

# FOOD FORE-BLESSING (BRACHA RISHONA)

## FORE-BLESSING (BRACHA RISHONA): GENERAL RULES

### FORE-BLESSINGS (BRACHA RISHONA): PRIORITIES

#### Fore-Blessings (Bracha Rishona): Priorities

You must say the blessing which was designed to be said on each type of food. *B'diavad*, a lower level blessing will still cover the food.

From lowest to highest level, here are the food fore-blessings:

- *She'hakol*,
- *Borei pri ha'adama*,
- *Borei pri ha'eitz* (on common fruits),
- *Borei pri ha'eitz* (on the *Five Special Fruits*)

**NOTE** You will only say *borei pri ha'eitz* ONCE to include both common fruits and also special fruits that you will eat at one sitting,

- *Borei minei mezonot*,
- *Borei pri ha'gafen*, and
- *Ha'notzi lechem min ha'aretz*.

#### Fore-Blessings (Bracha Rishona): Which Level To Say

In general, say the highest-level fore-blessing (*bracha rishona*) on a food.

**NOTE** As some foods get processed by cooking or by other means, they qualify for a higher-level blessing.

#### EXAMPLES

- Raw, rolled oats only merit the fore-blessing of *she'hakol*. But once the oats are cooked, the blessing of *borei minei mezonot* applies.  
**NOTE** Raw oats could get the fore-blessing *borei pri ha'adama*, since they grow directly in the earth. But because oats are not normally considered edible when raw, they get demoted to *she'hakol*.
- A raw grape or raisin gets the blessing of *borei pri ha'eitz*. But once made into wine or grape juice, it merits *borei pri ha'gafen*.

## FORE-BLESSINGS (BRACHA RISHONA): MINIMUM MEASUREMENTS

### FORE-BLESSINGS (BRACHA RISHONA): MINIMUM QUANTITY

#### On How Much Food To Say Fore-Blessing (Bracha Rishona)

Always say one of the six fore-blessings (*bracha rishona*) before eating, as long as you expect to get enjoyment or benefit from whatever you ate, even when eating:

- Less than a minimal quantity (minimal *shiur*), or

- Eating a small (*kolshetu*) amount of food.

#### EXAMPLES

- Say a fore-blessing before you taste food you are cooking.
- Say a fore-blessing before you taste a tiny amount of honeysuckle nectar.

**EXCEPTION** Do not say a fore-blessing on water that you drink with medicine.

## FORE-BLESSING (BRACHA RISHONA): TIME LIMIT

### Until When May You Eat without a New Fore-Blessing

You may continue eating without saying a new fore-blessing--without a time limit--as long as you are not involved in some other activity that distracts you from eating (*hesech da'at*).

#### Example

**SITUATION** You are eating and take a break to do work for your business or read a magazine article that involves your concentration.

**WHAT TO DO** You may not continue eating unless you say a new fore-blessing.

**NOTE** This is true whether you became full at any time or not.

## FORE-BLESSING (BRACHA RISHONA): FOOD CATEGORIES

### One Fore-Blessing (Bracha Rishona) per Food Category

Your fore-blessing covers all other same-category foods that you will eat at the same time (same sitting), if:

1. They are in front of you when you say the blessing, OR
2. You intend your blessing to cover all other same-category foods that you own and will eat at the same sitting--even if they are not in front of you when you make the blessing.

**NOTE** You do not need to state your intention out loud, just think it. If you usually have this intention but you forgot on an occasion, you do not need to say new blessings on the subsequent foods of that type that you already own.

### Examples in Your Home

- You say she'hakol over two kinds of she'hakol foods on your table. The blessing also covers a third she'hakol food in your refrigerator and a fourth in your pantry that you know you own.
- You say she'hakol and are eating an omelette when a visitor brings you a gift of chocolates: you must say a new she'hakol]blessing before eating the chocolates.

**NOTE** Anytime your spouse is serving you food, it is assumed that your initial fore-blessings will cover all food that you will eat.

### Examples outside Your Home

- **Guest at Someone's Home**  
Whenever you are a guest at someone else's house, it is assumed that whatever foods you will eat, will be covered by your initial fore-blessing as long as they are in the same category.
- **Attendee at *Kiddush* or Wedding**  
If you say she'hakol over fish at a *kiddush* or wedding, the blessing covers all she'hakol foods in the room.
- **Diner in Restaurant**  
If you have made an order in a restaurant, all ordered foods will be covered by your first fore-

blessing(s). However, if you later order more food, even if the fore-blessings are the same, you must still say a new fore-blessing.

## FORE-BLESSINGS (BRACHA RISHONA): HAMOTZI AND DESSERTS

### Fore-Blessings (Bracha Rishona): HaMotzi and Desserts

For details on HaMotzi and desserts, see [Which Foods HaMotzi Covers](#).

## FORE-BLESSING (BRACHA RISHONA): IDENTIFIABLE PRODUCE

### Which Fore-Blessing (Bracha Rishona) on Identifiable Produce

Say *borei pri ha'eitz* or *borei pri ha'adama* for foods made of identifiable pieces of fruit or vegetables.

**NOTE** Even if you know the ingredients in a prepared food--such as grated apples--you must see identifiable pieces in order to say a specific blessing (*borei pri ha'eitz*, *borei pri ha'adama*...). If no ingredients are visually identifiable, you must say *she'hakol* (or possibly *borei minei mezonot*).

