SHABBAT: COOKING

INTRODUCTION TO SHABBAT: COOKING

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Bishul B'*Shabbat*/Cooking on *Shabbat*

The *Torah* forbids cooking on *Shabbat*. "Cooking" means making food edible by heating it to above 120° F (49° C).
Cooking includes:

- You may not make a soft food hard (such as cooking an egg).
- You may not make a hard food soft (such as cooking meat).
- You may not, in any manner, heat (to 120° F or above) liquids that you will drink or foods with liquids—such as sauces and gravies--whether fully cooked or not.

Timing of Cooking

According to the *Torah*, you may eat food on *Shabbat* that had been placed on the heat source Friday afternoon but was not completely cooked by sunset.

REASON No action is being taken and the cooking will be completed by itself.

Kli Rishon and *Kli Sheini*

According to *Torah* law, food is only considered to be cooked if it has been directly heated from the heat source, such as a kettle on a fire or a pot on a flame (even if that utensil has been removed from its heat source). This is called a *kli rishon*.
Once you pour water from a *kli rishon* into a glass, the glass is a *kli sheni*. Some foods, such as an egg or tea, get cooked in a *kli sheni* (*kalei bishul*--easily cooked). These foods are forbidden by *Torah* law to be put into a hot *kli sheni* on *Shabbat*.

EXCEPTION *Halacha* allows spices and water to be "cooked" in a *kli sheni*.
NOTE If the water is less than 120° F, nothing gets *halachically* cooked in any *kli,* even in a *kli rishon* .

Reheating/Replacing to Heat Source

1. **Do Not Reheat Food Unless It Is *Halachically* Dry.**

This includes heating on a hotplate, stove, or oven and applies to even fully cooked food. *Halachically* dry means the food is solid at either the beginning or the end of the cooking, or both. To determine whether a food is liquid (and therefore may not be reheated on *Shabbat*), shake the container. If the food does not move around, it is considered to be solid. (For when solid food may be reheated, please see *Shabbat*: Reheating.)

2. **To Replace Heated Food onto/into Its Heat Source (*hachzara*):**

- You must have taken it off with the intention of replacing it, and
- You may not put the utensil down onto a surface; you must continue to hold the food (or the utensil) in your hand.
- The heat source must be covered.

REASON *Chazal* were concerned that someone might see you put food on the heat, mistake it for actual cooking, and erroneously think that cooking is permitted on *Shabbat*.

NOTE You may not replace incompletely cooked food to a heat source.

REASON To do so would facilitate the cooking.

3. **Do Not Put Food on a Heat Source that has Adjustable Controls.**

This applies even to fully cooked food.

REASON You might adjust the heat and thereby violate a *Torah* law due to *shehiya* (stoking the fire or turning up the heat).

NOTE *Shehiya* is simple to avoid; just cover the flame (or electric heating element) and any temperature controls before *Shabbat*, as when using a *blech* (a metal sheet that covers the flames and controls). Then, on *Shabbat*, you may put fully cooked solid (but not liquid) food on top of other food (or utensils containing food) that were already on a *blech* from before sunset on Friday.

REASON Doing so does not look like you are cooking and the *blech* prevents you from adjusting the heat.

4. **Do Not Insulate Food to which Heat Is Added.**

You may not add insulation (which will help keep in the heat) during *Shabbat* to foods that are on a heat source, even to fully cooked foods, if they are "wet." By *rabbinic* law, you may not apply heat to an insulated utensil—or apply any insulation that adds heat--even before *Shabbat* began and let it remain that way during *Shabbat*--even if the food was completely cooked before sunset on Friday.

NOTE Regarding food on a heat source, you may add insulation if there is at least one uncovered area at least the size of a quarter. Adding insulation on *Shabbat* is only a problem if the insulation completely surrounds the food or utensil on all surfaces and the top.

SHABBAT: HEATING LIQUIDS

Heating Liquids on Shabbat

You may not heat liquids by any method on *Shabbat*. You may put a hot water urn on a timer from before *Shabbat*, but you may not add any water to the urn once *Shabbat* has begun.

