

בית הוראה דיעטראיט
BAIS HORAAH OF DETROIT
HALACHA HOTLINE

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF HaRav Shmuel Irons שליט"א VAAD HALACHA Rav Aharon Yoel Sorscher • Rav Yissachar Wolf • Rav Boruch Miller

KITCHEN • SHABBOS • YOM TOV • BRACHOS • AVEILUS • TAHARAS HAMISHPACHA • EVERYDAY SHAILOS

ISSUE # 16 – APPLIANCES FAQs

Commonly Received Questions and their Answers

Below are some common questions and answers based on psakim from the rabbonim of the Bais Horaah. Please note: in the event one believes they have heard a different opinion in the past, one's family posek should always be consulted. Mareh mekomos for any specific answers below are available by email request to ask@bhdetroit.org.

● **May one use a stovetop burner on Yom Tov?**

- It is permitted on Yom Tov to cook on a burner that is already lit even raw food for use on that day of Yom Tov. Unlike Shabbos, a blech is not required.

● **I forgot to light a burner before Yom Tov. Can it be lit on Yom Tov?**

- Even though it is permitted to cook, and to add to an existing flame on Yom Tov, it is not permitted to light a new fire. Turning on an electric stovetop, or a gas stovetop with electric ignition, is not permitted. In a case of need, it is permissible to light a gas stove in a very specific way on Yom Tov. A Halachic authority should be consulted for guidance. (See the following question with regard to having a non-Jew turn on a burner.)

● **May a non-Jew be asked to turn on a burner or oven on Yom Tov?**

- In a case of great need, where an oven or stovetop was accidentally turned off or was unintentionally not turned on before Yom Tov, a non-Jew may be asked to turn it on during Yom Tov (but not Shabbos). Note: to avoid a problem of bishul akum, once the fire is on, the food must be placed on the stovetop or inserted in the oven by a Jew.

● **May the temperature on a gas or electric stovetop be raised on Yom Tov?**

- The flame on a gas stovetop can be increased if no lights or indicators change. Electric stovetops generally cannot be adjusted on Yom Tov.

● **May the temperature on a stovetop be lowered on Yom Tov?**

- In general, it is not permitted to extinguish a flame on Yom Tov, even for cooking. However, if necessary for the cooking process, the flame on contemporary gas stovetops can be lowered. Electric stovetops generally may not be adjusted on Yom Tov.

● **May a match be lit from a stovetop burner?**

- A match may be lit from a gas stovetop by inserting it directly into the flame of the burner.
- To light a match from an electric coil burner, the burner must be red-hot, and the match must touch the red-hot burner. It cannot be lit from the surrounding heat of the burner. A match cannot be lit from a glass stovetop since the burner coil cannot be accessed.

● **May an oven be used on Yom Tov?**

- In years past, ovens were controlled by a simple thermostat. Therefore, it was permissible to open and close the oven on Yom Tov, whether the flame was on or not. Nowadays, ovens are generally equipped with a door switch that is connected to the oven's computer. By opening and closing the door of an oven with a door switch, even if the light has been disabled, other changes may be triggered by the computer. For example, in many oven models, the flame will turn off if the door is open for a given number of seconds. To satisfy all halachic opinions, a magnet or strong tape should be used to disable the door switch. We recommend this even for models with Star-K certified Sabbath Mode due to the design of these systems. It is important to note that, even with the use of a magnet or tape, Sabbath Mode must still be engaged to disable other timers and alarms. (You may contact the Bais Horaah for assistance with locating and disabling the door switch on your oven.) According to current information from the OU, the Shabbos Keeper device does resolve this issue for compatible models.
- Once the door switch concern has been addressed, food for use on that day of Yom Tov may be put in the oven. The oven may then be opened and closed for cooking purposes throughout Yom Tov, regardless of whether the flame is on or off when doing so.

● **May the temperature setting of an oven be adjusted on Yom Tov?**

- Ovens with digital push-button or touch controls may not be adjusted on Yom Tov. The consensus of halachic authorities is to prohibit adjusting even models with Certified Sabbath Mode.
- Adjusting models with manual controls may or may not be permitted depending on the specific model. Contact the Bais Horaah to determine if and how your model may be adjusted on Yom Tov.

● **May one adjust the temperature setting of a hot plate or crock pot on Yom Tov?**

- These appliances may not be adjusted up or down on Yom Tov because it is usually not possible to determine whether the heating element is currently active.

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● **May a hot water urn or pump-pot be refilled on Yom Tov?**

- The most halachically preferred method to refill these appliances is to boil water on the stovetop and pour it into the urn or pump-pot. Since the water is already hot, it will not trigger a re-boil cycle. Adding a small amount of cold water may also be permitted, depending on the temperature sensitivity of the specific urn or pump-pot.

● **Is one permitted to use hot water from the faucet on Yom Tov?**

- On Yom Tov (but not Shabbos) it is permitted to use water that is heated by a hot water tank for washing one's hands or dishes. Tankless hot water systems, however, may not be used on Yom Tov.

The following questions relate to Shabbos:

● **Under what conditions is it permitted to leave food in the oven before Shabbos or before Yom Tov that falls on Shabbos?**

- It is not permitted to place food in the oven on Shabbos. Fully cooked food may be left in the oven before Shabbos. Food that is not fully cooked may require a blech. A Halachic authority should be consulted on how to construct a blech inside an oven. In modern ovens, the flame typically cycles on and off based on the thermostat. According to most opinions, an oven should only be opened when the flame is cycled on. If one cannot tell whether the flame is on, or if it is taking a long time, there is room to be lenient and open the oven and quickly remove all the food.

● **Is it permitted on Shabbos to remove some food from an oven while leaving other food for later?**

- In general, the oven should be opened only once, and all food should be taken out at that time. In a case of need, there is a possibility for leniency if the door switch has been disabled. A Halachic authority must be consulted for the exact parameters of this leniency.
- According to current information from the OU, when a Shabbos Keeper is installed on compatible models, it is permissible to leave fully cooked food in the oven even after opening it on Shabbos.

● **Is it permissible to use the timed bake mode on Friday night, and then remove food after the oven has turned off?**

- Yes. In fact, this method involves fewer halachic complications than taking out the food while the oven is on. To use the timed bake mode, one must ensure that the oven light or indicators will not turn on when the door is opened. The food must be fully cooked before Shabbos. Once the cycle has ended, the door may be opened as many times as necessary. Additionally, because the oven is off, it is permitted to leave food in the oven to keep it warm.
- Please note: many ovens will continue to beep all Shabbos once the timed bake cycle has completed. Sabbath mode generally disables the continuous beeping. Alternatively, the oven may have a setting that can be enabled to prevent this.

● **Is it permitted to leave food in a warming drawer before Shabbos?**

- According to most halachic opinions, a warming drawer is halachically equivalent to an oven. Therefore, it is not permitted to put food in a warming drawer on Shabbos. Depending on the specific model, it may be permitted to leave food in the warming drawer from before Shabbos. Contact the Bais Horaah with your specific model.

● **Is it permitted to use a hot plate on Shabbos?**

- Even food that is not fully cooked may be left on a hot plate before Shabbos. The hot plate should be covered with aluminum foil or similar material in a safe manner.
- It is also permitted to place even cold food on a hot plate on Shabbos, provided the following additional conditions are met:
 1. The food must be fully cooked and dry.
 2. A pan must be placed upside down on the hot plate. The food is then placed on top of the inverted pan.

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