**EXAMPLE** Say *borei pri ha'adama* on a potato *kugel* with coarsely ground potatoes; if the potatoes are pulverized, say *she'hakol*.

## FORE-BLESSING (BRACHA RISHONA): WHEN NOT THIRSTY

### Fore-Blessing (Bracha Rishona) When Drinking To Prevent Thirst

Do not say a blessing on water that you drink before you are thirsty in order to prevent thirst later.

### Fore-Blessing When Drinking To Swallow Pill

Do not say a blessing if you drink water in order to swallow pills.

## FORE-BLESSING (BRACHA RISHONA): FORGETTING

### Fore-Blessing If Forgot Whether You Said After-Blessing

**SITUATION** You ate some food and do not remember whether you had said the after-blessing. Now you want to eat or drink more food:

**WHAT TO DO** Depends on if what you want to eat or drink is water:

- Not Water:
  - If the food or drink had been in front of you when you had said the blessing before, do not say it again.
  - If the food or drink was not in front of you and was also not available to you when you said the first fore-blessing, say a new fore-blessing.
- Water (after having drunk water earlier in the same place):  
If you are not certain whether you had said the after-blessing and even if you definitely did NOT say the after blessing, do not say a new fore-blessing.

**REASON** Water is always considered to be in front of you (in the water pipe).

## FORE-BLESSING (BRACHA RISHONA): INCORRECT BLESSING

### Incorrect Fore-Blessing (Bracha Rishona) If Food Is/Is Not before You

**SITUATION** You say the incorrect blessing over food in front of you but you also have a food in front of you that does fit the blessing.

**WHAT TO DO** You may eat the food covered by your actual blessing, and then say the correct blessing for the food you originally intended to eat.

## NOTE

You may not go into a different room to find food that qualifies for the incorrect food blessing. You should instead say Baruch shem kevod malchuto l'olam va'ed as soon as possible.

## NOTE

There is no specific time limit beyond which you may no longer say Baruch shem kevod malchuto l'olam va'ed.

## FORE-BLESSING (BRACHA RISHONA): CHANGING LOCATION

### Fore-Blessing (Bracha Rishona): Changing Location

The fore-blessing (bracha rishona) must be said where you eat. However, sometimes you may begin eating in one domain and continue eating in another domain. A domain may be any physically limited area (car, house, restaurant, office building) or the outdoors (highway, park, etc.). Once you left the first place, you are considered to have had an interruption of thought (hesech da'at) and are no longer eating that original snack or meal.

Whether you say a new fore-blessing depends on your intention when you said the fore-blessing:

- Do not say a new fore-blessing if you had intended to go to the second place, as long as the food at the second place is in the same food categories as what you already blessed on at the first place.
- Say a new fore-blessing if you had not intended to continue eating in the second domain, even if you had planned to return to that first place and continue eating.

**EXCEPTION** You do not need to make a new fore-blessing if:

- You return to the first place and even one person who was eating with you is still there, OR
- You had eaten bread or mezonot and then left but had not said the after-blessings of birkat ha'mazon or al ha'michya, even if no one is left from before.

**REASON** Since you are required to say birkat ha'mazon or al ha'michya, you are still considered to be continuing your meal.

**NOTE** As long as you are under the same roof, do not say new blessings on food at the new place (such as when switching seats or even rooms in a restaurant).

**EXCEPTION** Even if you washed your hands and said ha'motzi at the first place, say a new blessing on food that would have required a new blessing at the first place, such as new wine or any dessert other than mezonot.

## FORE-BLESSING (BRACHA RISHONA) IN VAIN (BRACHA L'VATALA)

### Making a Conditional Fore-Blessing (Bracha Rishona)

To avoid making a blessing in vain (bracha l'vatala), you may intend a fore-blessing to cover all other foods of that category that you will eat at the same time.

**NOTE** You may make the condition:

- Each time you eat, or
- Once and intend it to apply to all future instances.

**NOTE** You then do NOT say new fore-blessings on these new same-category foods.

# FORE-BLESSING (BRACHA RISHONA): LIQUID FROM FOODS

## Fore-Blessing (Bracha Rishona): Liquid from Food

When you have said a fore-blessing on one type of food, such as *borei pri ha'adama* on vegetables, you do not need to say *she'hakol* on the liquid that remains after having eaten the solid vegetables.

**REASON** The fore-blessing covers all components, even if they are not the same classification.

**NOTE** If you ate the vegetables, said the after-blessing, and then later came back and drank the liquid, you would need to say *she'hakol*.

# THE FOOD FORE-BLESSINGS (BRACHA RISHONA): SPECIFICS

## I. HAMOTZI

### HAMOTZI: WHICH FOODS GET HAMOTZI

#### HaMotzi on Bread Made of the Five Grains

Wash the One-Time Method and say ha'motzi on bread made of the Five Grains (wheat, rye, oats, barley, or spelt), even if you will not eat at least 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup) within four minutes.

**NOTE** Say the blessing al netilat yadayim on washing hands ONLY if you will eat at least 1.9 fl. oz. (56 ml) of bread within four minutes.

**NOTE** If you eat less than 1.3 fl. oz. of bread of the Five Grains, do not say birkat ha'mazon or any other after-blessing.