Heating Already Cooked Coffee or Tea on Shabbat

You may not brew coffee or steep tea on *Shabbat*. You may use:

- Instant coffee;
- Powdered, dried tea; or
- Tea that has already been steeped.

However, you may not add them directly to the hot water! You must:

- Pour or dispense the hot water into an intermediate utensil, and then
- Put the water and brewed or instant coffee or tea into that utensil.

SHABBAT: FOOD READY BY SUNSET

Blech and Food Fully or Incompletely Cooked by Sunset

When using a *blech* (sheet of metal to cover fire source and controls), it is customary for food to be fully cooked (edible) before sunset (or before candle lighting for a woman) to avoid the temptation to stir the food or increase the heat to help the food cook more quickly.

Replacing Lid and Food Incompletely Cooked by Sunset

For food that is not fully cooked, you may not remove and replace the lid (such as when checking to see if the food is cooked).

REASON Replacing the lid helps cook the food (the food's being fully cooked before *Shabbat* avoids this problem).

When using a crockpot or slow cooker with a glass lid, however, the food does not need to be fully cooked.

REASON You can see how well cooked the food is through the lid.

SHABBAT: REHEATING

SHABBAT: WHAT TO REHEAT

Shabbat: Reheat Solid Food but Not Liquid

You may reheat dry (not wet; not even damp), solid, cooked food, but not liquid food on *Shabbat*.

SHABBAT: HOW TO REHEAT

Shabbat: How To Reheat

How To Reheat on Hotplate or *Blech*: Before *Shabbat* Begins

1. Cover any cooking controls (knobs, switches, etc.) so no one adjusts them during *Shabbat*.
2. Cover the heat source with a "*blech*" (sheet of metal). This will help prevent *Torah* law violations by serving as a reminder not to adjust the heat. NOTE Some *blechs* also block the temperature controls, to help with the previous step.

   NOTE To use a hotplate, remove the control knob before *Shabbat*.
3. Turn on the source of heat (hotplate, burner under the *blech*...).
4. Put onto the hotplate or *blech* at least one utensil containing food or water.

How To Reheat on Hotplate or *Blech*: After *Shabbat* Begins

1. Start with food that is fully cooked and solid (no liquids may be heated on *Shabbat*!). NOTE "Solid" food includes cooked meat with congealed jelly or cooked fish with jelly.
2. Place the fully cooked dry food on top of the food- or water-containing utensil that had been placed on the heating appliance before *Shabbat* began. Remember not to put the fully cooked food directly onto the hotplate, *blech*, or other heat source after *Shabbat* begins (even if there is a separation between the heat source and food).

NOTE After sunset on Friday, you may not put any incompletely cooked food (whether hot or cold) onto the heated part of the heating appliance or move it from a cooler part of the *blech* to a hotter part.

NOTE At some time during *Shabbat*, someone must eat or drink from the food- or water-containing utensil that had been on the *blech* since before *Shabbat* began.

Sabbath-Mode Ovens

Sabbath-mode ovens have a switch that:

- Keeps the light on or off (according to the way you have set it), regardless of whether the oven door is open or closed,
- Makes a forced delay in the heating elements' turning on after the door is opened so that the heating element never goes on while the door is open, and
- Shuts off the timer and digital display.

Sabbath-mode ovens do not permit any normally forbidden cooking-related actions on *Shabbat*. You may not ever cook food on *Shabbat*, even in such an oven (or any other way)!

Reheating on Hotplate with Timer

Once *Shabbat* begins, you may not put food on a hotplate with a timer that turns on the hotplate during *Shabbat*.

Reheating in Microwave Oven with Timer

On *Shabbat*, you may not put food in a microwave oven and have a timer turn it on, even if no light will be lit. However, you may put the food into the microwave oven BEFORE sunset on *Shabbat* and have the timer turn on the microwave oven on *Shabbat*.

NOTE You must cover the microwave controls from before *Shabbat*.

Reheating in Hot, Turned-Off Oven

Dry food that has been fully cooked before *Shabbat* may be heated in an oven if the oven is off even if the oven is hot (120° F--49° C--or more).

NOTE If the oven is on, you may not heat the food.

