

Kashering for Pesach

Dishes, utensils, kitchen appliances, countertops, and anything else used with food year-round, cannot be used for Passover unless it goes through a process known as “kashering” or “hechsher keilim”. For a few items kashering just involves thoroughly cleaning the item, but for most items kashering also requires submerging the item in boiling water or a similar hot process. The laws of kashering are quite complex, and this article will present the most practical points for the average consumer; readers are encouraged to discuss any questions not covered in this article with their local Orthodox Rabbi.

KASHERING NOTES

- Typically, it is not permitted to kasher a meat item in order to use it for dairy, or vice versa. However, once an item has been kashered for Pesach, it may be designated for either one.
- Since kashering can involve boiling hot water, red-hot burners or even a blow torch, safety is an important concern. It's best to use protective gloves and tongs while kashering. Children should be kept away from the area in which you are working.
- When in doubt, ask your Rabbi or contact the Vaad Hakashrus. Although this is an important rule all year round, it's crucial when it comes to Pesach when the laws are more complex and more stringent.
- These guidelines are for kashering chometz items for Pesach use only. To kasher items all year round that may have become non-kosher (i.e. meat utensil that absorbed milk), consult your Rabbi or the Vaad Hakashrus, as there may be more leniencies.
- Due to the complexities of the kashering process, to the extent that it is feasible, it is best to have separate items for Pesach.

Kashering & Cleaning Guide:

OVENS

A. Self-Cleaning Ovens

- Run the self-cleaning cycle for three hours.
- Some don't put any food during Pesach on the door unless the door is covered.
- Some cover the racks if chometz was put directly on them.

B. Conventional Ovens

- Use an oven cleaner to thoroughly clean the entire oven, including the racks and doors. • Turn the oven on to its highest setting for 1-2 hours (libun kal).
- If chometz was directly placed on the racks during the year, the racks should be covered with aluminum foil so that no pots or pans touch them directly.

C. Continuous Cleaning Ovens

- Despite its name, don't assume that this type of oven is always clean.
- Clean the oven thoroughly. (Caution - check the manual for what type of cleansers you should use).
- Kasher in the same way as a conventional oven.

D. Warming Drawers

- Cannot be kashered

STOVE TOPS

A. Electric and Gas

- Clean the entire surface of the stove top and all its parts - grates, burners, chrome rings, drip trays and knobs.
- Electric burners - Turn them on to the maximum setting for approx 10 minutes.
- Gas grates - Kasher them with one of the following methods:
 1. Placing them in the oven while it is being self cleaned or on to its highest degree for 1 hour. (Caution - if the oven is being kashered by using the self cleaning cycle, verify that the grates can withstand the heat).
 2. Place a wide pot (with water so as not to burn the pot) or a blech on the grate while the burners are turned to maximum heat for ten minutes in order to spread the heat to the grates.

- Drip trays - Put them in the oven while it's being kashered.
- Knobs - Clean them thoroughly and preferably cover them.
- Surface - Cover the entire surface with heavy aluminum foil or a Pesach blech so that only the burners are exposed.
- Backsplash - Cover with heavy aluminum foil. (Caution - be careful not to block any vents).
- Oven hood - Clean thoroughly, and cover with foil.

B. Glass-topped Range (includes Corning, Halogen, Ceran)

- Burners: Turn them onto their maximum setting (until they are glowing red hot).
- Cover the rest of the surface around and between the burners with material that will not easily tear (Caution: do not cover the stove with a blech as it can cause the glass to crack.)

SINKS

A. Stainless Steel Sinks

- Clean every part thoroughly - mainly basin, knobs, faucet, drain area. Be sure to clean the spout on the faucet.
- Pour a strong chemical cleaner half hour before kashering down the drain and into any crevices that cannot be properly cleaned.
- Do not use the sink with hot chometz for 24 hours.
- Dry the sink prior to kashering.
- Kasher by pouring boiling hot water on every part of the sink, including the knobs and faucet. Cold water should immediately be applied with a rag, or poured on, to all of those surfaces. Kashering should be done with a special pot used for kashering or a Pesach pot.
- Some people move a preheated stone or piece of metal around the sink as the water is being poured.
- It may take a few refills of the kettle or pot to kasher the entire sink. Each new area being kashered has to be dried from splash of previous pour.
- Extendable faucets - An alternative way of kashering this part of the sink is to dip it into the kashering pot (Caution - plastic parts could warp if kept in too long).
- Stoppers, strainers - replace for Pesach. (If necessary, they may be cleaned well and kashered with boiling water)
- Some people cover the entire area of the sink after kashering it or place an insert in the sink.