### FORE-BLESSING: BREAD-LIKE FOODS

#### Fore-Blessing: Bread or Mezonot

To be halachically considered “bread,” the item must have been baked and have air holes in it. To determine whether a food made of the Five Grains qualifies as bread (ha'motzi) or mezonot (borei minei mezonot), decide whether the food had been made to be eaten as a meal or as a snack. If it was made to be:

- Bread (that is, for a meal), say ha'motzi.
- Mezonot (but you will eat a full meal), say ha'motzi.
- A snack, say borei minei mezonot.

**NOTE** Some foods may qualify as either ha'motzi or mezonot (such as pizza).

**NOTE** If at least 20% of a bread's flour is from one of the Five Grains, say a fore-blessing of ha'motzi on the bread (and birkat ha'mazon afterward, if you ate at least 1.3 fl. oz. within four minutes).

**NOTE** Whether the bread/mezonot was made with fruit juice instead of water may not affect its blessing, since the blessing is determined by its intended use. Mezonot rolls on airline flights may still require the blessing of ha'motzi if you eat them as part of a meal.

**NOTE** Since it does not have air holes, wheat tortillas get the blessing of mezonot and not ha'motzi.

**NOTE** The fore-blessing on stuffing made of bread or a bread kugel is mezonot if none of the pieces are 1 fl. oz. or larger.

#### Fore-Blessing: Small Amount of Pizza/Other Bread-Like Mezonot

**SITUATION** You will eat less than 1.9 fl. oz. (56 ml) of pizza or other bread-like mezonot within four minutes.

**WHAT TO DO** Wash your hands using the One-Time Method, but do not say al netilat yadayim. Then say borei minei mezonot.

#### Fore-Blessing: Sprouted Wheat Bread

For the fore-blessing on sprouted wheat bread, say:

- Ha'motzi if the grains are more like wheat grains than sprouts.

**NOTE** If the sprout still has any part of the original grain, excluding the husk, it is still considered to be grain and the fore-blessing is ha'motzi.

- *She'hakol* if the grains were sprouted in water without soil.

### Fore-Blessing: Bread/Cakes of Only Rice Flour

Bread or cakes made of only rice flour may not be used for any meal requiring eating bread and saying birkat ha'mazon. The blessing is borei minei mezonot, not ha'motzi.

### Fore-Blessing: Bread/Cakes of Rice Flour and Mezonot Flour

In a bread containing rice flour, if at least 20% of the flour is from one of the Five Grains, say the fore-blessing of ha'motzi (after-blessing: birkat ha'mazon).

In a cake containing mostly rice flour, if at least 20% of the flour is from one of the Five Grains, say a fore-blessing of borei minei mezonot (after-blessing: al ha'michya).

### Fore-Blessing: Unbaked Dough

For the fore-blessing on cooked (but unbaked) dough, see [Fore-Blessing: Cooked Dough/Pasta](#).

### Fore-Blessing: Bulgur Wheat/Tabouli

The fore-blessing on bulgur wheat (such as tabouli) is borei minei mezonot.

## HAMOTZI: WHICH FOODS HAMOTZI COVERS

### Which Foods HaMotzi Covers

Ha'motzi always covers all food eaten as part of a meal, except wine and any non-mezonot desserts such as fruit, on all days (not just on Shabbat or Jewish festivals).

### Desserts that HaMotzi Does Not Cover

Non-mezonot dessert foods (which often have a sweet taste) are not normally eaten with bread. Say fore-blessings on desserts at a meal (for which you have already said ha'motzi and eaten bread) only on:

- Fruit from “trees” (borei pri ha'eitz),
- Fruit from the ground (borei pri ha'adama), such as melons and strawberries, and
- Specialty items (*she'hakol*), such as ice cream.

## HAMOTZI: WASHING HANDS

### HaMotzi: Washing Hands: When To Wash

Before eating bread, you must always wash your hands.

**NOTE** If you do not plan to eat at least 1.9 fl. oz. (56 ml) of bread within four minutes, wash but do not say the blessing al netilat yadayim.

### HaMotzi: Washing Hands: Finding Water

To find water for washing hands before eating bread:

- You must travel or walk up to 18 minutes away to find water.
- If you are already traveling, you must continue up to 72 minutes (in the direction in which you are going anyway) to find water.
- If you still cannot find water, cover your hands with any type of separation (gloves, sheet of plastic, bag, foil, or some other object) to keep your hands from directly contacting the bread.

### HaMotzi: Washing Hands: Finding 4 fl. oz. Container

**SITUATION** You do not have a washing cup of at least 4 fl. oz. (119 ml) and you need to wash hands after sleeping or before eating bread.

**STATUS** You may not substitute a smaller washing container (such as a 2 fl. oz./59 ml cup) and use it twice.

**WHAT TO DO** You must travel up to 18 minutes away to get such a container when needed.

**NOTE** If you have a spigot that is less than 12 inches above the ground, you may open the spigot and let at least 4 fl. oz. (119 ml) flow out, close the tap, reopen it, and repeat.

### HaMotzi: Washing Hands: Procedure

To wash for ha'motzi, use the One-Time Method, see [How To Wash Hands the One-Time Method](#).

### HaMotzi: Being Touched by Unwashed Hands

**SITUATION** Someone who has not yet washed touches your hand after you have washed your hands, said al netilat yadayim, and dried your hands.

