

9. Grinding

הטוחן

1. The objective of this *av melachah* is to grind a substance into small, fine particles by means of a utensil or instrument used for the purpose, such as a hand mill, a mortar, a grater, a blender, etc. The *melachah* includes milling grain to produce flour, grinding coffee in a mill, and pounding or crushing spices¹ or other substances in a mortar.

2. Also included within the *melachah (toladot)* are cutting² up vegetables into fine pieces³ for later use, filing metal for use of the

1. **Crushing Spices** You may crush pepper, garlic, salt and other spices, as needed for the Shabbat meal. However, instead of doing so in the usual manner, such as in a mill or with a mortar and pestle or another utensil designed for this purpose, you must do this crushing in some other way, such as placing the spices in a plate or on the table and crushing them with a knife.
2. **Mashing Fruit and Vegetables** Three issues govern whether you are allowed to mash foods such as cooked potatoes or bananas: 1) Does the prohibition of Grinding apply to foods that are also eaten whole (such that the grinding is less of a “perfection” of the food and more of a preference)? 2) Is grinding always permissible if the food is consumed immediately? 3) Is mashing considered grinding? The vast majority of *poskim*, taking these issues into account, permit mashing food for immediate consumption. However, a minority of *poskim* require that the mashing be done with a *shinui*, such as using a knife handle or a spoon. As this stringency can be easily accommodated, it is recommended, when possible, to mash food in this manner. However, you should not mash food other than for immediate use.
3. **Cutting Up Fruits and Vegetables** The *melachah* is only relevant when cutting the food into small pieces with the intention of setting it aside for later. Therefore,

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metal chips, sawing wood for use of the sawdust, chopping wood into small pieces for firewood and crushing a clod of earth for some use of the earth.

3. You are allowed to crumble bread by hand. The reason for this is a principle called, “There is no Grinding after Grinding (אֵין טוֹחֵן אַחַר טוֹחֵן).” Since the wheat was ground once in the process of making bread, it cannot be subject to the *Melachah* of Grinding a second time. You may also cut thin slices of cheese or meat with a knife, since the *Melachah* of Grinding is limited to things which grow from the ground and require grinding to be edible.

4. *Chazal* prohibited some specific activities that are similar to Grinding. Therefore, you may not grate *matzah* or cheese with a grater, as this is a weekday activity. Also, you may not rub off dried mud from clothing, or scrape it off with a fingernail.⁴

5. *Chazal* also prohibited some general activities for fear that involvement in them may lead to grinding at some point. Therefore, you may not feed animals on Shabbat in the same way that you would feed them on a weekday, for fear that you might crush legumes in order

you are permitted to cut up fruits and vegetables into small pieces to be eaten immediately. However, some *poskim* are stringent in the case of cutting fruit and vegetables into very fine pieces, and recommend cutting them into somewhat larger pieces. In any event, this issue pertains only to cutting fruits and vegetables for the upcoming meal. You are not allowed to chop vegetables for consumption later in the day. In addition, you should not cut up the vegetables with a utensil used principally for that purpose, but rather with a knife. Some permit use of a chopping knife as well.

4. **Scraping Dirt Off of Clothing** Even though this is a *melachah she'einah tzericha legufah*, it is still rabbinically prohibited. If there is only a mud stain, but no actual mud on the garment for any particles to fall off when scraped, some permit scraping the garment to remove the stain. Other authorities, however, indicate that while grinding is not involved, it may involve the *Melachah* of Cleaning (ליבוין).

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to feed those to the animals.⁵ As such, you may not stuff or force feed cattle, animals, or fowl on Shabbat.⁶

6. Since compounding medicines often involved grinding, *Chazal* also prohibited the use of medication, as a general rule. However, there are many exceptions to this rule, and certainly any life threatening illness is treated on Shabbat.⁷

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5. **Cutting Up Vegetables and Meat for Animals** You are obligated to provide food for your animals. You may therefore make the food edible on Shabbat, in order to prevent the animal from suffering. Therefore, you are permitted to cut up vegetables or meat in order to make them edible as feed for your animal for immediate consumption. However, if the food is already edible and fit to be eaten, you should not exert yourself on Shabbat to make it more appropriate and suitable, even for immediate consumption.
 6. **Feeding Animals** You are obligated to see to it that your animals not suffer from hunger. While force feeding is prohibited, you are allowed to put food into their mouths. If you own geese accustomed to being force fed who cannot eat in any other way, you may ask a non-Jew to stuff them. If a non-Jew is not available, you are permitted to stuff them so that they do not suffer. For a full discussion of the laws pertaining to the care and feeding of animals on Shabbat, see Part IV, Chapter 2, especially paragraphs 8, 10-17 and notes.
 7. **Use of Medicines and Medical Treatment** A person in general good health who is mildly indisposed or experiencing slight pain should not use medicines in the treatment of a minor ailment. The prohibition does not apply to one who is ill. Treatments which do not involve the use of drugs or medicines do not come under the restriction. For a detailed discussion of the laws pertaining to the use of medicines and medical treatment on Shabbat, see Part IV, Chapters 7, 8.



