

## 11. Cooking and Baking

### הַמְבַשֵּׁל וְהַאֲפֶה

1. The objective of this *av melachah* is to change the state of a substance by means of heat in order to make it edible or fit for some other use. This applies both when you use fire directly, heat derived from fire, and heat from other sources<sup>1</sup> such as gas or electricity.

The *melachah* includes baking, cooking,<sup>2</sup> boiling, frying, or roasting, and comprises activities such as baking bread; cooking food; heating

1. **Cooking in a Microwave Oven** The status of cooking food in a microwave oven is an interesting issue. Rav Moshe Feinstein, *zt"l*, who was considered the preeminent *posek* of the late twentieth century, ruled unequivocally that cooking in a microwave oven had the same status as cooking with heat generated by fire and violated the *Melachah* of Cooking *min haTorah*. Reading the *teshuva* written in 1971, though, we see that Rav Moshe based his ruling on an assumption that microwaves will in the future become the standard method of cooking because “they are better” than ovens. This prediction has not come to fruition as microwaves are used primarily for reheating, or melting, but in no way have replaced fire, inasmuch as cooking in a microwave produces a substandard product. Subsequent *poskim* have assumed that microwave cooking is akin to “cooking in the sun” (בישול בחמה). In either case, you may not cook with a microwave on Shabbat (See ahead, note 5).
2. **Stages of Cooking and Baking** A liquid, or food containing a liquid, is considered to be cooking when it is heated to the degree of *yad soledet bo* (literally, “the hand recoils from it”), the minimum temperature of which is taken to be between 110° and 120° Fahrenheit. Some estimate it at 113°F (45°C). You can assume food has reached *yad soledet bo* when it is too hot to touch, or it is so hot that you would refrain from

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water<sup>3</sup> or other liquids;<sup>4</sup> boiling ingredients used to make dyes; adding spices or other ingredients that cook easily to a boiling pot; and pouring hot water onto a solid, such as a piece of meat, causing the surface to be cooked.

2. Also included within this *melachah* (*toladot*) are stirring food that is not fully cooked in a boiling pot on the fire to help along the cooking; melting or heating metal until it glows in order to soften it; heating and melting wax, butter, animal fat, pitch, or any other substance that is naturally congealed; baking a clay pot in a furnace; drying damp wood in a hot oven; and hardening a naturally soft substance, or softening a naturally hard substance by means of fire.

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eating or drinking it. Dry, solid food is considered cooked when it reaches the point of *ma'achal Ben Derusai* (literally, "the food of Ben Derusai," a notorious robber, who ate food when only partially cooked). Some estimate it to be one third cooked, others one half cooked, with the time varying according to how long it takes to cook the particular food to completion. Bread is considered baked when it has formed a crust on the bottom and top. If you cook or bake to these stages, you are liable for transgressing the Biblical prohibition of this *melachah*.

3. **Running Hot Water from the Faucet** Hot water systems generally use gas, oil, or electricity to heat water stored in a boiler to a given temperature, with the heating unit activated by a thermostat. When the hot water is drawn from the boiler, it is automatically replaced by an inflow of cold water, which is then heated by the hot water in the boiler, or by the heating element. By running the hot water from the faucet, you are causing the cold water to enter the boiler and to be heated. Some authorities permit the use of hot water from the faucet, especially in case of necessity, if one of the following steps is taken before Shabbat:

(1) The water valve is shut off so that no cold water flows into the boiler. (Make sure that the procedure is safe and will not damage the boiler.) (2) The thermostat is adjusted so that the water temperature is always below the degree of *yad soledet bo* (Make sure that your thermostat setting can be set that low, as many cannot.) (3) The heating apparatus is turned off several hours before Shabbat, allowing the water in the boiler to cool sufficiently so that the cold water flowing into the boiler will not be heated to the degree of *yad soledet bo*.

4. **Opening and Closing a Radiator** You may not open the valve of a radiator on Shabbat to allow the steam from the furnace to come up, because it will heat the water or residual moisture in the radiator. Some permit closing the radiator valve, but others forbid it. In case of hardship, as when there is a sudden, severe cold spell, and there are young children or old and sick people in the house, and no non-Jew is available, you may open and close the radiator valve, but you should do so in an indirect, irregular manner that is **כלאחר יד**.

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3. *Chazal* prohibited some activities which are similar to cooking or which may lead you to cook. The *melachah* forbids cooking by means of heat derived from fire and from a fire-heated object, but *Chazal* prohibited cooking by means of an object that was heated by the sun. You are therefore not allowed to roast or cook an egg on a pan, on a cloth, or in sand, earth, or water that was heated by the sun. However, you may cook by the heat of the sun itself.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, you may place an egg or water in the sun<sup>6</sup> in order to warm it. You may not cook in natural hot spring water, such as the hot springs of Teveria.

