

THE SHABBOS WEEKLY

HALACHA SERIES ON HILCHOS SHABBOS

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Are there any limitations as to salting vegetables on Shabbos?

Here too *Chazal* were afraid that if one was permitted to salt vegetables in the normal fashion it would ultimately lead to processing in a forbidden manner. Therefore, one should not salt vegetables that are usually pickled such as cucumbers, onions radishes etc. ¹ unless a) one pours oil onto them, either before one adds salt or immediately after adding salt, ² b) one dips an individual piece of vegetable in salt and eats it. ³

Does this apply to salting eggs as well?

Eggs are not usually pickled and therefore one may salt any food item in this category as long as it is being salted for that Shabbos. ⁴ There is a bonus for salting it close to the meal. ⁵ Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach *ש"ת* adds that sliced tomatoes may be salted in the regular fashion because only whole tomatoes are pickled and salting sliced tomatoes does not appear as pickling. ⁶

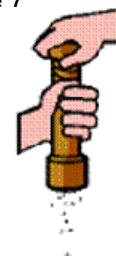
May one crush peppercorns on Shabbos?

Crushing – *טחינה* is one of the 39 *melachos* of the *Mishkan* and hence violating the prohibition of crushing involves an *issur d'oraisso*

(a biblical prohibition) and the bringing of a *korban chatas*.

Accordingly, if one were to crush peppercorns in a grinder on Shabbos one would be violating a biblical prohibition! Crushing directly onto one's food does not alleviate the prohibition.

Another weekday crushing method is with the aid of a pestle and mortar. The pestle is the implement used to grind and the mortar is the vessel into which the peppercorns are ground. Crushing in this manner on Shabbos incorporates an *issur d'oraisso*. The *Mishna Berura* ⁷ explains that even though one is only liable to bring a *korban* if one were to grind a quantity equivalent to the size of a *g'rogeres* – a dried fig, nevertheless it is an *issur d'oraisso* to grind even a single peppercorn.



Is there a permitted method to crush peppercorns on Shabbos?

The permitted method is to modify the crushing implement and the vessel used to retain the peppercorns. Accordingly one may crush peppercorns with a knife handle on a table or in a plate. ⁸ Cutting the peppercorns with the blade of the knife is problematic as we will see later *be"H*.

Is one permitted to use a salt grinder on Shabbos?

The same applies to the using of a salt grinder on Shabbos. The only way to crush salt on Shabbos is with a knife handle on a plate or on a table. ⁹

¹ SS"K 11:1.

² M"B *siman* 321:14. Adding oil disables the pickling agent.

³ M"B *siman* 321:20.

⁴ M"B *siman* 321:21 according to the *Elya Raba* and the *Vilna Ga'on*.

⁵ Ibid, seeing that there are *poskim* who only permit salting such food items prior to the meal.

⁶ SS"K 11 footnote 6.

⁷ M"B *siman* 321:23.

⁸ *Siman* 321:7 and M"B 25.

⁹ *Siman* 321:8 and M"B 28.

Is one permitted to crush hard boiled eggs into small pieces?

The Shabbos *melacha* of grinding – טחינה – only applies to items grown in the ground or items that are earth originating such as mud. Hence it is prohibited to grind pepper, salt, caked mud, garlic and other similar items. Eggs, on the other hand do not originate from the earth and therefore there is no *issur* to grind eggs.

What about grating cheese?

Similarly, cheese does not originate from the earth and therefore may be grated on Shabbos.

Is one permitted to use a grater for that purpose?

Even though one may grate certain items on Shabbos it is forbidden to use a grater!¹⁰ The reason for this is because using a grater is considered a weekday activity. It is not for us to define what is considered a weekday activity and what is not, it is *Chazal* who categorized certain activities as weekday activities. Here are several examples of what *Chazal* call עובדה דחול – a weekday activity: It is forbidden to **measure** quantities, size or space on Shabbos.¹¹ One is forbidden to hand an article to someone saying that it is to be used as collateral.¹²

What about cutting up a salad into very small pieces?

Cutting into fine pieces is an offshoot of 'grinding' and is forbidden on Shabbos. It therefore follows that it is prohibited to cut vegetables such as cucumbers and tomatoes into fine pieces on Shabbos. However, the *Rashba* says¹³ that one may cut finely, immediately prior to eating, because it is considered אכילה דרך

Chazal did not require one to eat food in large pieces.

Not all agree to the *Rashba* and indeed the *Bais Yosef* says that even when one intends eating right away one should not cut the vegetables finely. The *Mishna Berura*¹⁴ sides with the *Bais Yosef* and agrees that one should not cut the vegetables finely but says that one should not rebuke people that do cut them finely.¹⁵ However, it is **extremely important** to be aware that everyone agrees that if one cuts the vegetables finely an hour or two before the meal, or for example one cuts onions finely and then goes to shul, one is probably liable to bring a *korban chatas*, on account of both *Borer* – separating and **grating** the onion.¹⁶

Orchos Chaim LaRosh

שלא ישיח שיחה בטילה – one should not engage in idle chatter.

Speech is a gift to humans and it is one of the main attributes that sets us apart from animals. It is a powerful tool that should be used for its intended purpose, i.e. making others happy, learning Torah, strengthening relationships, communication and many other positive uses.

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¹⁰ *Siman* 321:10 and *M"B* 36.

¹¹ *M"B* *siman* 306:34.

¹² *Rama* in *siman* 307:11.

¹³ *Rama* *siman* 321:12.

¹⁴ *M"B* *siman* 321:44

¹⁵ This does not necessarily mean that one should not teach the members of one's household the correct method of finely cutting vegetables on Shabbos. On the contrary, each person is responsible for the correct conduct of one's family. It is with regards to others who would normally be offended etc that one need not teach them such a *halacha*.

¹⁶ *M"B* *siman* 321:44.

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If you would like to send a question to Rav Ostroff, you can write to him at shabbosweekly@shemayisrael.com.

Note: The purpose of this series is intended solely for the clarification of the topics discussed and not to render halachic decisions. It is intended to heighten everyone's awareness of important practical questions which do arise on this topic. One must consult with a proper halachic authority in order to receive p'sak.