

## 12. Shearing

### הגניז

1. The objective of this *av melachah* is to sever the outer covering of wool or hair of an animal from its natural source. The activities prohibited within this *melachah* include shearing wool or hair from a domestic or non-domestic animal or fowl, irrespective of whether it is alive or dead,<sup>1</sup> and even from its detached skin or hide.

2. Also included within this *melachah* (*toladot*) are plucking feathers from a bird or fowl, and pulling off or cutting off one's own nails or hair, or another person's nails or hair, with an implement.<sup>2</sup>

3. *Chazal* also prohibited pulling off nails,<sup>3</sup> or pulling out hair by hand, and removing a wart by hand or with an implement. You

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1. **Removing Feathers from a Cooked Chicken** Some authorities caution against removing the small feathers that remain on the skin of the chicken after it has been cooked. Others, however, maintain that the prohibition does not apply after it is cooked, especially since the feathers are loose and practically detached.

2. **Removing Hair from the Face, Head or Body** Removing hair from the face, the head, or the body, whether by using scissors, razor, shaver, and/or depilatory paste or ointment violates the *melachah* and is forbidden on Shabbat. In the case of a razor, using it to shave a man's beard and the hair of his temples violates an additional, independent prohibition.

3. **Removing a Hangnail That is Painful** You may remove a hangnail that is mostly detached and causes you pain, or is likely to cause pain, but only by hand or with

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may not pull off a cuticle, nor are you permitted to comb the hair<sup>4</sup> or to brush it with a hard brush, as you are certain to tear out some hair.<sup>5</sup>

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your teeth, not with an implement. If it is not mostly detached as well as likely to cause pain, you may not remove it in any manner.

4. **Combing or Brushing a *Sheitl*** A woman should refrain from combing out her *sheitl* on Shabbat, as it is likely to tear out some hair. However, she may use a soft-haired brush to smooth the hair.
5. **Brushing Hair** You may part your hair by hand, and brush the hair lightly with a soft brush that is not likely to tear out any hair, preferably a brush you keep expressly for use on Shabbat.

## 13. Cleaning

### המִלְבֵּן

1. The objective of this *av melachah* is to remove stains, dirt or coloring from wool, linen and other fabrics. Activities prohibited within this *melachah* include bleaching a cloth or a fabric, or cleaning it by rubbing the fabric on a washboard.

2. Also included within this *melachah (toladot)* are laundering a garment<sup>1</sup> by soaking it in water or by pouring water or some other cleaning agent over it, and wringing or pressing water<sup>2</sup> out of a cloth or a garment (סְחִיטָה).<sup>3</sup>

1. **Synthetic Material** You are allowed to clean plastic or rubber pants and sheets, as well as socks or other clothing made only from synthetic material, by soaking them in water if you need them for use on Shabbat.
2. **Shaking Water, Snow or Dust Off of Clothing** You may not shake the water out of a new garment, where you are concerned that the water may cause it to shrink. However, even with an old garment you should take care not to shake the water out too vigorously, so that it should not result in wringing the water out. You may shake out a raincoat made of non-woven plastic material, even vigorously. Shaking out and removing snow and dust from a garment is presumed to effect a recognizable improvement in its appearance. Therefore, when the garment is relatively new and of a black or dark color, so that you are particular about its appearance before wearing it, removing the snow and dust is considered like laundering it. However, you may remove snow that has not yet melted by shaking the garment lightly. The above applies in cases when the dirt is embedded into the fabric. You may wipe off any kind of clothing's surface dust or lint and the like.
3. **Washing and Drying Dishes with a Cloth** In washing dishes you should not use a cloth that will absorb the water, because it will lead to pressing out the water

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3. *Chazal* also prohibited mopping up water<sup>4</sup> with a cloth,<sup>5</sup> or wiping up water with a sponge,<sup>6</sup> for fear that you will wring out the water;<sup>7</sup> handling wet washed clothing;<sup>8</sup> hanging washed clothing out

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in violation of the prohibition of *sechitah*. You may use a dish scrubber made of plastic or other non-absorbent material. In drying the dishes, you should use a cloth designated for that purpose, so that you will not be concerned with its condition and will not squeeze the water out of it. If necessary, you may use a cloth which you are comfortable having become wet to dry a cup or a jar, or other vessel that has a narrow opening, as long as you will not come to wring it out. You should, however, first pour out whatever water is in the vessel. In addition, you are permitted to wipe the mist from a window with your hands or with a rag. You may clean eyeglasses by wetting the lenses and wiping them with a dry cloth. (For further discussion of the rules pertaining to washing dishes on Shabbat, see *Melachah* 11, note 13.)

