There is often confusion about the status of glassware in the kitchen. Questions which often arise include:

• Does one need separate milk and meat drinking glasses? What about dinner plates? Pyrex cooking utensils?
• Can glassware be kashered? If so, how is that done?
• Why do some people put their glassware into the bath before Pesach? Is there a difference on Pesach?

A] KASHERING - THE MITZVA

When the Israelite troops came back from the war on Midian with spoils, including pots and pans, a mitzva was given to ‘pass them through fire or water’ and to purify them.

• One of the mitzvot derived from this passage is tevilat kelim - to immerse new cooking and food utensils in a mikve before Jewish use.
• The other mitzva is kashering - that utensils which have used to prepare non-kosher food retain the residual taste of that food within the walls of the utensil. This taste can be expunged through the processes of kashering.

B] KASHERING - THE METHODS

• Torah verses drew a distinction between utensils that has passed through fire and those that passed through water.

Rashi explains that this represents different types of kashering. Utensils that were used to cook hot non-kosher food must be kashered using the same method that the treif taste entered. Thus pots that had non-kosher food cooked in them in liquid must be kashered using hot liquid. Those utensils in which non-kosher food was roasted on a flame must be kashered using a flame. Utensils that were used only with cold non-kosher food did not require any kashering, only tevilat kelim - ‘passing through water’.

The Ramban rejects Rashi’s understanding of the verse that ‘taviru bamayim’ means tevila. Rather, Ramban understands that this phrase refers to a ‘kashering’ process which is needed even for cups and plates which were used cold. This is washing and scrubbing them well to remove any food residue.

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1. We looked at the mitzva of tevilat kelim in depth in 3 shiurim in summer 2019, including the question of tevilat kelim for glassware. These audio shiurim and source sheets can be found at https://rabbimanning.com/index.php/audio-shiurim/cj/
Chazal learn that there are 4 method of kashering utensils that were used with hot food.

B1] LIBUN GAMUR - FULL BURNING

- Utensils used directly in the fire (e.g. a BBQ grate) must be kashered by placing them into fire. This process has the effect of burning away any absorbed taste. To qualify as a complete libun, metal must be heated until it glows.
- A self-clean cycle of an oven (approx. 850°F) qualifies as libun gamur.
- There is no need to wait 24 hours before libun, though it is advised. There is no need to scrub the utensil before performing libun, since the fire will burn off residue, but some cleaning is advised.

B2] LIBUN KAL - LIGHT BURNING

- In certain cases, libun kal is sufficient. This can be accomplished by heating in an oven at 550°F for one hour.
- This method of kashering can be used in place of hagala (below) or when the need for libun is only an added stringency.

B3] HAGALA - BOILING IN WATER

- Utensils that were used to cook using liquid can be kashered with hagala (boiling in water).
- The utensil must be thoroughly cleaned. Items that have narrow cracks, crevices, deep scratches or other areas that cannot be cleaned cannot be kashered.
- After cleaning, the utensils must left idle for 24 hours.
- To kasher, every part of the utensil must make contact with boiling water. This process can be done in parts. For example, a large spoon can be immersed into a pot of boiling water for 10 seconds, turned over and then the remainder immersed.
- When the utensil is removed from the boiling water, it should be rinsed off in cold water.

B4] IRUY MIKLI RISHON - POURING BOILING WATER OVER IT

- If a utensil only came in contact with hot liquid being poured on it (iruy), it can be kashered in the same manner.
- This is sometimes accompanied by an even melubenet - a heated stone. For example, if non-kosher food or chametz fell into a sink, stones should be heated on the stove, and moved around the surface of the sink while boiling water is poured over them. The water will then remain boiling on the surface of the sink. The stones may need to be reheated several times, since they cool down quickly.
- In all other aspects the process is identical to hagala.

