

# Hopkins Hillel Pesach Guide 5774

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*Please note: All zmanim (times) listed are for Charles Village in Baltimore, MD.  
To obtain zmanim that are relevant to your own Passover celebration if you will not be at Hopkins, visit: [myzmanim.com](http://myzmanim.com)*

## I. Preparing for Pesach

### *Maot Chitim*

*Pesach* is a very expensive holiday! There is an ancient tradition of donating money to charity to provide for the needs of the poor on this occasion. The *Rambam* (Maimonides) writes that we are obligated to bring joy on the holidays not only to ourselves and our own families, but also to those who are less fortunate this year. *Maot Chitim* can be donated online by credit card to many worthy organizations, including *Yad Eliezer* which supports the poor of Israel.

### *Mechirat Chametz (Selling of Chametz)*

During the eight days of *Pesach*, our residences must be free of all *chametz* (leavened products), as well as any products that have a trace of *chametz* (*taarovet chametz*). All such items are to be consumed prior to *Pesach*, or placed in designated areas and sold for the eight-day period to a non-Jew. During the entire *Pesach*, the designated cabinets should not be opened and no items in the designated areas should be used.

In order to be included in the sale, you must fill out the attached form; you will appoint me as your agent (*shaliach*) to sell your *chametz*. All forms must be submitted to me. It is preferable to perform a formal *kinyan* (gesture of sale in accordance with Jewish law) when submitting the document. Please see the e-mail that was sent a few days prior for more details.

Please keep the following points in mind:

- Even if you will not be at Hopkins for the entire Passover, you must either dispose of or sell any *chametz* that is in your possession. Any *chametz* not appropriately accounted for is considered *chametz she-avar alav haPesach* (see below), from which it is forbidden to derive any benefit after *Pesach*.
- If you own *chametz*, you should not rely on your parents' sale; your *chametz* isn't automatically included in their transaction.
- If you will be appointing me as your agent for the sale of your *chametz*, please refrain from consumption of your *chametz* until April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 9:30pm (approximately one hour after the conclusion of the Holiday).

### ***Bedikat Chametz (Checking for Chametz)***

In addition to the Torah's prohibition of *chametz* consumption, there is a prohibition regarding finding, seeing, and deriving benefit from your personal *chametz*. We rid ourselves of any *chametz* unknown to us by "nullifying" it through *Bittul Chametz*, thus rendering the *chametz* ownerless. Our *chachamim* (sages), however, further mandated a thorough check of one's home and property (*Bedikat Chametz*) on the night before *Pesach* as soon as possible after nightfall (8:24pm). There is a custom of placing 10 pieces of bread in one's home to be found during the search. Additionally, it is customary to perform the search in the dark, candle or flashlight in hand. One should clean one's home, car, and possessions first, followed by a circumspect check including dorm rooms, common areas in one's apartment, drawers, coat pockets, closets, desks, vehicles, etc.

Before beginning the search, we make the following *beracha* (blessing):

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על בעור חמץ

*Baruch Ata Hashem Elokeinu Melech ha-Olam Asher Kidshanu Bemitzvotav ve-Tzivanu al Biur Chametz*

*Blessed are You Lord our God, Sovereign of the World, Who has sanctified us by His commandments and commanded us concerning the removal of chametz.*

Note: A *beracha* is only said if performing the search on Sunday night, April 13<sup>th</sup> (14 *Nissan*).

Once the search is complete, one recites the following "*Kol Chamira*" (all *chametz*) declaration:

כל חמירא וחמיעא דאכא ברשותי. לדא חמיתה ולדא בערתה ודלא ידענא ליה לבטל ולהוי הפקר כעפרא  
דרארע

*Kol Chamira ve-chmi'ah de-ika bi-reshuti de-la chamiteh ude-la bi'arteh ude-la yadana leih. Li-batel ve-le-hevei hefker ke-afra de-ara*

*All chametz and leavening in my possession which I have not seen and have not destroyed shall be considered nullified and ownerless, as the dust of the earth.*

One leaving Hopkins before the night of *Bedikat Chametz* should perform the search on the night before one leaves, without a *beracha*, but with the "*Kol Chamira*" declaration.

Students should also participate in *bedikat* and *biur chametz* in their parents' homes.

### ***Biur Chametz (Burning the Chametz)***

All *chametz* must be removed from our possession by the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> hour of Passover eve. As a final act of getting rid of *chametz*, we burn the *chametz* that was found during the previous night's search. *Chametz* must be burned by 12:00pm (*Gra*) – the time at which owning

*chametz* becomes forbidden. Anyone who will be on campus on Monday morning, April 14<sup>th</sup>, there will be a community *Biur Chametz* at Hillel.