You may not wash your entire body or the greater part of your body with hot water, even if the water was heated before Shabbat, for fear that

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5. **Cooking with Heat from the Sun** The reason *Chazal* prohibited cooking with a sun-heated object was to prevent people from cooking with objects heated by fire, since others might mistakenly assume that the object was heated by fire and not by the sun. However, they did not prohibit cooking by the heat of the sun itself, because it is not customary to cook in this fashion and people will not confuse the sun with fire. It would therefore be permitted to put a pitcher of water in the sun in order to heat it without being concerned about how hot it may get. Some authorities, however, question the permissibility of cooking by the heat of the sun, in view of the fact that solar energy is being utilized increasingly and is becoming a customary way of heating. These concerns are directed at hot water which is generated by solar panels, however, not at pitchers of water, etc., out in the sun. See next note.
6. **A Water Heater Operated by Solar Energy** Many authorities are of the opinion that using solar powered water heaters is permissible on Shabbat. However, some ancillary issues make it advisable to refrain from doing so. For example, some argue that it is problematic to heat the cold water which will enter the tank and will be heated by the hot water remaining in the tank. (Although others do not consider this problematic, if the flow of cold water is shut off, that issue would be resolved according to all.) Other authorities urge caution based on the fact that the heater will run electronically on cloudy days. Certainly, even those who act in accordance with the lenient view should be careful to verify whether or not the heat source is the sun or the electricity. Hot water from a solar heater is to be considered as coming from a *keli rishon* (see paragraph 4), but it should, nevertheless, not be poured into a *keli rishon*, since it was not heated by fire in the usual way. The reason is that even though the *halachah* states that cooked food is not subject to cooking a second time, there is an open question as to whether that leniency is applied to cooking with fire after a food has been cooked in the sun. Since the water in the heating system was cooked by the heat of the sun, if it is reheated with water cooked by fire, it may be considered a violation of the *melachah*.

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someone might come to heat it on Shabbat. This is forbidden even if you do not wash your body all at once, but only a part of the body at a time.<sup>7</sup>

We have seen in other *melachot* that *Chazal* prohibited many general areas of activity in order to separate Jews from activities that may lead to violations of Shabbat. For example, in order to protect the *Melachah* of Reaping (קוצר), *Chazal* prohibited all interactions with trees. Similarly, to protect the *Melachah* of Grinding (טחון), *Chazal* proscribed taking medicine. It is obvious, with regard to the *Melachah* of Cooking, that no such prohibitions were practical, as much of Shabbat observance centers around food. Therefore, in place of wholesale **prohibitions**, *Chazal* instituted a number of **safeguards**, whose purpose is to help us balance our handling of hot food without coming close to violating the *melachah*. These safeguards are called *shehiya* (שהייה) which regulates what food you can leave on a fire before Shabbat, *chazarah* (חזרה) which regulates the condition under which you may return food to a fire on Shabbat, and *hatmanah* (הטמנה) which regulates the amount of heat you may apply to the food. These safeguards will be discussed in paragraphs 12-15.

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7. **Washing, Showering, and Bathing** Washing the entire body or the greater part of the body with hot water, irrespective of whether you bathe, shower or wash one part of the body at a time is prohibited on Shabbat. The degree of heat in this instance is not *yad soledet bo*, as no one would wash themselves with scalding water. Rather, for the purpose of this *halachah*, “hot water” is what is generally considered to be hot water. You may wash your hands, face, or other individual parts of the body, even with hot water if it was heated in a permissible manner or before Shabbat. In washing the hair or beard, you should take care not to squeeze out the water. While it is not prohibited, the common practice is to refrain from showering or bathing in cold or lukewarm water as well, unless you are experiencing great discomfort, as on a very hot day. In view of certain complications and prohibitions involved, the prevailing *minhag* is not to bathe in a pool, or in a body of water such as a lake, a river, or in the ocean. Swimming, whether in a pool or in a body of water, is not permitted. However, a woman may immerse herself in a *mikveh* at the prescribed time following her menstrual cycle. A man who wishes to cleanse himself after a nocturnal seminal emission, and according to some authorities, for purposes of additional sanctification, may likewise immerse himself in a *mikveh* on Shabbat morning. The water in the *mikveh* should be lukewarm, and you should be careful to avoid squeezing water out of your hair. When bathing or showering is permissible, as in the instances cited above, it is advisable to wear a nylon or rubber shower cap (but never in the *mikveh*).

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4. A pot which is on the fire is called *keli rishon* (כְּלִי ראשון). The pot is considered a *keli rishon* and capable of cooking, even after it is removed from the fire, as long as it retains sufficient heat to be *yad soledet bo*. You are, therefore, prohibited from putting anything that is subject to cooking into a *keli rishon*.<sup>8</sup> You are also prohibited from pouring from a *keli rishon*<sup>9</sup> (עִירוֹי מְכַלֵּי ראשון) onto something<sup>10</sup> that is subject to cooking,<sup>11</sup> because pouring<sup>12</sup> from

