



Dear All,

The Halachot of Pesach can be complicated at the best of times but this year brings with it the added complexities of Covid restrictions and erev Pesach falling on Shabbat (not to mention the change from GMT to BST on 1st night Pesach!). Below is a concise guide to help navigate this unusual situation. For any further questions please feel free to join the zoom Q&A this evening (Wednesday 17th March) at 8:30pm or contact me directly via whatsapp, phone or email. (07891 988 201 or rabbi@magenavot.com)

Mechirat Chametz and Fast of the Firstborn

I will be performing Mechirat Chametz on **Friday morning 26th March 2021**. For those who wish to appoint me in person as a shaliach to sell your chametz I will be available at Magen Avot on Sunday 21st March after Shacharit until 10am in order to do so in a socially distanced manner.

Alternatively, the relevant forms can be completed here: <https://forms.gle/RZsii5NhRd6UTM5y6> (**Please ensure that this form is completed by 5pm on Thursday 25th March 2021.**)

The fast of the Firstborn, which normally takes place on erev Pesach, is observed 2 days earlier this year, on Thursday morning 25th March. A communal siyum (part of the 3T project) will be broadcast via zoom.

Bedikat and Bi'ur Chametz

The search for and removal of chametz are similarly brought forward this year because of Shabbat.

Bedikat Chametz should take place after **7:13pm on Thursday 25th March**. A bracha is recited as usual and the Kol Chamira declaration, nullifying any chametz which was not found, is recited.

Bi'ur Chametz (burning of chametz) should take place on Friday morning before **11:04am**. Kol Chamira is not recited at this time.

(Although chametz may still be retained after this time as it is not yet erev Pesach, the burning is done in the morning as in a regular year, so as not to cause confusion.)

Chametz may still be retained and consumed until 10am on Shabbat morning.

Before Shabbat

All cleaning of surfaces, kashering and other preparations for Pesach must be completed before Shabbat comes in. Additionally, preparations for the Seder cannot be done on Shabbat and some of the activities necessary to prepare the Seder plate cannot be performed on Yom Tov either (roasting the egg and shankbone, washing lettuce for maror etc.) It is therefore recommended to make **all** preparations for the Seder on Friday in order to avoid complications and to be able to start the Seder as quickly as possible after Shabbat.

Before lighting Shabbat candles a **3-day candle** should be light in order to light Yom Tov candles from a pre-existing flame.

Shabbat Meals

Hamotzi needs to be made over two loaves at the Shabbat meals. Ordinarily this poses no problem, however is complicated this Shabbat by the fact that the home is already fully "kosher for Pesach". It is recommended to use pitot or small rolls which will be easily and fully consumed. These should be eaten **away** from the Pesach table, foods and utensils (ideally outside where possible). Once the bread has been eaten, crumbs should be shaken off and hands washed before returning to the table. The rest of the meal can be eaten from Pesach utensils or disposables.



Alternatively, egg matzah can be used for Hamotzi at both the Friday night and Shabbat morning meals until 10am. (According to Ashkenazi custom, egg matzah may not be consumed after this time on erev Pesach or on Pesach itself, barring extenuating circumstances.) Ordinary matzah may not be eaten on Shabbat, so as to leave anticipation for the taste at the Seder night.

Any chametz needs to be eaten before **10am** on Shabbat morning. Shacharit will therefore begin at **7:30am** to leave enough time to return home, make Kiddush and Hamotzi before this time.

The Kol Chamira declaration, whereby any remaining chametz is nullified, should be said on Shabbat morning before 11:04am, beyond which time one is no longer permitted to own chametz.

Regarding Seudah Shlishit, since reciting Hamotzi is no longer possible after 10am, one may fulfill their obligation through a meal of other cooked food or fruit etc. Cooked foods containing matzah meal may be eaten (before 3pm), however cakes and other baked goods containing matzah meal should not be eaten at all on erev Pesach.

It is recommended to eat a light snack or meal in the afternoon so that one is not too hungry and able to enjoy the Seder. At the same time one should make sure to leave a sufficient appetite for matzah and the Seder meal.

Motzei Shabbat

No preparations for Yom Tov may begin before **7:13pm**, at which time "Baruch hamavdil bein kodesh lekodesh" should be recited and Yom Tov candles lit from a pre-existing flame.

The brachot of Havdalah and "Borei Meorei Haesh" (over the Yom Tov candles) are recited as part of Kiddush, as shown in the Haggadah.

British Summer Time (BST) commences at 1am on Sunday 29th March. Most clocks cannot be adjusted on Yom Tov (and will therefore remain on GMT), whilst others will update themselves automatically. In order to avoid confusion, the shul newsletter will therefore include the timings of services according to both GMT and BST, and people can follow along according to whichever clock they are using. (Remember to update your clocks after the conclusion of second-day Yom Tov.)

Second Day Yom Tov

No preparation may be made for the second day of Yom Tov and the second Seder before **8:14pm BST** (7:14pm GMT) on Sunday 28th March. Yom Tov candles are once again lit from a pre-existing flame.

Yom Tov concludes at **8:16pm BST** on Monday 29th March.

Last year the prospect of 3 days alone was the source of anxiety for many people. Thankfully this year we find ourselves in a different situation, although many restrictions remain with us. If you find yourself alone and are at all anxious about the upcoming Yom Tov, please be in contact with me beforehand to discuss the options available and/or to arrange for a socially distanced visit over Chag.

Additionally, if you require assistance of **any** kind regarding provisions for Chag please do not hesitate to contact me.

Wishing the entire Kehilla Pesach Kasher veSameach!
Rabbi Kenigsberg