A longer *Kol Chamira* declaration is recited at the time of burning, as well:

*Kol chamira va-chami'a d'ika virshuti, da-chazitei u'd'la chazitei d'chamitei u'd'la chamitei, d'viartei u'd'la viartei livteil v'lehevei hefker k'afra d'ar'ah.*

*All chametz in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, whether I have removed it or not, is hereby nullified and ownerless, as the dust of the earth.*

### ***Ta'anit Bechorim (Fast of the First Born)***

*Erev Pesach* (Passover eve) is the fast of the firstborn, to commemorate the fact that the Jewish firstborn were spared during the last of the Ten Plagues. This year, the fast is observed on Monday, April 14<sup>th</sup> (14 *Nissan* 5774) beginning at 5:06am. It is customary that any firstborn who attends a *siyum* (completion of a significant portion of Torah study) and partakes in the *seudat mitzvah* (meal following the *siyum*) is exempt from the fast.

There will be a *minyan* and *siyum* at Hopkins Hillel this year. If you will be on campus, please make an effort to attend!

### ***Eating on Erev Pesach***

We do not eat *matzah* or anything baked with *matzah* (including *matzah* meal products) on Monday April 14<sup>th</sup>, in anticipation of the *mitzvah* to eat *matzah* (and plenty of it) at the *seder*. Cooked *matzah* products (i.e., *matzah* balls) are permitted. One should eat in moderation on *Erev Pesach* in order to have an appetite at the *seder*.

## II. Cleaning and *Kashering* for *Pesach*

### *Basic Cleaning*

If one will not be cooking or using the kitchen during *Pesach*, one does not need to *Kasher* cooking appliances. Simply eliminate all physical *chametz* in one's possession, including bits of bread in toasters, spills on surfaces, etc. Pieces that are both smaller than a *kezayit* (olive) and/ or inedible do not count, so the easiest thing to do is to dispose of all the large pieces, then clean one's surfaces with a strong, inedible chemical cleaner. If anything remains after this, it is not edible *chametz* and one need not destroy it. This is the simplest method for counters, cooking appliances, refrigerators, and floors. It is good to launder clothes or check pockets for *chametz*.

### **Microwave Ovens**

Clean the microwave thoroughly and do not use for 24 hours. Then boil a cup of water on the highest setting for 10 minutes, or until all the water has boiled off. Then quickly insert your hand and touch the oven ceiling. If it is very hot, the microwave should not be used for *Pesach*. If it is not hot, the microwave may be used. The glass plate should be covered with saran wrap.

### **Refrigerator and Freezers**

Each shelf should be removed and cleaned thoroughly. If hot *chametz* was spilled on a shelf then it should be covered (make sure to perforate any covers to allow for air circulation). Otherwise, covering shelves is not necessary.

### **Sinks**

China sinks cannot be kashered at all. Porcelain or corian sinks should also be considered like a china sink, since there is a controversy whether these materials can be kashered. These sinks should be cleaned, and completely lined with contact paper or foil. The dishes that are to be washed should not be placed directly into the sink. They must be washed in a *Pesach* dishpan that is placed on a *Pesach* rack. Alternatively, a sink insert can be purchased, allowing for the placement of either dairy or meat dishes directly into the sink. Dishes can also simply be washed while holding them in the air, without placing them on the surface of the sink.

Stainless steel sinks can be kashered by the following method. Clean the sink thoroughly. Hot water should not be used or poured in the sink for twenty-four hours prior to kashering. (It is recommended that the sink be covered or the hot water knob covered to ensure that it is not used). Kashering is accomplished by pouring boiling hot water from a *Pesach* kettle/pot over every part of the stainless steel sink. The poured water must touch every part of the sink including the drain and the spout of the water faucet. It is likely that the kashering kettle will need to be refilled a few times before the kashering can be completed. Granite sinks can be kashered like stainless steel sinks.

## Countertops

Countertops made of granite may also be kashered. Formica countertops should be cleaned and covered with a waterproof material. The same goes for tables with synthetic tops. Wood tables could theoretically be kashered with boiling water, but the custom is to clean and cover them.

## Major Appliances and Utensils

Those who need advice on kashering appliances and utensils for *Pesach* should contact Rabbi Levin.

## III. Important *Zmanim* (times)

### Sunday Night, April 13<sup>th</sup> 2014 – *Leil 14 Nisan, 5774*

*Bedikat Chametz*: After nightfall- 8:24PM

### Monday Morning, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 – *Yom 14 Nisan, 5774*

*Ta'anit Bechorim*: The fast starts at 5:06AM

*Sof Zman Achilat Chametz*: The latest time to eat *chametz* on Monday is at 10:54 AM (*Gra*).