8. **Putting Salt and Sugar into a Pot on the Fire** Despite salt and sugar's already having been boiled in the refining process, you should not put either into a pot of soup or *cholent*, etc., that is on the fire, or even off of the fire, if it is *yad soledet bo*. First, you should pour the soup or *cholent* into a *keli sheini* (see paragraph 5) and then add the salt and sugar. If you did put the salt and sugar into a pot that is on the fire, you are allowed to eat the food.
9. **Warming a Baby Bottle in Hot Water** You may pour hot water, even from a *keli rishon*, onto a baby bottle containing milk, or on a container of soup or baby food, in order to warm it. However, you may not warm a baby bottle or some other container by placing it in hot water in a *keli rishon* if the contents will be heated to the degree of *yad soledet bo*. You may warm it by placing it in a *keli sheini* containing hot water, even if it is *yad soledet bo*, as a *keli sheini* will not maintain the heat necessary to cook the contents of the bottle.
10. **Pouring Hot Soup onto Bread** You should not pour hot soup directly from the pot in which it was cooked onto pieces of bread or *matzah*. You should pour the soup first into the bowl, and after it has cooled somewhat, add the bread or *matzah*. The more common solution is to remove the soup from the pot with a spoon or ladle, and add the bread or *matzah* immediately, since the bowl will have the status of a *keli shelishi*.
11. **Pouring Hot Water onto Instant Coffee and Tea** You should not pour boiling hot water from a *keli rishon* onto instant coffee or instant tea, although they have been pre-cooked and dried in the process of production. They should be added after the water is first poured into a cup. Some advise the use of a *keli shelishi*, that is, pouring the hot water from the urn into a mug and then into a second mug. The above ruling applies as well to other similar products, such as milk powder, soup powder, instant cocoa, and spices.
12. **Making Tea on Shabbat** In making tea on Shabbat, you are not permitted to pour hot water from a kettle that was on the fire or from an urn onto tea leaves, or to place a tea bag into hot water either in a *keli rishon* or even in a *keli sheini*. There are two methods to make tea. The first is to cook the tea leaves or pour hot water over them before Shabbat. On Shabbat, you may put the liquid tea essence into hot water you poured from the kettle into a *keli sheini* (or a *keli shelishi*, as previously noted). If the tea essence is kept warm on the *blech*, you may put it into a cup and pour hot water on it from the kettle. If you did not prepare tea essence before Shabbat, some permit making the essence on Shabbat by putting a tea bag into cold or lukewarm water. Also, some permit using a tea bag without essence as long as you place the bag into a *keli shelishi*. The same applies to bouillon cubes.

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a *keli rishon* has the effect of cooking<sup>13</sup> its surface or outer layer (מבשל כְּדֵי קְלִיפָּה).

5. A pot that was not on the fire into which food or liquid is transferred from a *keli rishon* is called a *keli sheini* (כְּלִי שֵׁנִי). *Halachah* does not consider a *keli sheini* capable of cooking most foods, even when it retains sufficient heat to be *yad soledet bo*. However, there are some foods that cook very easily (קְלִי הַבִּישׁוּל) and would also cook in a *keli sheini*. Since it is difficult to determine exactly which foods fall into this category, you should not put any uncooked food into a *keli sheini* when the *keli* is still hot enough to be *yad soledet bo*.<sup>14</sup> While we generally assume that pouring from a *keli sheini* does not cook and is therefore permissible, we try to follow the stricter view and refrain from pouring from a *keli sheini*—if it is still sufficiently hot to be *yad soledet bo*—onto uncooked food such as a raw egg, which is more readily subject to cooking.

6. A pot into which food or liquid was transferred from a *keli sheini* is called *keli shelishi* (כְּלִי שְׁלִישִׁי). After the hot food has been transferred twice from its original container, it is seen as having lost its ability to cook other food. As we stated earlier, even a *keli sheini* loses its ability to cook in most cases. According to some opinions, a *keli shelishi* loses its ability to cook in all cases. However, some opinions do not differentiate between a *keli sheini* and a *keli shelishi*, and advise

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13. **Washing Dishes with Hot Water** When washing dirty or greasy dishes on Shabbat, you should not pour hot water from a *keli rishon* directly over the dishes. Rather, you should first pour the hot water into a tub or in the empty sink, and then put the dishes into it. Hot water from a boiler drawn from the faucet, and from a heater or urn is considered as from a *keli rishon*, if it is of the degree of *yad soledet bo*. (Running hot water from the tap is discussed in footnote 3.)
14. **Putting Food or Liquid into a Keli Sheini** You should not put a slice of lemon into a hot cup of water or tea which is a *keli sheini* that is *yad soledet bo*. However, you may put boiled or pasteurized milk, tea essence that was boiled before the Sabbath, processed lemon juice and soup essence which were cooked when produced, and other products that were similarly pre-boiled or pre-cooked in the process of production, such as salt, sugar, soup powder, soup cubes, milk powder, instant powdered cocoa, instant coffee, and instant tea into a *keli sheini*. You should not pour from a *keli rishon* into a *keli sheini* containing the above products.

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not to put uncooked food that is easily cooked even into a *keli shelishi*, when it is *yad soledet bo*.<sup>15</sup>

7. Any solid food (דָּבָר גּוֹשׁ) that is hot to the degree of *yad soledet bo* is capable of cooking on its own, even if it is not in any *keli* at all because it stores its own heat. For example, a hot potato<sup>16</sup> is capable of cooking another food with which it comes in contact even if the potato has been transferred into numerous containers, as long as it remains *yad soledet bo*.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, you may not put seasonings on meat, or put a piece of meat into cold liquids,<sup>18</sup> if the meat is hot to the degree of *yad soledet bo*.

8. Solid, dry food that was fully cooked before Shabbat is not subject to cooking again (אֵין בִּישׁוּל אַחֵר בִּישׁוּל) even if it has cooled off. Therefore, you are permitted to soak it in a *keli rishon*, provided it is not on the fire. You may not soak solid, dry food that was not cooked before Shabbat, such as a raw carrot, even in a *keli sheini*, because it appears as

15. **Status of a Keli Shelishi** Opinions differ regarding the status of a *keli shelishi*. Some authorities do not differentiate between a *keli sheini* and a *keli shelishi*, maintaining that the only valid considerations are whether the pot is *yad soledet bo*, and the nature of the food and how readily it is cooked. However, some authorities, including Rav Moshe Feinstein, zt"l, are of the opinion that cooking does not take place in a *keli shelishi*.