**STATUS**

- If his/her hand is dry, there is no problem of transferring impurity.
- If his/her hand is wet, this may have transferred ritual impurity to your hand.

**WHAT TO DO**

- If his/her hand is wet, touch a normally covered part of your body and then rewash your hands and say the blessing on washing hands.

**NOTE** If you have already said ha'motzi, don't repeat the ha'motzi blessing.

### HaMotzi: Speaking after Washing

**SITUATION** You washed your hands in order to eat bread. You spoke before saying *hamotzi*.

**WHAT TO DO** You do not need to wash your hands again.

You do not need to say the blessing on washing hands again.

### HaMotzi: Forgot To Wash

**SITUATION** You said ha'motzi without having washed your hands first.

**WHAT TO DO** Up until the time you say birkat ha'mazon, you must interrupt your meal and wash your hands.

**NOTE** Say al netilat yadayim ONLY if you will still eat at least 1.9 fl. oz. (56 ml) of bread afterward; if you will eat less than 1.9 fl. oz., wash without a blessing.

## HAMOTZI: LIFTING THE BREAD

### HaMotzi: When To Lift the Bread

When saying ha'motzi, lift the bread when saying God's name. This is a non-binding custom, not a halacha.

## HAMOTZI: INTERRUPTED MEAL/HESECH DA'AT

### Washing Your Hands for Interrupted Meal

**SITUATION** You said ha'motzi, ate any amount of bread, interrupted your meal and forgot about it, and now wish to resume your meal and eat more bread.

**WHAT TO DO** Wash your hands again and say the blessing on washing hands.

**NOTE** There is no time limit for this; whenever you forget about the meal, you must rewash before eating more bread. However, you do not say ha'motzi if it is within the allowed time to say birkat ha'mazon.

## HAMOTZI: SHABBAT

### HaMotzi: Shabbat

For *HaMotzi* on *Shabbat*, see *Shabbat: Two Loaves (Lechem Mishneh)*.

## II. BOREI MINEI MEZONOT

### BOREI MINEI MEZONOT: GENERAL RULES

#### Introduction to Borei Minei Mezonot

Say the fore-blessing *borei minei mezonot* on non-bread foods if:

- Grain  
The *Five Grains* (wheat, rye, oats, barley, or spelt) make up at least 20% of the food's flour volume, AND
- Cooking Method  
Food is cooked or baked, AND
- Meal or Snack  
You intend to eat the food as a snack and not a meal.

**NOTE** If you intend to eat a full meal that includes *mezonot* of a cake-like or bread-like texture, say *ha'motzi*.

For basing the fore-blessing on the main or preferential ingredient in a food mixture and/or saying two fore-blessings, see *Fore-Blessings (Bracha Rishona): Food Mixtures: Main Ingredient* and *Introduction to Food Fore-Blessings (Bracha Rishona): The Five Grains*.

### BOREI MINEI MEZONOT: WHICH GRAINS

#### FORE-BLESSING: WHICH GRAINS: NON-FIVE GRAINS: IN WHOLE OR IN PART

##### Fore-Blessing: Which Grains: Non-Five Grains: In Whole or In Part

Say the fore-blessing *borei pri ha'adama* (not *borei minei mezonot*) on cooked or baked foods:

- If the *Five Grains* make up less than 20% of the food's flour volume, OR
- If made of non-*Five Grains*, such as corn, millet, or quinoa.

**NOTE** Rice is an exception; see next entry.

##### Fore-Blessing: Which Grains: Non-Five Grains: Rice

Rice (including rice bread and rice pasta) gets the fore-blessing *borei minei mezonot*, but not the after-blessing of *al ha'michya* (after-blessing: *borei nefashot*), even if you ate an entire meal of rice.

##### Fore-Blessing: Which Grains: Non-Five Grains: Tortillas

For corn tortillas (most tortillas are corn tortillas), say the fore-blessing *she'hakol* (after-blessing: *borei nefashot*).

For wheat tortillas, say the fore-blessing *borei minei mezonot* (after-blessing: *al ha'michya*).

#### FORE-BLESSING: WHICH GRAINS: NON-FIVE GRAINS: MEZONOT/NON-MEZONOT COMBINATIONS

##### Fore-Blessing: Which Grains: Mezonot/Non-Mezonot Combinations: Ice Cream Cone

The fore-blessing for ice cream cones depends on which part you prefer to eat:

**SITUATION 1** You like the ice cream more than the cone and would eat it without the cone.

**WHAT TO DO** Say the fore-blessing of *she'hakol*.

**NOTE** *She'hakol* covers the cone.

After-blessing

- Borei nefashot if you eat at least 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup--including cone, if you eat the cone) within four minutes.
- No blessing if you eat less than 1.3 fl. oz. in four minutes.

**SITUATION 2** You like the cone and the ice cream equally.

**WHAT TO DO** Say borei minei mezonot (this will cover the ice cream).

After-blessing

- Al ha' michya if you eat at least 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup of ice cream plus cone) within four minutes.
- No blessing if you eat less than 1.3 fl. oz. in four minutes.

**SITUATION 3** The cone is sweet and you ALSO like the ice cream as much as the cone.

**WHAT TO DO**

- Say she'hakol on the ice cream.
- When you get to the cone, add borei minei mezonot.