*Sof Zman Biur Chametz*: The last time to dispose of /burn *chametz* is at 12:00 PM (*Gra*).

### Monday Evening, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 – *Yom 14 Nisan, 5774*

*Zman Hadlakat Neiroi*: Candle Lighting time- 7:25pm

For the first night, the *berakhot* to be recited are "*le-hadlik ner shel Yom Tov*" and "*Shehechyanu*." It is a proper custom to give *Tzedakah* (charity) before candle lighting on *Yom Tov*, and also to see the moment of candle lighting as one of transcendence and an opportunity to compose personal prayers to *Hashem*.

For the second night, candles should not be lit and preparations for the 2<sup>nd</sup> day should not begin until after 8:26 pm. Before lighting, the *berakhot* to be recited are "*le-hadlik ner shel Yom Tov*" and "*Shehechyanu*."

### Monday Night, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 – *Yom Tov- Leil Rishon 15 Nisan, 5774 (Pesach)*

**The Seder**- should start as early as possible, after *Tzeit HaKochavim* (it has become fully dark and the stars have come out). *Kiddush* can be recited after 8:25PM.

### Tuesday Night, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014 – *Yom Tov- Leil Sheini 16 Nisan, 5774 (Pesach)*

*Zman Hadlakat Neiroi*: Candle Lighting times- no earlier than 8:26pm

\*\*One should not begin any preparations for the Seder until that time.

## Tues. Night, April 22nd, 2014 – *Motzai Yom Tov (Chol haMoed) - 17 Nisan, 5774 (Pesach)*

*Yom Tov* (Holiday) concludes with *Havdalah* no earlier than 8:34PM. It is recited over wine. Spices and a *Havdalah* candle are not used.

### IV. The *Mitzvot* of the *Seder*

#### The *Arba Kosot* (Four Cups) of Wine

##### Minimum Size of Each of the *Arba Kosot*

The cup must hold at least a *revi'it* (3.0 fluid ounces). One must drink at least *rov kos* (more than half of the cup of wine) to fulfill the obligation. If one would like to avoid drinking an abundance of wine, it is recommended to use a small cup that holds only a bit more than a *revi'it*.

##### Minimum Strength of the Wine

One may dilute the wine with a small amount of grape juice or water, if necessary. The ratio should not exceed 2/3 cup of water or grape juice to 1/3 cup of wine. One may use grape juice if one is unable to drink wine.

One should drink the wine while doing *heseiba* (leaning to the left). One should drink the requisite amount at once.

#### ***Matzah* (Unleavened Bread)**

There are three points during the *Seder* at which *Matzah* must be eaten:

- 1) After the blessing of *Al Achilat Matzah* (on the eating of *matzah*)
- 2) The *Korech* sandwich of *Matzah* and *Maror* (bitter herbs)
- 3) The *Afikoman* (dessert)

One must eat a *kezayit* (volume of a large olive) of *matzah* at each of these points. This translates to approximately one-half of an average machine made *matzah* or one-third of a handmade *matzah*. It is customary for many to eat *Matzah Shmurah* (*matzah* that has been watched since the time of harvest) during the *Seder*.

The *matzah* should be eaten while performing *heseiba*, *kedei achilat peras* (the *halachically* prescribed amount of time for performing a *mitzvah* requiring consumption of food or drink). This is between 2-4 minutes.

#### ***Maror* (bitter herbs)**

There are two points during the *Seder* at which *Maror* must be eaten:

- 1) After the blessing of *Al Achilat Maror* (on the eating of *maror*)
- 2) The *Korech* sandwich of *Matzah* and *Maror* (bitter herbs)

The *maror* should be consumed *kedei achilat peras* (within 2-4 minutes).

### Minimum Amount of *Maror*

Romaine Lettuce (either its stalks or leaves) or horseradish can be used for *maror*.

- *Romaine lettuce, whole leaves*: Enough leaves to cover an area 8 x 10 inches. This is slightly less than a sheet of standard paper.
- *Romaine lettuce, stalks only*: Enough stalks to cover an area of 3 x 5 inches. This is the size of an index card.

### ***Sipur Yetziat Mitzrayim* – Recounting the Story of the Exodus**

The goal of recounting the story is not simply to relate the details of the story, but to create an experience where each individual feels that he/she has experienced a personal redemption. The *Haggadah* tells us “anyone who increases the telling of the story, it is praiseworthy.” This applies equally to both elderly scholars and young children. It is our responsibility to pique the interest of the children, and to engage them in discussion and questioning regarding the story. This is the simple explanation of much of what we do and recite during the course of the *Seder*.