16. **Potatoes in Cholent** The *halachah* that a solid has the status of a *keli rishon* applies only to dry solids not immersed in a liquid. Potatoes in *cholent*, or an onion in chicken soup, would not be considered "*davar gush*" since they are immersed in liquid.

17. **Putting Gravy, Butter, Salt and Ketchup on Hot Food** You are not permitted to sprinkle uncooked onions or garlic onto a hot piece of meat, or butter on hot potatoes. You are permitted, however, to put salt and ketchup which are pre-cooked in the process of production onto hot meat when it is on the plate, that is, in a *keli sheini*. The reason for this is as follows: The status of a solid food as a *keli rishon* is itself not absolutely certain, and is a matter of discussion among the *acharonim*. Nonetheless, it is accepted *halachah* to treat a *davar gush* as a *keli rishon*, and ignore the fact that it may physically be in a *keli sheini*. However, when additional factors are involved, such as the fact that the salt and ketchup were already cooked, we do not impose the strict interpretation of *davar gush*; see next note.

18. **Putting Hot Solids on a Plate Next to Uncooked Food** You may put hot chicken on a plate next to coleslaw or salad, even though it is a *davar gush* coming into contact with an uncooked food. Since you have no intention to cook and gain no benefit from "cooking" the salad by way of the chicken, combined with the fact that the status of a solid as a *keli rishon* is the subject of debate, you can be lenient in this case.

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though it is being cooked. You may, however, pour onto it from a *keli sheini*. However, a pot of soup that was cooked before Shabbat is subject to cooking again once it has cooled off, because a liquid is subject to repeated cooking (לֵשׁ בִּישׁוּל אַחַר בִּישׁוּל בְּדָבָר לֶחֶ).<sup>19</sup>

9. If the food in a *keli rishon* is not fully cooked, you are not permitted to stir it or remove some of the food with a spoon or ladle, or to put a lid or a cover on the vessel, whether it is on or off the fire, so long as it is *yad soledet bo*, because such action helps the process of cooking along and is therefore a violation of the *melachah*. For example, you may not tend in any way to *cholent* which is not yet fully cooked. However, once the food is fully cooked, you are permitted to stir<sup>20</sup> or remove some of the food and to recover the pot, provided that you do not do so while the pot is on the fire or other heat source. You are permitted in any case to uncover the pot, even when it is on the fire and the food is not fully cooked, as uncovering the pot does not help in the cooking.

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19. **Reheating Liquids and Food Containing Liquid** The prohibition of repeated cooking applies to fluids such as water, wine, oil, fruit juices, etc. It applies as well to cooked food, such as meat in soup or in a gravy. You are forbidden to heat them again to the degree of *yad soledet bo* once they have cooled off completely. As such, you may not pour cold liquid into a *keli rishon*, whether it is on or off the fire, nor may you pour onto it from a *keli rishon*. If it was previously fully cooked, and it has not cooled off completely, but it is warm enough to be edible, for example, chicken soup or *cholent* that has been off the fire for some time, you may reheat it. We will discuss permissible methods of reheating later in this chapter.
20. **Stirring and Removing Food from a Pot on the Fire** As previously stated, the Torah prohibits stirring (הִגְסָה) food that is not fully cooked while it is on the fire. Moreover, it is rabbinically prohibited to stir food that is not fully cooked in a pot that is sufficiently hot to be *yad soledet bo*, even after it has been removed from the fire. There is a position among *rishonim* that stirring food in a pot is a transgression of the *melachah* even if the food is fully cooked. This position is endorsed *lechatchila* by Rema. Therefore, you should refrain from stirring a pot of food that is on the fire or on a *blech* directly over the fire. Opinions also differ as to the permissibility of removing some of the food with a spoon or ladle from a pot on the fire, even when the food is fully cooked. It is advisable to follow the stricter view and to refrain from removing even cooked food from a pot that is on the fire or on the *blech* directly over the fire. You should first remove the pot from the fire before taking out any of the food. If that is impossible, you may remove the food from the pot without stirring.



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10. Just as solid food that is fully cooked is not subject to cooking again<sup>21</sup> (אין בישול אחר בישול), so it is also not subject to roasting if it was already roasted (אין צלי אחר צלי) and not to baking if it was already baked (אין אפיה אחר אפיה). However, according to some *poskim* roasted or baked foods are subject to cooking (יש בישול אחר אפיה וצלי) and cooked foods are subject to roasting or baking (יש אפיה וצלי אחר בישול). Therefore, you should not put meat that was cooked in gravy (בישול) near the fire where it can be heated to the degree of *yad soledet bo*. You may not reheat the meat in the gravy, as reheating the gravy is prohibited (יש בישול אחר בישול ברבך לח). You may not reheat the meat without the gravy because reheating the meat out of the gravy to the point of *yad soledet bo* would be considered roasting (יש אפיה וצלי אחר בישול).