After-blessing

- Borei nefashot.
- Also say al ha'michya if the cone totaled at least 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup) and you ate it within four minutes.

### Fore-Blessing: Which Grains: Mezonot/Non-Mezonot Combinations: Pie

Normally, for a pie say:

Fore-Blessing

Fore-blessing of borei minei mezonot, even if it contains less than 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup) of flour.

After-Blessing

To say the after-blessing, al ha'michya, you must eat a total volume of at least 1.3 fl. oz.--even if the flour was a minority of the ingredients.

However, if you prefer the filling to the crust (if you would not eat the crust by itself), say the appropriate fore-blessing over the filling, such as:

- She'hakol (after-blessing: borei nefashot), or
- Borei pri ha'eitz (after-blessing if on more than 1.3 fl. oz. of the Five Special Fruits--figs, dates, grapes, or pomegranates: al ha'eitz).

### Fore-Blessing: Which Grains: Mezonot/Non-Mezonot Combinations: Turkey with Bread Stuffing

**SITUATION** You will eat bread stuffing with turkey. The bread stuffing has at least one chunk of bread at least 1.3 fl. oz. in volume.

**WHAT TO DO** Wash and say ha'motzi. If you eat at least 1.3 fl oz of the stuffing, say birkat ha'mazon afterward.

**SITUATION** You will eat bread stuffing with turkey. There is NOT at least one chunk of bread at least 1.3 fl. oz. in volume.

**WHAT TO DO** Do not wash and say ha'motzi, and do not say birkat ha'mazon (unless you eat enough to constitute a full meal). However, if you enjoy the stuffing as much as the turkey or will eat some stuffing by itself, say borei minei mezonot.

## BOREI MINEI MEZONOT: WHICH COOKING METHODS

### FORE-BLESSING: COOKED DOUGH

#### Fore-Blessing: Cooked Dough/Pasta

Bread must be baked in order to say ha'motzi on it ; dough that was cooked by any method other than baking (such as pasta) gets the fore-blessing of borei minei mezonot.

NOTE Even if you eat enough to constitute a meal, you still say al ha'michya afterward.

## FORE-BLESSING: FRIED BREAD BATTER

### Fore-Blessing: French Toast

See Bread/Mezonot: Mixtures with Other Foods.

## FORE-BLESSING: RAW OR COOKED GRAINS

### Fore-Blessing: Raw or Cooked Grains: Porridge/Oatmeal

If oatmeal is porridge, say borei minei mezonot (after-blessing, al ha'michya).

### Fore-Blessing: Raw or Cooked Grains: Rolled Oats/Muesli

If rolled oats are eaten without cooking (such as in raw muesli), say borei pri ha'adama (after-blessing, borei nefashot).

### Fore-Blessing: Raw or Cooked Grains: Granola

On granola, since it is cooked (baked), say borei minei mezonot (after-blessing, al ha'michya).

### Fore-Blessing: Raw or Cooked Grains: Granola Bars

On granola bars, say borei minei mezonot (after-blessing, al ha'michya).

## FORE-BLESSING: CAKE BATTER

### Fore-Blessing: Raw Cake Batter

Before eating raw cake batter, say she'hakol (after-blessing: borei nefashot).

## BOREI MINEI MEZONOT: INTENDED AS MEAL OR SNACK

### Fore-Blessing: Bread-Like Crackers

Fore-blessing for Ryvita and other bread-like crackers :

- Ha'motzi if they are normally eaten as a meal—even if you eat only a small amount. The after-blessing is birkat ha'mazon as long as you ate at least 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup) within four minutes.

NOTE If you ate less than 1.3 fl. oz. or took more than 4 minutes, do not say any after-blessing.

- Borei minei mezonot if normally eaten as a snack (after-blessing: al ha'michya).

SITUATION Crackers are normally eaten as a snack, but YOU eat it as part of a meal.

WHAT TO DO Say ha'motzi (after-blessing, birkat ha'mazon).

### Fore-Blessing: Bread Sticks

Bread sticks are intended to be eaten as a snack, so say borei minei mezonot and not ha'motzi (after-blessing, al ha'michya).

### Fore-Blessing: Crackers

Over crackers, say the fore-blessing borei minei mezonot (after-blessing, al ha'michya).

## III. BOREI PRI HAGAFEN

### BOREI PRI HAGAFEN: WHICH FOODS

### BOREI PRI HAGAFEN: WHAT IT COVERS

#### When To Say Borei Pri HaGafen

Say borei pri ha'gafen on wine or grape juice, whether at a meal with bread or not.

### BOREI PRI HAGAFEN: MIXED DRINKS

### **Borei Pri HaGafen: Mixed Drinks: Wine/Grape Juice Mixed with Water**

Say *borei pri ha'gafen* on drinks of wine or grape juice mixed with water if at least 1/7th of the total volume is wine (or grape juice) but the mixture but also still be considered to be wine or grape juice.

### **Borei Pri HaGafen: Mixed Drinks: Wine/Grape Juice Mixed with Non-Water Liquids**

Say *borei pri ha'gafen* on mixtures of wine (or grape juice) with beverages other than water, as long as the final mixture would still be considered to be wine (or grape juice) by most people in your area.

