

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.