C] KASHERING - THE MATERIALS

- Not every material can be kashered.
- The following materials may NOT be kashered: Ceramic, China, Enamel coated pots, Earthenware
- The following materials MAY be kashered: Metals, Stone, Wood, Natural rubber,

Glassware will be the subject of our discussion below!

D] GLASS IN TANACH AND THE ANCIENT WORLD

- Although glass-making dates back to the third millenium BCE, during the time of the Tanach the main use of glass was for beads and precious objects.
- The word for glass - zechuchit - appears once in Tanach - Iyov 28:17 - and most mefarshim understand this to be a precious stone more valuable even than gold.
- The use of glass to make utensils for food storage and serving spread widely only in the Hellenistic (Second Temple) period. Thus, glass appears many times in the Mishna and is discussed widely in the Talmud in many contexts, although NOT explicitly in the context of kashrut.

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2. The follow summary was taken from https://oukosher.org/passover/articles/kashering-for-passover/#:~:text=The%20prescribed%20method%20depends%20on%20the%20utensil%20and%20how%20it%20was%20used.&text=Utensils%20used%20directly%20in%20the%20oven%20are%20heated%20until%20they%20glow.

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E] HOW IS GLASS MADE?

The process of glass making usually includes the following raw materials:

- SiO2 – Silica Sand
- Na2O – Sodium Oxide from Soda Ash
- CaO – Calcium oxide from Limestone / Dolomite
- MgO – Dolomite
- Al2O3 – Feldspar

The key halachic factors are that glass is (i) made from sand and earth compounds and (ii) is smelted and reshaped.

F] THE HALACHIC STATUS OF GLASS - TALMUDIC SOURCES

The Gemara does not directly specify whether glass does or does not require kashering from non-kosher use. It does, however, discuss glass in other contexts.

F1] TEVILA - GLASS IS LIKE METAL

The Gemara sets out some basic principals for tevilat kelim, which include an obligation to tovel glassware because it is smelted, similar to metal.

3. Most poskim rule that glassware requires tevila on a Rabbinic level.
4. The poskim debate why this would not also apply to plastic, which is melted and reformed, and thus would appear to need tevilat kelim! R. David Tzvi Hoffman (Melamed LeHoil 2:49) understands that this halacha applies ONLY to glass and the custom is not to tovel plastic. Even those poskim who require it (such as Michat Yitzchak 3:76-78) do not require a beracha.

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F2] TUMA - GLASS IS LIKE EARTHENWARE

For the purposes of tuma, Chazal equated glassware with earthenware, since it is made from sand!

The Meiri explains that glass has elements of both earthenware and metal and Chazal assigned to it the stringencies of both - it requires tevilat kelim (like metal) but it cannot be made tahor in a mikve (like earthenware).

F3] GLASS IS NOT LIKE EITHER BUT IS IN OWN CATEGORY

A third source (Avot deRebbi Natan) learns that glass is sui generis. Uniquely, it neither absorbs taste nor emits it.

G] THE HALACHIC STATUS OF GLASS - 4 APPROACHES IN THE RISHONIM

G1] GLASS IS UNIQUE - IT DOES NOT ABSORB AND CANNOT BECOME TREIF

Ra’avya also takes this position - glassware is NOT like earthenware. Earthenware absorbs taste but glass does not.

The Rashba rules that glass does not absorb even if hot food is put into it. He brings a proof from Avot deRebbi Natan (above) and also from the fact that we see clearly that glass is completely smooth and cannot absorb.

5. This is also the position of the Ran (Pesachim 9a), Rabbeinu Tam, Rosh and other Rishonim.

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G2] GLASS IS LIKE EARTHENWARE - IS ABSORBS AND CANNOT BE KASHERED

R. Yechiel of Paris rules that glass IS like earthenware - it absorbs taste but cannot be kashered. This approach does not follow the statement in Avot deRebbi Natan.