10. Kneading

הלש

1. The objective of this *av melachah* is to combine separate particles of a substance by means of a liquid to form one mass.¹ Combining flour with water—or some other liquid such as honey or fat—to form a dough-like mixture is the action which constitutes the *av melachah*. The prohibition applies even if you do the kneading immediately prior to the meal for which you are preparing the food.

2. Also included within this *melachah* (*toladot*) is mixing earth,² or clay,³ plastic, etc., with water.⁴

1. **Preparing a Vegetable or Fruit Salad** You may prepare a vegetable salad on Shabbat, pour oil, vinegar, or mayonnaise on the vegetables, and add salt and seasoning as usual. Similarly, you may make a fruit salad with condiments added. Since the ingredients do not fuse into one mixture, the *Melachah* of Kneading isn't violated.
2. **Substances Not Subject to Kneading** Opinions differ as to whether the *melachah* applies to substances, such as ash and coarse sand, which cannot be kneaded into a dough-like mixture. Some maintain that in such cases the *melachah* does not apply, and it is only rabbinically prohibited. Many *Rishonim*, however, are of the opinion that the *melachah* applies and the addition of water to the substance is a transgression of the *melachah*.
3. **Children Playing with Sand and Clay** Children are permitted to play in a sandbox with sand that has been prepared for this purpose before Shabbat, provided it is dry, loose sand so that it will collapse and refill the hole when the sand is removed. They may not mix the sand with water or to pour water over it. Children should not play with clay, plastic, wax and similar substances that can be molded.
4. **Use of Adhesive Powder and Paste for Dentures** Those who wear dentures may use an adhesive paste. Some authorities also permit the use of adhesive

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3. The *Melachah* of Kneading applies only when it results in a thick mass, such as bread dough or cake dough. Kneading that produces a soft, thin mixture, which can be poured but is still not a liquid, does not violate the Biblical prohibition but is nevertheless rabbinically prohibited. Therefore, you may prepare a soft, thin mixture on Shabbat as long as it is done with a *shinui*—in a manner different from the usual (על ידי שינוי). To create the *shinui*, you should:

- (a) Reverse the order in which the ingredients are mixed
- (b) Mix the ingredients in a different way.

For example, in mixing mustard or horseradish with vinegar to be used as a condiment,⁵ you should reverse the normal order and pour the liquid first. Then, you should mix the ingredients in a different manner, for example, with the handle of the spoon, by shaking the container, by stirring with an altered motion, or the like.

In times of great need, you may use a *shinui* to create a thick mixture. For example, when Pesach occurs on Shabbat and you inadvertently failed to prepare the *charoset* before Shabbat, you may prepare *charoset* by pouring the wine first and then adding the apples, nuts, and other ingredients.

4. If the mixture contains so much liquid that it results in a thick, turbid liquid, you are allowed to prepare the mixture, even if it is not done in a manner different from the usual. Where the mixture involves

powder on dentures which, when it dissolves in the mouth, forms a thin paste, allowing the false teeth to adhere to the gums. Others, however, do not permit the use of adhesive powder, as the mixing of the powder and saliva constitutes Kneading. Considering the debate about the matter, you should use a paste if possible.

5. **Preparing a Salad of Fish, Eggs, Chopped Liver** You may prepare tuna, herring, eggs, and chopped liver, with onions or other vegetables, and add oil or mayonnaise, provided you prepare it immediately before the meal (for concerns related to Grinding). You should mash the tuna and eggs with a fork, and cut the vegetables into somewhat larger pieces. Some permit cutting the vegetables into smaller pieces immediately before the meal. See *Melachah* 9, note 3.

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dissolving a soluble powder which yields a liquid solution, the prohibition does not apply.⁶

5. You may not prepare on Shabbat instant, pre-cooked and ready-to-eat, solid foods, such as rice pudding and mashed potatoes, which are made by mixing the powder with water, or some other liquid.⁷

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6. **Dissolving Powders** You may dissolve soluble powders in water, sugar in tea or coffee, instant coffee or tea in water, milk powder in water, cocoa in water or milk, beverage mixes in water, etc. Some require a variation in the way of preparing the mixture in liquid mixtures (such as cocoa powder in milk) where some of the substance forms into lumps as it settles at the bottom.
7. **Preparing Cereal and Pudding for a Baby** Ideally, you should take care to prepare all of a baby's needs before Shabbat. However, if that was not done, leniencies can be applied, since preparing food for a baby is considered something of great need. For example, if the baby will eat cereal which is a bit runny, it is best to prepare it in that way, with a *shinui*. If the baby will not eat runny cereal, you may prepare thick cereal with the requisite *shinui*.