Reheating Using a Warming Tray

On *Shabbat*, you may not heat food, whether liquid or solid, on a warming tray that is 120° F--49° C--or more. But if the tray is less than 120° F, it may be permissible. Ask a *rabbi*, since there may be other problems due to switching on or off the heating element, lights, etc.

Reheating by Covering (Hatmana)

Hatmana is forbidden on *Shabbat* and applies to an item or structure that retains heat.

- You may not, during *Shabbat*, place a food container in an item or structure, such as a blanket, that retaines heat. You may do so if the food container was already wrapped before *Shabbat*.
- You may not add insulation (which will help keep in the heat) even before (and certainly not during) *Shabbat* to foods that are on a heat source, even to fully cooked foods, whether the foods are wet or dry.
- You may not apply heat to an insulated utensil--or apply any insulation that adds heat--even before *Shabbat* began and let it remain that way during *Shabbat*--even if the food was completely cooked before sunset on Friday.

SITUATION You wrap a pot in blankets before *Shabbat*, serve the food on *Shabbat*, and return it to a non-heat source.

WHAT TO DO You may rewrap it after eating to retain heat for later.

Heating Frozen Food

Frozen food is considered “dry” (unless it has ice crystals or frost on the outside) and, unlike liquids, may be heated (under some conditions) on *Shabbat*. See How To Reheat on Hotplate or *Blech*.

SHABBAT: MIXING HOT AND RAW FOODS

Shabbat: Hot Liquids on Raw Foods

You may not pour a hot liquid (120°F--49°C - or more) onto raw vegetables, uncooked salt, or other raw foods on *Shabbat*. If a *kli shishi* is used, ask a *rabbi* what to do, as this is controversial.

Shabbat: Hot Soup and Cheese

You may not put cheese in hot (120° F--49° C—or more) water or soup on *Shabbat*.

REASON This is cooking/*bishul*. Even though the *milk* was probably pasteurized, there are other ingredients (such as rennet) that have not been cooked.

Shabbat: Mixing Hot and Pickled Foods

Pickles, sauerkraut, olives, and other pickled foods are considered raw and may not be put into hot food on *Shabbat*.

NOTE Pickled and salted foods are sometimes considered to be cooked regarding some *halachot*, but not in this case of putting them into hot food (which will actually cook them).

SHABBAT: SERVING HOT FOOD

Shabbat and Ladling Soup

You may ladle soup from a pot on a turned-off burner without having to remove the pot from the burner.

Returning Hot Soup or Cholent to Heat Source

To serve hot soup, *cholent*, etc., and then return the food to the hotplate, *blech*, or other covered heat source:

- You may pick up the pot or utensil containing the food from the hotplate, *blech*, or other covered heat source, but you must not put it down, even to partially rest on a table or other surface;
- You must intend to return the utensil and food to the hotplate, *blech*, or other covered heat source; and
- You may not remove/serve food from the utensil while it is still on the hotplate, *blech*, or other covered heat source.

SHABBAT: FOOD HEATED BY NON-JEW

Conditions for a Non-Jew To Put Food into Oven for a Jew

A non-Jew may put food in an oven for a Jew on *Shabbat* if:

- Oven controls are covered,
- Food is fully cooked, and
- Food is non-liquid.

If a Non-Jew Heats Food or Water for Self

If a non-Jew heats food or water on *Shabbat* for himself or for other non-Jews, a Jew may use the water and eat the food.

SHABBAT: FOOD HEATED BY SOLAR HEAT

Shabbat: Cooking by Solar Heat

You may cook or reheat food on *Shabbat* using solar heat, but only if the sun's rays directly cook the food. Practically, this can probably only be done by using a magnifying glass.

NOTE You may even cook or reheat liquids this way on *Shabbat*.

NOTE You may not cook the food by having the sun's rays first heat a surface—such as heating a black backing that will absorb heat--and then transfer it to the food.

SHABBAT: FOOD IN TURNED-ON OVEN

Shabbat: Food in Turned-On Oven

SITUATION Food is in a turned-on oven.

WHAT TO DO Even if the heating element is not on at that moment, once you have opened the door, you must remove any food from the oven. You may not leave food in there to be eaten later.

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