Another understanding of this approach is that glass may indeed be smooth and not absorb taste. However, Chazal gave it a rabbinic designation like earthenware since it is made from sand. It is irrelevant what is actually absorbed - the din is in place in all situations.

Why not compare glass to metal, as in the Gemara in Avoda Zara? First that Gemara is about tevilat kelim. Second, these poskim may see the comparison with earthenware as more persuasive since the glass is actually made from that material.

G3] GLASS IS LIKE METAL - IS ABSORS AND CAN BE KASHERED, BUT ......

The Or Zarua rules that glass is like metal and does absorb, but can be kashered. Although the Gemara in Shabbat compares glass to earthenware for tuma, the analogy to tevila is more apt since both tevila and kashrut are tahara processes and are presented in the same verse!

The Ra’ah is cited (here by the Ritva) as ruling that (a) glass is like metal and it absorbs and can in principle be kashered; but (b) we are concerned that, since glass is very fragile, one will not kasher it properly in hot water and will leave it treif. Chazal then prohibited using it, even if used cold, in case one comes to use it hot.

G4] GLASS HAS AN UNCLEAR STATUS

The Isur Veheter rules that glass has an unclear status in halacha and we are not sure if it is like metal or earthenware. So we give it the stringencies of both - it requires tevilat kelim (like metal), but we are also concerned that it may absorb and cannot be kashered (like earthenware).

6. This could be because it regards it as aggadic and not halachically binding, or perhaps it is simply stating the properties of glass without intending to draw halachic conclusions.
7. The laws of absorption of taste and kashering are not necessarily based on physical realities but halachic designations. Even if one were to prove in a lab that there were no taste molecules in the walls of a utensil, this would not affect the psak if the halacha designated it as treif.
8. This is also the position of the Rambam. The Aruch HaShulchan (YD 120:25) explains that metals and earthenware both come from the ground. The difference between them is that metal must be refined and smelted and effectively changes its identity, whereas earthenware does not. Glass, although made from sand, is much more similar to metal in that it can only be manufactured by a total transformation of its material make-up.
9. Some approaches to tevilat kelim see it as a type of ‘kasherung’, removing the last remnants of halachic impurities from the utensil.

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Notably, the Shulchan Aruch brings his psak on glass and kashrut in the section about Pesach, which is normally dealt with more strictly than regular areas of kashrut.

The Mechaber (R. Yosef Karo) rules that glass does not absorb at all and does not require kashering. The Rema rules stringently in the laws of Pesach and follows the view that glass cannot be kashered.

Most Sefardi poskim follow this position and rule that glass may be for Pesach without kashering, even if it was used previously with hot chametz. This also applies the rest of the year in regular kashrut from treif to kosher or from meat to milk/milk to meat.

The Ashkenazi poskim follow this stricter approach but disagree on the reasoning behind the Rema.

One approach is that the Rema is following the view that glass is like sand and absorbs fully but does not expel taste and cannot be kashered.

R. Yaakov Emden understands that the stricter opinion of the Rema is in fact based on the view that glass can in theory be kashered but we are concerned that people would not kasher it properly in boiling water for fear of it cracking. Nevertheless, R. Emden himself rules like the lenient approach of the Mechaber.

The Magen Avraham also takes the view that the Rema’s stringency results from concern that people will not kasher properly since, bedieved, he rules that the kashering DOES work when done correctly.

The Sha’ar Hatziyun (by the Mishna Berura) rules that glass DOES require kasherding and that kasherding DOES work on glass at least bedieved. He also brings many poskim that do not accept the concern that people will be too nervous to kasher properly. The principle of ‘kebolo kach palto’ - that the taste can be extracted in the same manner that it was kashered but we are concerned that people would not kasher it properly in boiling water for fear of it cracking.

Glass is treated by all opinions like china - Shulchan Aruch 451:23. The thin layer of glaze Some situations of significant need - sha’at hadechak will also be treated in the same way as a bedieved case - 'sha’at hadechak kebedieved dami'.

