

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 #28 – Chol Hamoed FAQs

- Although certain weekday activities are permitted on Chol Hamoed, it retains the sanctity of Yom Tov in many respects. Accordingly, one's dress and meals should reflect the elevated stature of these days. As a rule, weekday activities are prohibited unless they fall within one of the specific leniencies established by Chazal for Chol Hamoed.
- Chazal caution us in the strongest terms to safeguard the holiness of these special days. The following is a sampling of common questions and their answers. As the halachos are often case-specific, one should study the relevant laws carefully or consult a Halachic Authority before engaging in any particular activity.
- The Halacha Hotline will be available with extended hours during Chol Hamoed and can be reached via call or text at 248-923-1613.
- **Should one wash for bread, eat meat, or drink wine?**
 - Yes, this should be done, although according to many opinions it is not an obligation. Therefore, bentching is not repeated if one omits Ya'aleh V'Yavo.
- **May one go for routine dental, doctor or orthodontic appointments on Chol Hamoed?**
 - Routine appointments should not be scheduled on Chol Hamoed unless they cannot be deferred. If one is in pain, however, they may seek treatment as needed.
- **May one trap or kill bothersome bees or mosquitoes on Chol Hamoed?**
 - Yes.
- **Is it permitted to go apple or other fruit picking on Chol Hamoed?**
 - Yes, however, only what will be used on Chol Hamoed should be picked. Picking should be done only by those who genuinely enjoy it.
- **May one buy food items on Chol Hamoed?**
 - Yes, food may be purchased for use on the chag even if it could have been bought before Yom Tov.
- **May one purchase non-food items on Chol Hamoed?**
 - Such items should preferably be purchased before Yom Tov. If not, one may buy them for a genuine Chol Hamoed need. Purchases are also permitted if the item is generally more expensive or harder to obtain at other times, such as a rare special sale or when traveling in a place where it is available but will not be after Yom Tov.
- **Is buying online treated differently?**
 - Online purchases are generally subject to the same restrictions as in-store purchases, even if the item will only arrive after Yom Tov.
 - Returns should generally not be made on Chol Hamoed unless they will no longer be accepted afterward.
- **May one cook or bake more food than needed for Yom Tov?**
 - It is permitted to do so as long as some is needed for Yom Tov itself, but not specifically for after Yom Tov.
- **May one get a haircut on Chol Hamoed?**
 - One may not get a haircut on Chol Hamoed. A Halachic Authority should be consulted regarding other forms of hair removal.
- **May one cut nails on Chol Hamoed?**
 - Children's nails may be cut. Adults may cut their own nails only if they were also cut before Yom Tov.
- **May clothes be washed on Chol Hamoed?**
 - Children's clothing may be washed if they do not keep their clothing clean from day to day. Adult clothing may not be washed, even with the children's load. However, spot cleaning is permitted. If an adult has no clean clothing to wear and purchasing new clothing is not an option, a Halachic Authority should be consulted.
- **May clothes be ironed on Chol Hamoed?**
 - Ironing is permitted if needed. However, professional pressing, even by a non-Jew, is not allowed.
- **Under what circumstances may one drive on Chol Hamoed?**
 - One may drive for convenience or enjoyment, even if walking is an option.

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● **May car repairs be done on Chol Hamoed?**

- Common tasks such as installing a spare tire, jump-starting, or replacing a battery are permitted, as they can generally be done by a non-skilled person. Most other car repairs, however, may only be performed to prevent a significant financial loss.

● **May the lawn be mowed on Chol Hamoed?**

- One may not cut the grass, trim bushes, or engage in any other type of gardening. It is also forbidden to have a non-Jew perform these activities. However, one may cut aravos for use on Sukkos.

● **May one water the lawn or garden on Chol Hamoed?**

- Watering is not permitted unless needed to prevent a significant loss, such as a plant dying.
- A sprinkler set on a timer before Yom Tov or Chol Hamoed may be left to operate, even if it turns on during Chol Hamoed.
- Indirect watering, such as runoff from an outdoor sink or sukkah covering, is also permitted. On Yom Tov, however, the water must first flow over non-vegetative ground or material before reaching the grass or garden.

● **May one build a sukkah on Chol Hamoed?**

- Yes. Building a sukkah for use on Yom Tov or Chol Hamoed is permitted.
- Dismantling a sukkah is allowed only to prevent a loss.

● **May one put items in storage, such as Pesach dishes that are no longer needed?**

- It is permitted to put these items in storage within one's property, as long as it does not require significant time or effort.

● **May a toilet be repaired on Chol Hamoed?**

- Generally, skilled labor may not be performed on Chol Hamoed. Plunging a toilet is permitted, as it does not involve skilled labor. Professional repairs of a toilet are an exception and are allowed if the situation causes discomfort or significant inconvenience due to the essential nature of a toilet. Normally, one should try to hire a Jewish tradesman, however on Chol Hamoed a non-Jew is preferred. If a non-Jewish plumber is not available, a halachic authority should be consulted.

● **May one have their oven or fridge repaired on Chol Hamoed?**

- Kitchen appliances are another exception to the restriction on skilled labor as they are needed for food preparation. Professional repairs are permitted but one should try to have a non-Jew perform them. If a non-Jew is not available a halachic authority should be consulted.

● **May an article of clothing be repaired on Chol Hamoed?**

- If the article is needed for Yom Tov, it may be repaired in an unskilled fashion (for example, sewing with a zigzag instead of a straight line). A sewing machine may not be used.

● **May one send a text message on Chol Hamoed?**

- Writing on Chol Hamoed is generally not allowed. However, typing or writing on an electronic device is permitted if needed for Yom Tov or Chol Hamoed, unless the device has an e-ink display, such as a Kindle. Printing should only be done if needed for Yom Tov or Chol Hamoed or to prevent a loss.

● **May one write a check on Chol Hamoed?**

- One should preferably use a different form of payment. If a check must be written, it should be done in a sloppy, non-professional manner. Similarly, if a credit card signature is required on paper, it should be a scribble rather than a proper signature.

● **Is painting permitted on Chol Hamoed?**

- No. All types of painting may not be done on Chol Hamoed even if one finds it enjoyable.
- Note: When painting pottery, no tevillah is required if the glaze is applied by a Jew. If non-glaze paints are used and a non-Jew dips the piece in glaze before placing it in the kiln, tevillah is required without a bracha.

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