**NOTE** If the mixture is at least 50% wine (and maybe even at greater dilutions), it will normally be considered *borei pri ha'gafen*.

## **BOREI PRI HAGAFEN: IN SUCCESSION WITH SHEHAKOL**

### **BOREI PRI HAGAFEN\*: AFTER SHEHAKOL**

#### **Borei Pri HaGafen\*: After SheHakol**

**SITUATION** You said *she'hakol* on a non-grape beverage, drank the beverage, and then want to drink wine (or grape juice).

**WHAT TO DO** Say *borei pri ha'gafen* before drinking the wine (or grape juice).

### **BOREI PRI HAGAFEN\*: BEFORE SHEHAKOL**

#### **Borei Pri HaGafen\*: Before SheHakol: Drink at Least 2 Fl. Oz.**

If you say *borei pri ha'gafen* and drink at least 2 fl. oz. (59 ml) of wine (or grape juice) within 30 seconds, the *borei pri ha'gafen* will cover all subsequent beverages you drink at about the same time--even if their fore-blessing should be *she'hakol*.

**NOTE** Saying the after-blessing on the wine/grape juice--if drinking at least 3.3 fl. oz. (99 ml) of the wine/grape juice--covers the water or other beverage that you drank.

#### **Borei Pri HaGafen: Before SheHakol: Drink Less than 2 Fl. Oz.**

If you say *borei pri ha'gafen* and drink less than 2 fl. oz. (59 ml) of wine (or grape juice) within 30 seconds, you must say *she'hakol* over any subsequent non-grape-based beverages that you drink.

## **BOREI PRI HAGAFEN: SAYING AGAIN**

### **Saying Borei Pri HaGafen Again**

You may say a new blessing on any remaining wine if:

- You said, or heard someone saying, *borei pri ha'gafen*,
- Drank some wine (or grape juice),
- Decided to stop drinking (*hesech da'at*), and
- Returned to drink from the same cup later.

**NOTE** If you are not sure you had *hesech da'at*, do not say a new blessing.

## **IV. BOREI PRI HA'EITZ**

### **BOREI PRI HA'EITZ: WHICH FOODS**

#### **BOREI PRI HA'EITZ: ALL FRUITS**

##### **Borei Pri Ha'Eitz: All Fruits: Perennial Fruits and Nuts**

Say *borei pri ha'eitz* on fruits and nuts from perennial trees or bushes.

**NOTE** A perennial tree or bush is a plant whose trunks or stalks survive from year to year; often with bark on the trunk or stalk.

## **BOREI PRI HA'EITZ: FIVE SPECIAL FRUITS**

### **Borei Pri Ha'Eitz: Five Special Fruits: General Rule**

Say *borei pri ha'eitz* on the *Five Special Fruits* for which the Land of Israel is praised.

### **Borei Pri Ha'Eitz: Five Special Fruits: Order and Preference**

To eat more than one type of the *Five Special Fruits*:

- If you have a particular preference, you may eat the fruits in whichever order you prefer.
- If you have no particular preference, eat them in this order:
  - Olive
  - Date
  - Grape
  - Fig
  - Pomegranate.

**NOTE** Order of *Five Special Fruits*

The order for eating the *Five Special Fruits* comes from *Deuteronomy/Devarim* 8:8 and follows the fruit's proximity to the two times the word “*eretz*” is used:

“*Eretz chita u's'ora v'gefen u't'eina v'rimon, eretz zayit shemen u'dvash.*”

A land of wheat and barley and grapevine and fig and pomegranate, a land of olive oil and honey.

## **V. BOREI PRI HAADAMA**

### **BOREI PRI HAADAMA: WHICH FOODS**

### **BOREI PRI HAADAMA: WHICH FOODS: GENERAL RULES**

#### **Borei Pri HaAdama: Which Foods: General Rules**

Say *borei pri ha'adama* on:

- Common vegetables,
- Fruits and nuts that grow on annual plants (such as pineapple, bananas, strawberries, peanuts), and
- Uncooked or unbaked grains, including those not of the *Five Special Grains*.

**NOTE** For when to say *she'hakol*, see [Borei Pri HaAdama: Sprouts](#) .

### **BOREI PRI HAADAMA: WHICH FOODS: SPECIALTY FOODS**

#### **Borei Pri HaAdama: Bananas, Hearts of Palm**

Say *borei pri ha'adama* if the tree from which the food grew can only be used once, such as banana trees or palm trees that get cut down after giving their produce.

#### **Borei Pri HaAdama: Bread Croutons in Salad**

For fore-blessing of bread croutons in salad, see [Borei Pri HaAdama: Salads](#).

#### **Borei Pri HaAdama: Salads**

Say *borei pri ha'adama* on vegetable salad.

**NOTE** The fore-blessing of borei pri ha'adama also covers salad toppings and additions that by themselves require a different blessing, such as:

- Borei pri ha'eitz for a sprinkling of pine nuts, cashews, apple slices, or raisins, or
- Borei minei mezonot or ha'motzi for bread croutons.

**REASON** Since these toppings and additions are subordinate to the main salad, you do not say the individual blessings; you only say borei pri ha'adama.

### **Borei Pri HaAdama: Sprouts**

Say the fore-blessing of she'hakol if the sprouts were grown only in water.

Say borei pri ha'adama if the grains were sprouted in the ground (such as sunflower sprouts or wheat grass).