Likewise, you should not put roasted meat, bread crumbs or *matzah* into hot soup or gravy that is in a *keli rishon* where it would be cooked, or even into a *keli sheini*, as some foods cook in a *keli sheini* as well.<sup>22</sup>

11. You may not place raw fruit, cold food, or liquid that is subject to cooking again near the fire, or on the stove after it was lit,<sup>23</sup> even

21. **Putting Fried or Cooked Noodles into Hot Soup** Food that is deep fried in oil, such as soup croutons, is considered as cooked and not subject to cooking again. Baked products that were cooked are, likewise, not subject to being cooked again. It is, therefore, permitted to put noodles that were fried in oil or cooked into a pot of hot soup after it was removed from the fire, or to pour the hot soup from the pot onto the noodles.
22. **Using a Spoon or Ladle to Remove Soup from a Pot** If a spoon or ladle is used to remove the hot soup from the pot in which it was cooked into a bowl or plate, the bowl or plate may be considered a *keli shelishi*, provided the ladle was not left in the pot for any length of time. You would then be permitted to put the bread or *matzah* into the soup.
23. **Heating Food by Means of a Timer** You may not cook food that was not cooked or only partially cooked by putting it on an electric stove which will be ignited later on Shabbat. This is forbidden irrespective of whether the food is placed on the stove on Shabbat or before Shabbat. For example, you would not be allowed to put grinds in a percolator before Shabbat, and set the percolator to run Shabbat morning. Even though you are allowed to put uncooked food on a fire before Shabbat, such as a *cholent*, and let it cook on Shabbat, we are more stringent in the case of a timer for a simple reason: When you put food on a fire *Erev Shabbat*, you are aware that your involvement with the preparation is over, and you will not do anything else to further the process of cooking. By contrast, setting food **before Shabbat** on a stove which is

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before it has heated up, if it could—even after a long time—reach the degree of *yad soledet bo*, for fear that you might forget it there and let it reach that degree of heat and begin to cook. You are permitted, however, to put it at a distance from the fire or on the stove in a place where even if left there for a long time it would not be heated to the degree of *yad soledet bo*.<sup>24</sup> You are likewise permitted to put a pot of cooked<sup>25</sup> liquid that has not cooled off completely, or solid, dry<sup>26</sup> food that is not subject

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off can be confused with setting food on **Shabbat** on a stove which is off. The above is true regarding food which is subject to *bishul*. However, regarding food that was already cooked, there are three positions. 1) Some prohibit placing cooked food on a heat source that will turn on during Shabbat **even if it was set before Shabbat**. 2) Some permit setting cooked food if a) the food was set down before Shabbat and b) the heat source was covered by a *blech* or its *halachic* equivalent, such as a *Shabbat plata*. (See also notes 30 and 43.) 3) Some permit setting cooked food on a *Shabbat plata* which is off, even on Shabbat. We should note that some of those who prohibit using a timer in such cases base their reasoning on their view of the questionable *halachic* propriety of timers on Shabbat in general.

24. **Warming Cold Food to Make it Edible** You are allowed to reheat a piece of cooked meat, chicken, or *kugel* that was kept in the refrigerator and completely cooled by putting it into hot gravy or soup in a *keli rishon* that is not on the fire, or by placing it some distance from the fire, or on top of a vessel that is on the *blech* over the fire, or on a radiator, or on a nonadjustable hot plate made to heat food but not to cook on. In the view of some authorities the above procedures are permissible only if it will not be heated to the degree of *yad soledet bo*. Other authorities do not set this restriction. In addition, there is a debate among *poskim* regarding placing food on an empty inverted plate or pot which is on top of a *blech*. Some consider putting food on top of an inverted vessel which has been placed on a *blech* tantamount to placing it on a pot of food, and thereby permitted even if the food was taken out of the refrigerator. See next note. Others prohibit it. In light of all of the above debate, you may certainly place cooked, dry food from the refrigerator onto an inverted vessel on top of a *Shabbat plata* on Shabbat.
25. **Warming Cooked Food on Top of Another Vessel** You may reheat a pot of soup that was fully cooked and is still warm, or a piece of cold meat that was fully cooked by placing it on top of a pot of food or liquid, such as a pot of *cholent*, or a water kettle, that is on the fire, even if the soup or meat is heated to a high temperature. You should take care not to place the meat where it will roast.
26. **Warming a *Kugel* or Meat Pie** You may heat a *kugel* or a meat pie, as the small amount of fat that dissolves will remain within the pie or the *kugel*. You are likewise permitted to heat a piece of fatty meat, since the amount of fat that melts and flows off is negligible. As an additional factor, there are those of the opinion that since the

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to cooking again, on top of a second pot which is on the fire.<sup>27</sup> Also, if the food that is already cooked is beginning to burn, and you wish to prevent it from burning, you may put an empty pot on the fire and place the pot of food on top of it.

12. The general rule for most *melachot* is that as long as you set it in motion before Shabbat, it may continue on Shabbat. For example, you cannot trap animals on Shabbat, but you can set a trap before Shabbat even though the trapping will take place on Shabbat. With this logic in mind, you might have expected *halachah* to allow food to cook on Shabbat as long as the pot was on the fire before Shabbat began. However, as stated in paragraph 3, *Chazal* instituted three safeguards surrounding our handling of hot food to distance the possibility of Shabbat transgression. The first of these is known as *shehiya* (שְׁהִיָּה), which regulates which foods may be kept on an open flame, and under which circumstances.

*Chazal* were concerned that even if food was set on the fire or in the oven, there might be a temptation to “stoke the coals,” or adjust the fire in some way to better cook the food (שָׂמָא יִחַתֶּה בְּגָזְלִים). Therefore, they prohibited leaving food directly on a fire unless the following conditions were met:

- (1) The food is cooked to the level of *ma'achal Ben Derusai*. (See note 2.) The reason for this requirement is that *Chazal* felt that a person would not interfere with the cooking process by stoking the coals once the food was minimally edible. (It is important to remember that this minimal standard is what is needed to be considered “cooked enough” to be left on the

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fat is solid when cold, it is considered solid for the purpose of reheating on Shabbat, no matter its size. You may rely on this opinion in cases of need.

