

בית הוראה דיעטראיט
BAIS HORA AH 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 #6 SUMMER FAQs

Commonly Received Questions and their Answers

- **May a swing or hammock that is hanging from a tree be used on Shabbos or Yom Tov?**
 - A swing or hammock is permitted only if it is indirectly attached to the tree via a hook that is affixed to the side of the tree, and only if use of the swing or hammock does not cause the tree to shake at all. If the swing is attached in any other manner to the tree, it is forbidden.
- **May it be attached on Shabbos?**
 - No. A swing or hammock may not be attached on Shabbos, even if the hook was already affixed to the side of the tree prior to the onset of Shabbos.
- **May one have a drink on the lawn on Shabbos?**
 - One should not drink water or fruit juice directly over the lawn. This is due to a concern of watering the grass which is a toldah of zoreia (planting). However, if one is at a table it is permitted.
- **Is it permissible to ride a scooter or bicycle on Shabbos or Yom Tov?**
 - It is forbidden to ride a bicycle or adult tricycle, even within an eruv. Riding a small tricycle or a small scooter is permitted within an eruv, because these are not typically used for riding long distances.
- **Is ball playing permitted for young children on Shabbos?**
 - Yes, under the following conditions:
 1. It must be in an area which is permitted to carry in, for example a backyard with a fence on all four sides or within an eruv. Care must be taken that the ball cannot easily exit the eruv. If the ball gets caught in a tree or bush it may not be retrieved on Shabbos.
 2. Games which require a smooth ground surface such as soccer, hockey and marbles, are prohibited.
- **Can one apply sunscreen on Shabbos?**
 - In general, creams and lotions are not permitted due to mimareiach (smearing), and possibly refuah (healing) depending on the product. Sunscreen is not a treatment, so the only concern is smearing. If the sunscreen has a thin consistency (i.e. it is a purely liquid or spray variety), it is permitted to apply.
- **Can one apply insect repellent on Shabbos?**
 - Yes. However, it can only be sprayed on the skin, and not on one's clothing. Spraying any scent onto fabric on Shabbos or Yom Tov is forbidden due to the prohibition of molid rei'ach (adding scent).
- **May I have my automatic sprinklers turn on to water the lawn over Shabbos?**
 - Sprinklers may be left on a timer, however they should run only at night when people are not around to avoid Zilzul Shabbos.
- **Can freeze pops or ice cubes be frozen on Shabbos?**
 - They should be put in the freezer before Shabbos or Yom Tov. If one forgot to do so, and these items will enhance the enjoyment of Shabbos or Yom Tov, it is permitted to freeze them. However, only as many as will be consumed during Shabbos or the current day of Yom Tov may be frozen.

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● **Is it permitted to open freeze pops on Shabbos or Yom Tov?**

- Ideally, freeze pops should be opened before Shabbos or Yom Tov. If they were not opened beforehand, they can be opened on Shabbos or Yom Tov under the following conditions:
 1. one is careful not to cut any words or pictures on the plastic.
 2. the opening one creates should be less than perfect, for example:
- detachable double freeze pops should not be cut on the narrow area where they are intended to be cut, but rather should be cut higher up on the cylinder.
- a regular freeze pop should be cut in a jagged manner, or on an angle.

● **Can I open a patio umbrella on Shabbos?**

- A patio umbrella should be opened before Shabbos. If one forgot to do so, a halachic authority should be consulted.

● **Our air conditioning was accidentally turned off on Shabbos. May we ask a non-Jew to turn it back on?**

- In general, a non-Jew may not be asked to do anything on Shabbos which is forbidden for a Jew. In fact, any work done on our behalf, even if done without any request or prompting, is forbidden to benefit from. There are very few cases in which such activity is permitted. It is important to consult a halachic authority for specific cases.
- However, a non-Jew may be asked to turn on an air conditioner with the following conditions:
 1. One may not leave the air conditioning off and plan to have a non-Jew turn it on during Shabbos. It must have been either accidentally turned off once Shabbos began, or mistakenly not turned on before Shabbos, etc.
 2. It must be unbearably hot in the room.
 3. There must be no other comparable rooms in the house that are cool.

● **Can I set my air conditioner with a timer before Shabbos to turn on and off on Shabbos?**

- There are poskim who prohibit the use of a timer, however the common custom is to rely on the many poskim who permit its use.

● **May a child turn on the air conditioner?**

- No, having a child turn it on is not permitted. There are very few - if any - instances in which a child may be asked to do melacha. A halachic authority must be consulted for any such case.

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