## **VI. SHEHAKOL**

### **SHEHAKOL: WHICH FOODS**

#### **SheHakol: Which Foods: General Rule**

Say she'hakol, the most general blessing, over any food or drink that does not fall into a higher category ( HaMotzi, Borei Minei Mezonot, Borei Pri Ha'Eitz, Borei Pri HaGafen, and Borei Pri HaAdama).

**NOTE** One blessing of she'hakol covers both liquids and solids that will be eaten/drunk at the same snack or meal.

#### **SheHakol: Which Foods: Mistaken SheHakol**

She'hakol may theoretically apply to many foods, b'diavad,--even bread, wine, the Five Special Fruits, and mezonot. However, we have a principle to say the highest-level food blessing possible. If you said she'hakol, mistakenly believing it was the correct blessing for a higher-level food, she'hakol does cover the food after the fact and, b'di'avad, you may eat the bread, wine, or other higher-level food.

#### **SheHakol: Which Foods: Unrecognizable Foods**

You must be able to recognize, from at least one piece, that an ingredient is from the ground or from a tree in order to say borei pri ha'adama or borei pri ha'eitz. If not, say she'hakol.

So say she'hakol on:

- All foods that did not grow in the ground or on a tree, but also
- Foods that you cannot personally identify as having grown in the ground or on a tree—either because it has been finely ground or processed or because you personally do not know what it is.

**EXAMPLE** Even if you know that a kugel is made with potatoes, unless you can see recognizable pieces of potato, do not say borei pri ha'adama, but rather she'hakol.

#### **EXAMPLES** (Foods that Get SheHakol)

- Apple Sauce.
- Beer, Cognac, Grape Brandy, and other alcoholic beverages other than wine and grape juice and their derivatives.
- Cheese and other Dairy Products (unless they contain grain).
- Eggs (plain).
- Fish.
- Fruits or vegetables whose identity is not recognizable.
- Honey.

- Ice Cream.
- Juice.
- Meat.
- Mushrooms.
- Poultry.
- Seaweed.
- Soda.
- Soup (clear).
- Sprouts.
- Water.

## SHEHAKOL: IF YOU CANNOT EAT THE FOOD

### SheHakol: Said But Cannot Eat

**SITUATION** You said the blessing *she'hakol*, intending to eat some cheese that is in front of you, and then remember that you ate meat shortly before.

**WHAT TO DO** You should not eat any of the cheese but, instead, say *Baruch shem kevod malchuto l'olam va'ed.*

## SHEHAKOL: HOW OFTEN

### SheHakol: Drinking Water Once

Say the *she'hakol* blessing on water once for the entire day if you:

- Are hiking or doing other outdoor activities, and
- Have water with you or know there is water along the way, and
- Expect to be thirsty again later in the day and will want to drink water.

### SheHakol: Drinking Water Again

Say a new *she'hakol* blessing if you buy more water along the way while hiking or doing other outdoor activities--even if you said the blessing at the start of your day's activities.

### SheHakol: Drinks while in Flight

If you intend to continue drinking during a flight, you may say one blessing on beverages (*she'hakol*) and continue drinking for the entire flight.

## SHEHAKOL: WHEN NOT TO SAY

### SheHakol: When Not To Say: Non-Nutritive Foods

Do not say a fore-blessing on chewing gum or bubble gum if it contains no nutritional substances.

## SHEHAKOL: HUMOROUS REMINDER POEM

### SheHakol: Humorous Reminder Poem

If you're in doubt,

And you do not know,

Say *she'hakol*

*Nihiyeh bi'dvaro.*

## FOOD FORE-BLESSINGS (BRACHA RISHONA): SPECIAL CASES

## FORE-BLESSINGS (BRACHA RISHONA): FOOD MIXTURES

### GENERAL RULES OF FORE-BLESSINGS (BRACHA RISHONA): FOOD MIXTURES

#### Fore-Blessings (Bracha Rishona): Food Mixtures: Main Ingredient

1. Say the fore-blessing (*bracha rishona*) over the main or most important ingredient in a mixture of foods from various food-blessing categories.
2. The blessing on the main food covers all other ingredients in the mixture.

#### EXAMPLES Fore-Blessing over Turkey with Cranberry Sauce

To eat turkey with cranberry sauce, saying the fore-blessing *she'hakol* on the more-important food (turkey) covers the less-important food (cranberry sauce). Even if you eat some of the sauce after the turkey is finished, you do not say a new blessing on the sauce.

#### NOTE If you eat cranberry sauce by itself and not with turkey, say:

- *Borei pri ha'eitz* if it contains identifiable pieces of (or entire) cranberries.
- *She'hakol* if the cranberry sauce has no identifiable pieces.

#### Fore-Blessing (Bracha Rishona) over Cholent

*Cholent* blessing (if the *cholent* is not eaten as part of a meal) follows the most important ingredient and is somewhat subjective to the eater.

- German *cholent* —A variety of wheat is primary; say *borei minei mezonot*.
- Hungarian *cholent* —Barley is primary; say *borei minei mezonot*.
- Polish *cholent* —Beans are primary; say *borei pri ha'adama*.
- Russian *cholent* —Potatoes are primary; say *borei pri ha'adama*.
- If meat is most important, say *she'hakol*.

