to cure the illness.

However, this is often not the case with medications.

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Alcohol

Whiskey – Chometz Gamur

Whiskey which is the Gemerah calls Yain Saruf is considered Chometz Gamur, and one who drinks it would be Chaiv Kares on Pesach.

Included in this would be any type of alcohol that is derived from wheat or one of the five grains.

Ethyl Alcohol

Ethyl Alcohol is alcohol derived the fermentation of starches, sugars and other carbohydrates. Therefore it may be made of grain and would then be Chometz Gamur.

Isopropyl – synthetic and not Chometz at all

Synthetically derived alcohol has no wheat basis and is not Chometz, therefore one may use this on Pesach.

Denatured Alcohol

Denatured Alcohol often time consists of Ethyl Alcohol to which a substance has been added to render it unfit for consumption.

For that reason it would be in the category of a food that was unfit for even a dog's consumption, before Pesach, and should therefore be permitted.

However, many Poskim hold that since with some minor modifications these products can be made consumable, and since some people do in fact do that, any product containing Ethyl alcohol even if denatured should not be used on Pesach, and should be sold with the Chometz.

Cosmetics

Liquids

Included in this category would be all liquids cosmetics that contain denatured Alcohol:

The Star K, as well as the Passover Digest (Rabbi Blumenkrantz z'l.) offers a full list of the products that are approved for Pesach use.

Solids

Many Poskim permit the use of solid products that contain denatured alcohol, as it something that cannot be consumed. In this category would be: creams, ointments, and powders.

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Kitnios

Gezarah from the Rabonon

As we learnt earlier, only the five type of Dagan (wheat) can become Chometz.

However there is a minhag that become part of the Ashkenazic halachic system that grains other than wheat are forbidden to be eaten on Pesach.

Reason for the decree

There are two reasons brought in the Poskim for this minhag:

1. Since these grains can be made into a cereal form that might look like a wheat based product and people could mistake it for Chometz.
2. Since these foods can be baked into some form of bread, people might come to mistake it for Chometz.

What is included

Rice, Peas, Corn, Legumes- all Beans, Lentils, Millet, Buckwheat...

Oils

The question arises as to the status of derivatives and by products of Kitnios. Oils which are pressed from Kitnios, for instance, corn syrup, or lecithin (a derivative of soy beans) used in many chocolates...

Peanuts

There are different Minhagim as to whether peanuts are included in the category of Kitnios. One should follow his minhag.

Peanut derivatives

A further debate amongst the Poskim arises in regards to peanuts. Even if the peanut itself is included in the decree, what is the status of a derivative of peanuts? A derivative is a step away from the actual food. That combines with the question as to whether peanuts are included in the group of foods called Kitnios. So many poskim are lenient.

Here too, a person should follow his minhag. If a person doesn't have a minhag in regards to this issue, Rav Moshe allows one to be lenient. However, most Kashrus agencies will not allow either peanuts, any Kitnios oil, or by product (included in this are Citric acid, ascorbic acid, Nutra -Sweet, Vitamin C...)

Kitnios are forbidden to be eaten, but permitted in usage

Therefore cosmetics and powders containing corn starch may be used on Pesach.