### ***Hallel***

Our telling of the story of the Exodus leads to singing the praise of *Hashem*. This is why *Hallel* is instituted at the end of the *Seder*.

## **V. The *Kashrut* of Various Products**

### **Medicine**

A number of the leading *kashrut* agencies, including the OU (Orthodox Union) and the CRC (Chicago Rabbinical Council) have ruled that any medicines that one swallows may be taken on *Pesach*, without checking whether or not they have *chametz*.

However, liquid and chewable medicines may be problematic, as they contain *chametz* or *kitniyot*, and they are ingested in the normal way in which we eat. If you have a serious medical condition it is important to consult with your doctor before discontinuing any medication. The *halachic* imperative to take care of oneself obligates those with serious conditions or illnesses to take their medicine without regard for ingredients.

Vitamins and food supplements do not necessarily fall under the category of medicine. If they are taken based on a doctor’s order, they should be treated like medicine. If not, they may be problematic to ingest on *Pesach* if not properly certified for *Pesach*.

### **Cosmetics and Toiletries (see [http://www.crcweb.org/medicine\\_letter.pdf](http://www.crcweb.org/medicine_letter.pdf))**

All varieties of blush, soap, creams, eye shadow, eyeliner, face powder, foot powder, ink, lotions, mascara nail polish, ointments, paint, shampoo and stick deodorant are permitted for use on *Pesach* – regardless of the ingredients they contain.

Many liquid deodorants, hairsprays, perfumes, colognes and shaving lotions contain denatured alcohol and should not be used on *Pesach* unless they are confirmed to be free of *chametz*.

Lipstick, mouthwash and toothpaste which contain *chametz* should not be used on *Pesach*.

### **Pets**

Many pet foods contain *chametz*. The prohibition against *chametz* includes a prohibition against owning and benefiting from it – this includes feeding it to one's pets. If you have a pet please see the following on how to properly care for them on *Pesach*.

## **VI. After Pesach**

### ***Chametz SheAvar Alav HaPesach (Chametz which was owned by a Jew during Pesach)***

In addition to the Torah prohibition against *chametz* on *Pesach*, there is also a Rabbinic penalty against *chametz* that was in a Jew's possession during *Pesach*. The most common area where this is a concern is in Jewish-owned stores that did not make the proper arrangements to sell their *Chametz*.

Many supermarkets are not under majority Jewish ownership and thus do not have to sell their *Chametz*. One may purchase *chametz* from such places immediately after *Pesach*. Contact Rabbi Levin for more details.

### **Laws of *Sefirat Omer* (Counting of the *Omer*)**

The period from *Pesach* until *Shavuot* is known as the *Omer*. Each night, beginning with the second night of *Pesach*, we count the day of the *Omer*, starting with 1 and going up to 49.

If one forgot to count one night, one can count the following day without saying the blessing. One can then proceed to count the *Omer* with a blessing on the following nights.

If one totally missed a 24 hour period, one cannot count the *Omer* with a blessing anymore. However, one is still obligated to count the *Omer* without a *beracha*. Ideally, one in this situation should hear the *beracha* recited by someone else, respond *Amen*, and then count the *Omer*. For this reason, in synagogues, the rabbi or *chazzan* recites the *beracha* out loud every night at *Maariv*.

Rabbi Akiva's students died out during the *Omer*, because they were not respectful to one another. Therefore, the *Omer* is an ideal time to work on our sensitivity and respect for each other.



In memory of Rabbi Akiva's students, there are several mourning customs that apply during the *Omer*:

- 1) Not getting haircuts (even on Fridays)
- 2) Men – not shaving (some shave on Fridays in honor of *Shabbat*)
- 3) Not listening to live music
- 4) Not going to parties, even without live music

The restrictions of the *Omer* (except getting a haircut) are suspended on *Pesach*, *Shabbat*, and according to some, *YomHa'atzmaut*.

## VII. Additional Resources

For more information, here are resources that the major Kashrut agencies have made available:

- Chicago Rabbinical Council  
[http://www.crcweb.org/Passover/2014/complete\\_passover\\_guide-2014.pdf](http://www.crcweb.org/Passover/2014/complete_passover_guide-2014.pdf)
- Star-K [http://www.star-k.org/PassoverDirectory2014\\_Web.pdf](http://www.star-k.org/PassoverDirectory2014_Web.pdf)
- Orthodox Union <http://oukosher.org/passover/download-passover-guide-2014/>

Feel free to contact me with any questions or comments at [RabbiLevin@jhu.edu](mailto:RabbiLevin@jhu.edu)

*Chag Kasher V'Sameach to all!!!*

**A Happy and a Healthy Passover!!**