#### NOTE You may need to say more than one blessing (*bracha rishona*) if there is no one preeminently important ingredient in a mixture of food types in one utensil, such as a casserole or *cholent*, but only if:

- You especially like more than one ingredient, and
- Both (or more than two) of the ingredients can be eaten distinctly.

## FORE-BLESSINGS (BRACHA RISHONA): FOOD MIXTURES: INCLUDING FIVE GRAINS

### FORE-BLESSINGS (BRACHA RISHONA): MIXTURES WITH FIVE GRAINS: CONTAINING BREAD/MEZONOT

#### Introduction to Food Fore-Blessings (Bracha Rishona): The Five Grains

#### Bread or *Mezonot*: Intended Use

Whether a food made of the *Five Grains* qualifies as bread (*ha'motzi*) or *mezonot* (*borei minei mezonot*) depends on whether the food was intended to be eaten as a meal or as a snack, as follows:

- Bread for a meal: Say *ha'motzi*.
- *Mezonot* (but you will eat a full meal): Say *ha'motzi*.
- A snack (including bread as a snack): Say *borei minei mezonot*.

**NOTE** Some foods may qualify as either ha'motzi or mezonot (such as pizza).

**NOTE** Whether the bread/mezonot was made with fruit juice instead of water may not affect its blessing, since the blessing is determined by the food's intended use. "Mezonot" rolls on airline flights may still require the blessing of ha'motzi if you eat them as part of a meal.

**NOTE** Bread that has been cut into small pieces and fried may be reduced in status from bread to mezonot.

### **Bread/Mezonot: Amount of Five Grains Needed**

In a non-bread food containing a mixture of grains, at least 20% of the main ingredients must be from one of the Five Grains in order to require the fore-blessing (bracha rishona) of borei minei mezonot (after-blessing: al ha'michya).

If at least 20% of a bread's flour is from one of the Five Grains, say a fore-blessing of ha'motzi (and birkat ha'mazon afterward if you ate at least 1.3 fl. oz. within four minutes).

**NOTE** If you do not know the actual percent of each grain, such as in cereal, say she'hakol (after-blessing: borei nefashot). But you should try to determine the actual amounts of the grains.

### **Bread/Mezonot: Mixtures with Other Foods**

Normally, the fore-blessing for bread (ha'motzi), or for other cooked or baked foods made from flour (borei minei mezonot), will override the remaining foods in a food mixture.

**NOTE** Bread that has been cut into small pieces and fried may be reduced in status from bread to mezonot.

**EXAMPLES** Saying HaMotzi over Bread Mixture

Wash and say ha'motzi over bread and bread-mixture foods such as French toast, if at least one piece is more than 1.3 fl. oz. (39 ml, or 1/6 cup) in volume.

If no individual piece is at least 1.3 fl. oz., say borei minei mezonot.

**REASON** Being fried changes the French toast's status, even if the total of all of the pieces is more than 1.3 fl. oz.

### **Saying Borei Minei Mezonot over Mezonot Mixture**

Say borei minei mezonot over:

- Cholent whose main ingredient is barley;
- Ice cream cone (ice cream + cone)—see "ice cream cone" for further details;
- Pie; and
- Cheesecake with any kind of crust.

**NOTE** Cheesecakes are sold in bakeries and not in cheese stores, indicating that the mezonot part is more important than the cheese part as regards fore- and after-blessings.

## **FORE-BLESSINGS: FRUIT MIXTURES**

### **Fore-Blessings over Fruit Cocktail**

For fruit cocktail, say fore-blessings of borei pri ha'eitz (for tree fruits) AND borei pri ha'adama (for pineapple, etc.).

**REASON** Fruit cocktail does not have a main ingredient.

## **FORE-BLESSINGS: MIXTURES WITH RICE**

### **Fore-Blessings: Stuffed Grape Leaves**

If grape leaves are stuffed with rice, say borei minei mezonot.

### Fore-Blessings: Sushi

Say the fore-blessing *borei minei mezonot* over sushi, since the rice is primary. If you are eating the sushi for the salmon (or other ingredient) in the middle, say *she'hakol*, too (or whatever blessing is correct for that important ingredient).

**NOTE** To say fore-blessings over sushi:

- Say *borei minei mezonot*, then take a bite of rice (which may have nori, etc., on it).
- Say *she'hakol*, then take a bite of fish (which may have rice, avocado, etc., stuck to it).

## FORE-BLESSINGS: UNUSUAL FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

### Bracha Rishona: Coconut Water

To drink coconut water:

- Say *borei pri ha'eitz* if you drink coconut water directly from the coconut.
- Say *she'hakol* if you pour the water out of the nut into a utensil.

### Bracha Rishona: Fiddleheads

Say *borei pri ha'adama* on fiddleheads (unfurled fern tops in early spring).

### Bracha Rishona: Hydroponic Vegetables

Say *she'hakol* on hydroponic vegetables, including bean sprouts.

**NOTE** If you don't know how the vegetables were grown, you are not required to research the source of the vegetables: you may assume that they are not hydroponic and say the fore-blessing of *borei pri ha'adama*.

### Bracha Rishon: Olives

There is no separate blessing on eating olives with a meal. If you eat olives by themselves (without other food), say *borei pri ha'eitz*.

### Bracha Rishona: Popcorn

Say *borei pri ha'adama* on popcorn.