27. **Taking the Chill out of Food** You are permitted to put a dish of cold food near the fire to take the chill away and to warm it, provided you put it at a distance from the fire where it cannot heat up to the degree of *yad soledet bo* (113°F/45°C), even if it will stand there for a long time. However, you may not place it so close to the fire that it could reach the degree of *yad soledet bo*, even if you do not intend to heat it to such a degree, but only to keep it there for a brief period of time. If it is urgently necessary to warm the food, as for a child or for a sick person, you may do even that, provided the food was fully cooked and you are careful to remove it before it heats up to the degree of *yad soledet bo*.

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fire. In no way can you remove a food from the fire and then reheat until it is completely cooked.)

- (2) The food is completely raw. *Chazal* thought that raw food would be out of your mind since you know it will take a long time to cook. Therefore, in this case, there was no fear of stoking the coals.

The above applies when you are placing food directly onto a fire or heat source. However, if you have taken measures to separate the food from the direct impact of the fire, you are permitted to place food that is in the initial stages of cooking.<sup>28</sup> In the language of the Mishnah, these measures are referred to as *גָּרוּף וְקָטוּם* (*garuf vekatum*),<sup>29</sup> and are most commonly accomplished by placing a metal sheet (*blech*)<sup>30</sup> over

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28. **Making Hot Water Before Shabbat** You should heat water to the point of *yad soledet bo* before Shabbat begins. If it was not, you can heat in an electric urn, as an urn with no adjustable knobs is not considered to be directly on the fire; see note 30.
29. **Status of Gas and Electric Ranges** In the time of the Mishnah, ovens used for cooking were called *כירה* (*kirah*), which was a box shaped oven filled with hot coals, while the food was cooked on top of the box. *Garuf vekatum* literally means “swept and covered,” meaning that the coals were either swept out or covered with dirt in order to remove the possibility of stoking. Our stoves are considered the equivalent of the Mishnaic *kirah*, and therefore require being “swept and covered” as well. However, since our ovens have no coals, a *halachic* equivalent must be found. The *blech*, which both diminishes the heat and creates a barrier to the fire, is precisely that equivalent.
30. **Covering the Stove with a Blech** There are two points on a stove which are essential when discussing *garuf vekatum*: the heat source and the control knobs. On a gas oven, where you can see the fire and control it through the knob, it is best to cover both. However, *poskim* differ as to which is the most vital. Some argue that the knobs are the most essential as you will be reminded (*היכר*) not to adjust the flame by seeing the knobs covered. This is not the accepted position, however. Most agree that covering the flame and thereby diminishing its heat is the best reminder (*היכר*) that you are finished cooking. Therefore, if you cannot cover the knobs for whatever reason, covering the flame would suffice. An electric cooker, such as a crock pot, has a heat source and knobs, but no visible flame. That difference notwithstanding, *poskim* liken it to a gas range; you should cover the heat source and the knobs as well. A *Shabbat plata* which maintains a set temperature that cannot be adjusted, and is designed to keep food hot but not to cook it, in the opinion of many authorities does not require an additional *blech*. In any event, the food may be eaten on Shabbat if it was fully cooked before Shabbat, even if the stove was left uncovered.

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the fire. Once the fire is covered<sup>31</sup> in this manner, the fear of “stoking the coals” is no longer warranted. However, it is always best to have all of your food fully cooked before Shabbat begins.<sup>32</sup>

Once the fire is covered, you may move a pot containing cooked food or a kettle of boiled water to and from areas on the *blech* where the heat is at the degree of *yad soledet bo*, and according to some authorities, to and from any warm part of the *blech* to any other part of the *blech*, provided the food and the liquid have not cooled off completely. You may, likewise, remove the pot of cooked, hot food from one stove to another, as well as from a gas stove to an electric stove, and vice versa, provided the stoves are covered. (You may place cold foods or liquids to warm on a part of the *blech* where they cannot heat up to the degree of *yad soledet bo*, even if left there all day.)

13. You may transfer cooked food or boiled water from one container to another if necessary, provided both are on the *blech* and the contents of both are still warm. If the food in one pot is becoming dried up, you may pour hot water into it from a kettle which was on the *blech*.<sup>33</sup> It is preferable that the above be done by first lifting the pot to which the food or water is being transferred off the *blech*, or moving it to another part of the *blech* not directly over the fire.

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31. **Making a Blech on Shabbat** If you forgot to put a *blech* on the stove before Shabbat, you may do so on Shabbat, provided the fire will not heat the metal covering to a glow, and that you are careful not to extinguish the flame while covering it.
32. **Fully Cooking Food Before Shabbat** The leniency of putting food that is cooked only minimally to *ma'achal Ben Derusai* is debated in the Talmud, *Shabbat* 36b. Whereas *Chachamim* forbid minimally cooked food to be placed on a fire, Chanania allows it. Both opinions are cited in *Shulchan Aruch*, and we generally accept Chanania's leniency. Nonetheless, avoiding the debate altogether by cooking Shabbat food in advance of sunset is certainly preferred.
33. **Adding Water to Cholent** If your *cholent* is drying out, you may take water from the urn and put it into the *cholent*. The fact that the water is moved into a *keli sheini* is inconsequential (for Ashkenazi Jews); since the water is still hot, it is not subject to *bishul achar bishul*. Sefardic authorities forbid adding water that was in a *keli sheini* into food that is in a *keli rishon*. If the *cholent* is in a crockpot, you should remove the pot from the base and then add the water. (While the pot is off of the base, you must take care to follow the rules of *chazarah*. See paragraph 14.) If the crockpot is the kind which can't be removed from the base, you are allowed to pour water onto the *cholent*.