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CONCLUSIONS SO FAR

• For Pesach, most Sefardi poskim are totally lenient with glass. This will also be the case with other kashrut situations (which are usually more lenient than Pesach) eg treif and milk/meat.
• For Pesach, Ashkenazim are strict with glass14 and will not use it OR kasher it. There is a debate about whether kashering the glass will work bedieved or not.

I] THE HALACHA GENERALLY - TREIF/MILK & MEAT

• Since the Sefardi poskim are lenient with glass on Pesach, this will also be the case with other kashrut situations (which are usually more lenient than Pesach) eg treif/milk & meat.
• For Pesach, Ashkenazim are strict with glass but will they also be strict in regular situations!? 

I] POSITION 1: ASHKENAZIM ARE LENIENT GENERALLY

• Some poskim15 understand that Ashkenazim are LENIENT with glass for all other situations.

יש מי שמאמר שהמיאר נשתה בצנצסיו לקה ל׳את בל כמו כל חרב יבש. והמשיסים של על תוחר. יש מי שמיסיק

The Shulchan Aruch here discusses where storage of non-kosher wine in utensils makes those utensils treif. The psak of the Mechaber is to be strict with most materials but NOT with glass. This fits with the position of R. Yosef Karo that glass does not absorb. But, interestingly, in this case the Rema does not disagree, perhaps indicating that the Ashkenazim are also lenient with glass in non-Pesach situations.

II] POSITION 2: ASHKENAZIM ARE STRICT GENERALLY AS WITH PESACH

מכקי במנה [...] ויהי דל שדה McCoy מנה דני חמתו חמת חמים דני חNonQueryי חמות חמותмечаי חמות=

Generally speaking, if a cold liquid is stored for 24 hour in a utensil it will transfer taste16 understand the principle of ‘kavush kemevushal’ - pickling is like cooking. Thus the utensil will then become treif/milk/meat depending on the case. The Magen Avraham rules that this even applies with glassware. Thus, even cold treif liquids which are stored in glass utensils will be absorbed and make the utensil treif.17 The reason the Rema was lenient with wine is due to the lower level rabbinic prohibition of cham yeinam. But in other cases, the Ashkenazim would be strict.

• This is also the position of the Taz18.

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For a Chabad perspective see https://shulchanaruchharav.com/halacha/may-glass-vessels-cookware-be-used-for-both-meat-and-dairy-products/

R. Hershel Schachter has a stringency that glass should be kashered by hagala Tzitz Eliezer 6:21.

The practice of iruy gimel yamim is now rare but can still be found in some older households (with m esora!), especially for crystal glasses. The OU rules that it does not apply in contemporary America where new glassware is cheap to buy – see https://outorah.org/p/44999.

• Ashkenazi poskim rule that glass is absorbent and should be thoroughly cleaned, or take a middle position – see Halichot chatzalot (halichot chatzalot) for Pesach.

The Chaye Adam lays out the procedure for 3 days of glass, where the water is changed each day. His rule is that this only works for glassware which has a broad opening that can be cleaned (ie not bottles), which was used only cold and only where it is not reasonable to acquire alternative glassware which is kosher for Pesach. 29.

J] CONTEMPORARY GLASS

J1] REGULAR GLASS

• Most Sefardi poskim are lenient that glass is non-absorbent (even if used hot) and can be re-used for all purposes (including Pesach) if thoroughly cleaned.

• Ashkenazi poskim rule that glass is absorbent and may not be kashered for Pesach.

• Ashkenazi poskim disagree on whether glass requires kashering or can be kashered for non-Pesach use.

- R. Shmuel Wosner rules that it cannot be kashered.

- R. Moshe Feinstein is quoted as ruling that, for non-Pesach use, we may rely on the opinion that glass does not absorb, even if hot.