4. **Use of a Paper Towel** You are allowed to use a paper towel or paper napkin to soak up water or other liquid that has spilled. Since you discard these after use, there is no fear you will wring it out.
5. **Wiping a Table and Tablecloth** You should use a dry cloth to wipe a table clean, not a wet one. You may mop up liquid that spilled onto the table or tablecloth with a paper towel, or with a cloth or rag you do not mind getting wet, but you should not wring it out. If liquid spilled onto a plastic tablecloth, you may clean it with a rag or non-absorbent cloth. If the plastic is dirty, you may pour water on it and clean it with a paper towel or a paper napkin, taking care not to wring it out.
6. **Washing a Baby Bottle with a Brush** You may wash the inside of a baby bottle with a brush made of synthetic bristles, inasmuch as they do not absorb the water, and hence the prohibition of *sechitah* does not apply.
7. **Drying Yourself with a Towel** You are permitted to dry your whole body with a towel. When drying hands, some are careful to let the excess water drip off before drying them. Also, you are permitted to place a cloth under an infant while bathing him, since people are not particular about pressing the water out if the towel gets wet.
8. **Wearing Wet Clothes and Drying Them Out** You may continue to wear clothes that were soaked in the rain, but if you remove them, you may not dry them near a heater or the oven, if they will be heated to the degree of *yad soledet bo*. Moreover, after removing them, you should not spread them out to dry, as it would appear that they had been washed on Shabbat. You may, however, hang them in their usual place. For example, you should not hang all the wet coats in the shower, but you may hang them on a coat stand or hook, or anywhere where it does not look as though they were washed and set to dry. You may hang clothes made of synthetic material, such as a raincoat and other items, but not near a heater or radiator. You should refrain from handling a garment if it is soaked, but you may

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to dry;<sup>9</sup> rubbing clothes after laundering to make them shine; wringing water out of your hair;<sup>10</sup> and brushing dust or dirt from a suit,<sup>11</sup> garment, or your shoes.<sup>12</sup>

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handle it when it is only moderately wet. You may handle rags that are constantly soaked in water, since you do not mind if they remain wet and will not wring them out.

9. **Taking Clothes Out of the Dryer** You are allowed to take out and wear on Shabbat clothes you knowingly left in the dryer.
10. **Drying Your Hair** While you are not permitted to squeeze the water out of your hair, you are permitted to dry your hair with a towel, and even to rub it to relieve any discomfort.
11. **Brushing and Removing Dirt from Clothing** You may not use a brush to remove dirt from clothing. If you are not particular about its cleanliness, you may clean it off with your hand or with a dry cloth, or by shaking it lightly. However, you may not clean a dark, new suit or garment about which you are particular in this manner. You are allowed to brush off dust and surface dirt with your hands or with a dry cloth. Some permit use of a clothes brush with soft bristles. (For sweeping a carpet, see *Melachah* 1, note 6.)
12. **Cleaning Shoes of Dirt and Mud** You may clean shoes made of leather or a similar non-absorbent material by pouring water over them. You may remove mud that is still wet by scraping them lightly with a scraper or some other article that may be handled on Shabbat, but not with a knife. You may not scrape off dry mud, but you may wash it off with water. Suede and cloth shoes are governed by the laws that apply to cleaning clothes.



## 14. Combing Raw Materials

### הַמְנַפֵּץ

1. The objective of this *av melachah* is to prepare the raw material by combing, hackling and separating it into strands or fibers to be used for spinning, twining and weaving. Activities prohibited within this *melachah* include carding or combing out raw wool and flax to make the fibers and felts.

2. Also included within this *melachah (toladot)* are hammering out or pounding dried sinews until they form strands fit for spinning, and combing out various fibers until they become threadlike and fit for weaving and braiding into rope.

3. *Chazal* also prohibited winding thread and yarn onto a cylinder or spindle, and unwinding a ball or coil of wool or other threads.