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14. The second safeguard is called *chazarah* (חֲזָרָה), which regulates the circumstances under which cooked food can be returned to the fire. Generally, a pot containing cooked food that was placed on the stove before Shabbat, and was then removed on Shabbat, may not be returned to the stove. There are two reasons for this prohibition; putting food on a stove looks like cooking on Shabbat,<sup>34</sup> or according to some authorities, because you might “stoke the coals.” *Chazal* did, however, allow for returning a pot to the stove if the following conditions are met: (1) the food is fully cooked; (2) the food has not cooled off completely, but is still warm; (3) the stove is “*garuf vekatum*” (covered with a *blech*); (4) when the pot was removed from the stove you intended to return it; (5) the pot continues to be held in the hand, even if placed on the table but not set down on the ground.<sup>35</sup>

The above applies to a stove top or *Shabbat Plata*. However, you may not return a pot containing food into a heated oven on the Sabbath, even under these conditions.<sup>36</sup>

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34. **Returning Food to a Spot that is Warm but Not Hot** The restrictions on returning a pot of food to the stove apply only if it is placed on a part of the *blech* where it will be heated to the degree of *yad soledet bo*. However, if it will not attain that degree of heat you are permitted to return food, both solid and liquid, even if it has cooled off, without regard to the prescribed conditions, because it is incapable of cooking and it does not appear as though you were cooking on Shabbat.
35. **Returning Food to the Stove in Case of Great Need** In case of need, you may return a vessel onto the stove if, in addition to the first three conditions, either of the last two conditions are complied with. In case of extreme need, where you would be left without warm food on Shabbat, you may return the vessel to the stove even if you did not have in mind to return it, and set it down on the table or on another surface. The restriction is eased in this case if the remaining three conditions are met. However, since according to *poskim* you are allowed to place cooked dry food, and warm liquids, onto an inverted empty plate or pot which is on top of the *blech* without meeting the conditions for *chazarah*, that would be recommended in this case. (See note 24.)
36. **Use of an Oven and Warming Drawer Regulated by a Thermostat** You may not use a gas or electric oven that is regulated by a thermostat on Shabbat, because when you open the door, you are likely to ignite the flame or turn on the electricity. You are, therefore, not permitted to open the oven door to remove any food unless the fire is on, or the thermostat is set so that it is certain the fire will not go on as the door is opened. (However, if the door was opened inadvertently while the fire was off, all the food should be removed, but it may be eaten.) Opinions

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15. The third safeguard is called *hatmanah* (הַטְּמָנָה), which regulates the degree to which food may be insulated on Shabbat. *Chazal* prohibited *hatmanah* for fear that someone might insulate the pot in ashes containing coals and then stir the fire in order to reheat the food which may have cooled in the interim.

*Chazal* recognized two situations in which insulation can take place. The first is insulation which is *ma'amid hevel* (מַעֲמִיד הֶבֶל, maintains heat), and the second is insulation which is *mosif hevel* (מוֹסִיף הֶבֶל, increases heat). *Ma'amid hevel* refers to a case where the food or pot is insulated with a material that can maintain its heat, but the food or pot is not in a circumstance where the heat will increase. For example, wrapping a pot of soup in towels and leaving it off the fire will maintain its heat, but will in no way increase the heat. However, if that pot is wrapped and placed on the *blech*, it is considered to be insulated in a way that is *mosif hevel*.

The manner of insulation is relevant depending on when the insulation took place. You are never allowed to insulate<sup>37</sup> food in a manner

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differ regarding returning food to the oven, even after the above precautions have been taken. According to some authorities it is similar to returning the food onto the stove and is permissible under the same conditions. Others, however, do not permit it, because the heat inside an oven is more intense and it appears as though you are cooking on Shabbat. Again, the restrictions regarding returning food, whether on the stove or into the oven, apply only if the food could be heated to the degree of *yad soledet bo*, but not if it cannot reach that degree of heat. Therefore, you may heat the oven to a high temperature before Shabbat, turn off the oven before Shabbat, and let the food remain heated within. In this case, you can return the food to the now semi-warm oven as it is incapable of heating food to the degree of *yad soledet bo*. Some ovens are equipped with a warming drawer. The *halachot* of the warming drawer follow the same lines as above. If it will not reach *yad soledet bo*, no restrictions apply. If it will reach *yad soledet bo*, it must be treated like a hot plate; if there are adjustable knobs, they and the heat surface must be covered, etc. In all circumstances, you must learn how your appliances work as opening and closing doors and drawers may trigger various mechanisms which should be avoided on Shabbat.