- Other poskim (including R. Eliezer Waldenburg, R. Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg and R. Yitzchak Weiss) take a middle position - that glass DOES absorb hot taste but it CAN be kashered.

Some do not permit this where the utensil was used hot as a kli rishon (eg to cook in an oven).
J2] DURALUX/PYREX

- Duralex is regular glass which is tempered. It is heated to 600°C and then quickly cooled, giving it much greater impact resistance.
- Pyrex is a special type of glass - borosilicate glass - made with silica and boron trioxide.\(^{30}\)
- Some poskim are STRICTER with reinforced glass products. R. Eliyashiv rules that even the most lenient opinion - that glass does not absorb at all - may only apply to regular glass and not to these new products.
- Some poskim\(^{23}\) are MORE LENIENT with reinforced glass products\(^{23}\) on the basis that the stringency of the Rema is based on a concern that people will not kasher the glass properly for fear of it cracking in the boiling water.\(^{44}\) Since there is no such concern with Pyrex etc it can certainly be kashered (according to the Ashkenazim who would require this. Most Sefardim would not require it at all.)\(^{25}\)

J3] CORNINGWARE & CORELLE

- Corningware is a type of glass-ceramic material made from superheated glass.
- Corelle is made from two different types of tempered glass applied in three layers.
- Both share certain characteristics with both glass and ceramic.
- Star K rules that all glassware - including arcoroc, duralex, pyrex, corelle and crystal - has the same halachic status.

J4] IN PRACTICE

Sefardim:
- The Sefardi custom is to allow using glass food utensils (i.e. cups, plates, bowls) for both meat and milk, even if hot, provided they are well cleaned in between uses.
- The same applies regarding using glass chametz vessels for Pesach, or using the glass vessels of a non-Jew for kosher food.
- Some Sefardi poskim are lenient even regarding glass cookware, such as Pyrex and Duralex, to allow cooking meat and dairy one after the other so long as they are cleaned well in between. Others, however, are stringent.

Ashkenazim:
- The Ashkenazi custom is not to use any chametz glass vessels on Pesach even if they are kashered.
- For milk/meat many are lenient to use cold glass utensils i.e. drinking glasses for both meat and milk, provided as they are well cleaned in between uses.\(^{37}\)
- Some Ashkenazim are also lenient to use glass plates and bowls for both meat and milk even if hot (kli sheni), provided they are well cleaned in between uses.
- However, glass cookware, such as Pyrex and Duralex, may not be used for meat and milk even if it is well cleaned in between uses. If one did so, the utensil should be be kashered with hagala.
- Practically, the widespread custom today amongst many is to be stringent and designate totally separate glass utensils for meat and milk.

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\(^{30}\) Containing the following materials: 80.6% SiO\(_2\), 12.6% B\(_2\)O\(_3\), 4.2% Na\(_2\)O, 2.2% Al\(_2\)O\(_3\), 0.1% CaO, 0.1% Cl, 0.05% MgO, and 0.04% FeO

\(^{31}\) Tzeit Eliezer 9:26. R. Waldenberg does however quote the opinion of R. Zvi Pesach Frank that pyrex can be kashered (even for Pesach) if hagala is done 3 times.

\(^{32}\) See Yabia Omer 4:41. R. Ovadia Yosef applied this also to Corelle. See also R. Shimon Eider.

\(^{33}\) Note however that other poskim did not read the Rema in this way (see above), but understand that the position of the Rema is based on the approach that glass, like earthenware CANNOT be kashered at all. According to these poskim, it will make no difference if the glass is reinforced.

\(^{34}\) Note however that other poskim did not read the Rema in this way (see above), but understand that the position of the Rema is based on the approach that glass, like earthenware CANNOT be kashered at all. According to these poskim, it will make no difference if the glass is reinforced.

\(^{35}\) Star K rules that corelle is glass.

\(^{36}\) Both share certain characteristics with both glass and ceramic.

\(^{37}\) The Halachos of Pesach

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