



PESACH FAQs

SHOPPING GUIDE FAQs

Buy Before Pesach

Q I see that you recommend certain items for Pesach but say they should be bought before Yom Tov. If they do not contain any *chametz*, why can't I also buy them on Chol HaMoed?

A There are a handful of items – milk, eggs (in the shell), bagged salads, baby carrots – where (a) additives are used which might be *chametz* (though they probably aren't), (b) the additives are *batei b'shishim*, but (c) they're in stores very soon after they're processed. So, the milk, eggs, etc., which you buy on Chol HaMoed might have been produced on Pesach with a *chametz* additive which can't be *batei* (since it was added on Pesach). This is why we recommend that if these items aren't available with Pesach certification, you should buy them before Yom Tov.

Contact Lens Solution

Q Do I need special contact lens solution for Pesach?

A We reviewed the ingredients used in several popular brands of contact lens solution and didn't see anything which was sensitive for Pesach. But since we haven't checked every brand, you're welcome to send a picture of the ingredient panel to info@crckosher.org, and one of our Rabbis will check on it for you.

Alcohol

Q I know that alcohol can be made from wheat. What about things like isopropyl alcohol?

A Benzyl alcohol, methyl alcohol (a.k.a., methanol), isopropyl alcohol and stearyl alcohol aren't made from *chametz*. Ethyl alcohol, a.k.a. ethanol, can be made from *chametz*, and isoamyl alcohol is often a byproduct of whisky. [These might be listed as part of a compound, like ethyl acetate or isoamyl butyrate.] So, they're not recommended unless they are known to be *chametz*-free.

There are different opinions about whether denatured alcohol (SD alcohol) is forbidden on Pesach. The cRc position is that it's fine in a product manufactured in the U.S.

Seltzer

Q Why does the cRc require a Pesach *hechsher* on unflavored seltzer?

A There are several ways to collect the carbon dioxide that's used to make seltzer. One source is a byproduct of beer or whisky production, and of course, beer and (just about all) whisky are *chametz*. There's a difference of Rabbinic opinion about whether the *chametz* status transfers to the carbon dioxide gas. Some say that since carbon dioxide is a gas, and it's "scrubbed" of all *chametz* taste, it's permitted on Pesach, despite the *chametz* source. The cRc follows the stricter opinion that treats the gas as *chametz*, since it's a direct result of the beer or whisky production. If you get seltzer with a reliable Pesach *hechsher*, you can be sure that it's not coming from a *chametz* source.

Disposable Gloves

Q Is there anything wrong with using disposable gloves on Pesach?

A Disposable gloves aren't inherently problematic for Pesach, but some are coated with powder to prevent the gloves from sticking. The powder is likely made from *kitniyos* or an innocuous material, but it's possible that it will be *chametz*. For example, a company recently began marketing disposable gloves which are dusted with colloidal oatmeal to help hydrate the skin inside the glove. Accordingly, we recommend that people only use powder-free gloves or ones that are known to not have *chametz* issues.

Bottled Water

Q Is bottled water acceptable for Pesach without special certification?

A Yes, and this is true even if the water also has these minerals: calcium chloride, magnesium chloride, magnesium oxide, magnesium sulfate, potassium bicarbonate, potassium chloride, sodium bicarbonate, or sodium chloride. But if it has any flavors, vitamins, and/or citrates (e.g., calcium citrate), then it should only be used with kosher for Pesach certification.

Toothpaste

Q Is it okay to use my regular toothpaste on Pesach?

A Some *Poskim* hold that toothpaste is considered inedible, since any food that tastes like toothpaste would never be served as a meal item. This is why many Rabbis allow the use of any toothpaste (year-round), despite the possibility that the glycerin in the toothpaste is made from non-kosher animal fat. Others argue that toothpaste is *halachically* considered edible, since we put toothpaste in our mouths every day (and young children like to eat it). Some follow that position all year-round and will only use a toothpaste that is certified as kosher (or free of glycerin).

The cRc accepts the lenient approach as relates to year-round use but recommends that one be *machmir* for Pesach – that you should only use a toothpaste that’s known to be *chametz*-free.

What ingredients in toothpaste might be *chametz*? Just about every variety of toothpaste has sorbitol, which is created by “hydrogenating” glucose, which can be derived from *chametz*, *kitniyos*, or completely innocuous ingredients, and, though most glucose and sorbitol in the U.S. is not made from *chametz*, we can’t recommend toothpaste unless we know what the glucose is made from. Toothpastes also commonly contain other minor ingredients which raise *chametz* concerns.

KASHERING THE KITCHEN FAQs

Braces

Q How should I clean out my braces after eating *chametz* for the last time before Pesach?

A We have been told by orthodontists that [for those people who do not have a water-flosser (e.g., Waterpik)] the best way to clean braces is to use a “proxa brush” which has a narrow-bristled end that fits between the different wires and brackets. It is an inexpensive and effective tool for removing all residue from braces and other dental appliances.

Steamers

Q Can I *kasher* my countertops with a steamer?

A The general rule (as per *Iggeros Moshe* YD 1:60) is that *kashering* must be done with water in liquid form, and can’t be done with steam. So, a steamer can only be used for *kashering* if two conditions are met. First, the steam must condense to the point that the whole area being *kashered* is covered with water, and second, that water must be at approximately the boiling point (212°F). Most steamers sold for cleaning purposes do not meet these criteria and can’t be used for *kashering*, but Wagner Power Steamer 715 can be used, if one is diligent to use it slowly and with patience.

Faucet With Spray Hose

Q The faucet in my new kitchen has a spray hose. Is the *kashering* of that faucet any different than a regular one?

A The first step in *kashering* any item is to remove all residual *chametz*. With this in mind, *Rema* 451:18 rules that any utensil which has small cracks and crevices where food might get caught should not be *kashered* for Pesach because of the difficulty in getting the utensil perfectly clean. This poses a concern for many pull-out faucets because the hose is made of a ribbed material where bits of food can get trapped and then fall out into the Pesach food. Accordingly, any faucet with this type of hose cannot be *kashered* for Pesach.

The good news is that the only concern is if the faucet is pulled out, thereby exposing the ribbed portion of the hose. Therefore, one may use the faucet on Pesach if (a) the hose is not pulled out, and (b) the rest of the faucet is *kashered* in the typical manner as described in our Pesach Guide and website.

Iron for Kashering

Q My son suggested we *kasher* our countertops by running a hot iron over them. Would this work?

A A counter can’t be *kashered* with a clothing iron without any water present. Theoretically, hot water could be poured on the counter, and then the iron could be used to bring that water to a boil, but because it would be too difficult to know whether every single part of the countertop came into contact with boiling water, we wouldn’t recommend it.