37. ***Hatmanah* with a Crockpot** There is a debate among contemporary *poskim* regarding a crockpot. Some are of the opinion that the snug insulation on all sides renders the device a form of *hatmanah*, despite the fact that it is open on top. According to this opinion, you should elevate the pot a bit out of the base by placing rocks or wads of tin foil on the bottom. Other *poskim* disagree and rule that *hatmanah* is only an

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that will be *mosif hevel*.<sup>38</sup> However, **before Shabbat** you may cover and envelop a pot containing food with a material that will retain the heat. Once Shabbat has begun, you are not allowed to cover and envelop a pot containing food, even cooked food, and even when the insulation will be merely *ma'amid hevel*.<sup>39</sup>

The prohibition applies only when the food remains in the pot in which it was cooked (*keli rishon*), and not if you transfer it to another pot,<sup>40</sup> even if the food is still *yad soledet bo*, and even if after that you return it to the original vessel. If the food has cooled below *yad soledet bo*, you may do *hatmanah* in case of need even if it remains in the pot in which it was originally cooked.

You are allowed on Shabbat to insulate cold food or liquid with material that retains heat, but does not add heat, in order to remove the chill or to keep it from cooling further.

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issue if the pot is surrounded by all sides, including the top. Therefore, there would be no issue of *hatmanah* with a crockpot.

38. **Keeping a Pot of Food in the Oven or Warming Drawer** Placing a pot of fully cooked food, such as *cholent*, in the oven before Shabbat to keep it hot for serving on Shabbat is not considered *hatmanah* because the pot is not enveloped with material, and it is therefore permissible. For similar reasons, use of a warming drawer would be permissible as well. If, however, the oven is constructed so that the pot fits into it snugly and is completely enclosed, it is considered *hatmanah* and it is not permissible; see above note 36 for other requirements related to using an oven on Shabbat.
39. **Covering a Pot with a Lid or Aluminum Foil** You may put a lid on a pot containing fully cooked food on Shabbat, even if it helps preserve the heat, as this is normal procedure and is not considered *hatmanah*. Covering a pot with some other article or material, such as aluminum foil, is likewise not considered *hatmanah* and is permissible, provided that your intention is to protect its contents. For example, you can wrap *kishke* in foil and put it into the *cholent* pot, since the purpose of wrapping it is to keep the *kishke* out of the cholent. If the pot was already covered before Shabbat in a permissible manner with material that retains heat, you may add to or replace the covering with similar material on Shabbat in order to preserve the heat.
40. **Filling a Thermos or Hot Water Bottle** You may pour liquid from a *keli rishon*, such as hot soup from a pot on the stove, or hot water from the kettle on the stove, into a thermos on Shabbat. Although the thermos is intended to retain heat, it is not prohibited because we considered it a *keli sheini* and it is, moreover, not the manner of making *hatmanah*. You are likewise permitted to fill a hot water bottle on Shabbat. The thermos and the hot water bottle should be dry before being filled.



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16. If food was cooked on Shabbat in deliberate transgression (מְזִיד) of Shabbat, the food is forbidden to the cook and his family forever,<sup>41</sup> but others may eat it after Shabbat.<sup>42</sup> According to *Magen Avraham* (318:1), you may not use the pot in which you cooked the food until you *kasher* it. If you cooked food unintentionally or in ignorance of the fact that it is a transgression (שְׁוֵי), you may not use that food on Shabbat, but anyone may have it after Shabbat is over. In the latter instance, you may even eat it on Shabbat in case of need.

17. You may not tell a non-Jew to cook or bake for you on Shabbat. You may not eat food cooked and bread baked by a non-Jew for a Jew on Shabbat until such time has elapsed after Shabbat as it would take to cook the food and bake the bread. Where you asked a non-Jew to heat the house, you may have him put the cold pots of cooked food and liquids on the oven before lighting the fire in order to reheat them for the Shabbat meal.<sup>43</sup>

18. It is a *mitzvah* to eat hot food on Shabbat. Preparing good food and preserving its heat in a permissible way honors Shabbat and makes

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41. **Food Cooked and Bread Baked by a Jew on Shabbat** You may not ask a non-observant Jew to cook or bake for you on Shabbat, and such food is forever forbidden. Food cooked and bread baked on Shabbat by Jews in a restaurant, hotel or bakery for a Jewish clientele is likewise forever forbidden. This issue may be particularly sensitive for observant Jews who come from non-observant homes. A *moreh hora'ah* should be consulted to arrive at a *halachically* solid and sensitive course of action.
42. **Food Cooked for the Critically Ill** If, in an emergency, you must cook on Shabbat for a dangerously ill person, only the patient or someone in the same critical condition may eat that food. Others may not use the food until the close of Shabbat. The pot in which the food was cooked is permitted to be used afterwards.
43. **Having a Non-Jew Put Cooked Food on a Stove to Be Heated** You are not permitted to ask a non-Jew to do anything on Shabbat that a Jew is forbidden to do, even if it is only a rabbinic prohibition. Therefore, you may not request a non-Jew to put a pot of cooked food, that has cooled completely, on a heated stove which is used exclusively for cooking, where the food will be heated to the degree of *yad soledet bo*. Some permit having the non-Jew put it on the stove to be heated before the stove is lit, in case of need, and on an electric stove before it begins to operate when the current is connected by means of a time switch. See also note 23. The laws relating to *melachah* done by a non-Jew are discussed in detail in Part IV, Chapter 6.

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it a day of *oneg*. Moreover, while *Chazal* permit the use of fire lit before Shabbat, some sects who denied the validity of the *Torah Shebe'al Peh* forbade it. Therefore, by endeavoring to have hot food on Shabbat, you affirm your faith in the authority of *Chazal*.