B. Enamel, Porcelain, Corian Sinks

- Sinks made of these materials cannot be kashered.
- Clean them thoroughly and use a strong chemical cleaner (see stainless steel sinks, above)
- Place an insert in the sink; or line the walls and bottom of the sink with contact paper or heavy aluminum foil. Then, place a rack on the bottom and wash dishes in a dishpan placed on top of the rack.

COUNTERTOPS

A. Materials that CAN be kashered:

Pure Granite (not granite composite)/Marble/Metal/ Stainless Steel/Wood

To kasher these counters:

- Clean them thoroughly.
- Do not put anything hot on them for 24 hours.
- Kasher by carefully pouring boiling water on the entire area from a kettle or from a pot taken directly from the stove. It may take a few refills of the kettle or pot to kasher the entire counter. Each new area being kashered has to be dried from splash of previous pour. Kashering should be done with a special pot used for kashering or a chometz pot that has not been used for 24 hours.
- Some people cover these types of counters even after kashering them. Some people move around a preheated stone or hot iron as they pour the hot water.

B. Materials that CANNOT be kashered:

Corian/Enamel/Formica/Plastic/Porcelain/Surrel/ Granite Composite

Before using these counters:

- Clean them thoroughly.
- Cover them with a thick waterproof material that won't rip easily while you are working on them.

REFRIGERATORS & FREEZERS

- Clean every surface and all parts thoroughly using a cleanser that will render inedible any tiny crumbs that may have been missed.
- Some have a custom to cover surfaces that will directly touch food.

CUPBOARDS, DRAWERS & SHELVES

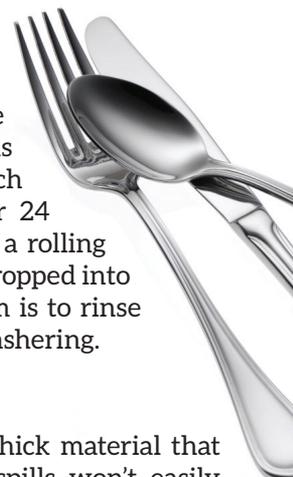
- Clean thoroughly with a cleanser that will render inedible any tiny crumbs that may have been missed.
- Some have a custom to cover surfaces that will directly touch food.

FLATWARE

- Silver and stainless steel flatware require Hagola. The process begins with a thorough cleaning, after which the utensil should not be used for 24 hours. A pot of water is brought to a rolling boil, and the pieces of flatware are dropped into the water one at a time. The custom is to rinse the flatware with cold water after kashering.

TABLES & CHAIRS

Clean thoroughly. Cover tables with a thick material that won't tear easily and through which spills won't easily penetrate. Covers should be fastened securely. cont.



KASHERING FOR PESACH cont.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- A. Tablecloths and Dish Towels - Launder with soap and hot water. (Plastic tablecloths cannot be kashered.)
- B. Highchairs - Clean thoroughly and cover tray.
- C. Rings - Clean thoroughly.
- D. Candlesticks and Tray - Clean thoroughly and don't wash in a Kosher for Pesach sink (the same applies for flower vases that were on the table during the year).

ITEMS THAT CANNOT BE KASHERED

- Blech
- Bottles with narrow necks
- Ceramic
- China
- Colander/Strainer/Sieve
- Crockpot
- Food Processor
- George Foreman Grill
- Grater
- Hot Plate
- Mixer
- Plastic Tablecloths
- Sifter
- Toaster / Toaster Oven
- Warming Drawer
- Wooden Cutting Board 