

GOING KOSHER FOR PASSOVER

CAL KOSHER GUIDE BY RABBI YONAH BOOKSTEIN

Passover is a completely awesome holiday. Going “Kosher for Passover” is a cool way to do Spring cleaning, start a healthier diet, and get spiritual. While preparation requires some effort, understanding what is required can make the task cheaper, faster, and easier, giving you more time to prepare for the spirit of the Holiday. Do what you can at your own pace.

Tip: If making a Seder, use the Hagaddah to check you have everything need for the Seder a few days in advance.

CLEANING THE HOUSE *Getting rid of the stuff*

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

KOSHERING THE KITCHEN *Making it stuff free*

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

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

BEDIKAS CHOMETZ *Checking for the stuff*

It is a Mitzvah to check for *chometz* before the Festival. Turn off the lights in your home and use a candle to check your home, office, garage. We perform Bedikas Chometz the night preceding the seder after dark. Ten pieces of *chometz* wrapped in foil/wrap/newspaper, are placed around the home before the search. During the search, check every room in the house, collect the ten pieces, and any leftover *chometz* and destroy it by 11am Erev Passover. Find the prayer for this ceremony at the beginning of every Haggadah. If you share a house with non-Passover observers just check your personal areas are *chometz* free.

MECHIRAS CHOMETZ *Selling the stuff*

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

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

Buy all fresh fruits, vegis, eggs, milk, & meat etc. preferably before Passover. Look for special Passover certified processed foods and products at major supermarkets, marked with a “P”. There are other customs for Passover about certain foods and matzah. Ask your parents, or your Rabbi what custom you should follow. Several reliable organizations certify kosher products year round and for Passover. They have websites with detailed information about kosher for Passover products: [CRC](http://CRC.org), [OU](http://OU.org), [Star-K](http://Star-K.org), [OK](http://OK.org), KosherQuest.com, Not all products need a “P”, as is detailed in these on-line guides to their supervised products. Passover cookbooks have helpful recipes for traditional and new Kosher for Passover dishes.

CELEBRATE *Party time*

Now that the house is ready for Passover, find a bunch of interesting Hagaddahs to discuss and read, speak about freedom, slavery, Exodus from Egypt, Matzoh, drink Four Cups of wine, and have eight days AMAZING days of celebration. *Have a joyous and kosher Passover!*

This is according to Ashkenazi custom, Sephardic customs vary. Questions? Twitter [@rabbiyonah](https://twitter.com/rabbiyonah), rabbiyonah@gmail.com
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