In the Tabernacle: Dye plants were ground up in order to prepare dyes.

Grinding

Definition of the labor: Transforming one entity into small parts (and perhaps a new identity is established thereby)

Primary category of labor: When there are two components: 1. Actual grinding, and 2. preparation for cooking or eating, e.g., grinding wheat into flour

Subcategory: When only one of those components applies. For example:

- Crushing metal – it is actual grinding but it is not food.
- Finely cutting a vegetable – it is not actual grinding, but there is preparation of food for cooking or eating.

Is it permitted to cut a salad very finely?

- **Rosh and others:** Permitted (at least under certain conditions)
- **Rashba:** Prohibited
  - ***Shulḥan Arukh*:** Prohibited

What is "finely"?

Small pieces where it is difficult to determine which vegetable a piece is. It is permitted to cut larger pieces or thin strips.

Although it is permitted to finely cut a salad **just before the meal**, it is preferable to cut it into slightly larger pieces.

Is it permitted to grind for immediate use?

- ***Shiltei HaGiborim*:** Prohibited
  - ***Ḥazon Ish*:** In general it is prohibited. It is permitted only in specific circumstances.
- **Rashba:** Permitted
  - The ***Beit Yosef*** cited his opinion, and that is the halakhic ruling of the **Rema**.

Is it permitted to mash a banana or an avocado?

- ***Ḥazon Ish*:** It is prohibited even for immediate consumption
- ***Iggerot Moshe*:** It is permitted in every case because it remains a single entity and it is not grinding.

In practice: One who mashes it in the standard manner has authorities upon whom to rely, but it is preferable to mash it just before the meal or directly onto bread (or both). One who is stringent in accordance with the opinion of the ***Ḥazon Ish*** should mash it in an unusual manner (*shinui*). All agree that a very soft fruit may be mashed (Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach).

Is it permitted to grind in an unusual manner?

Gemara, Rambam, *Shulḥan Arukh*: It is permitted to grind in an unusual manner (*shinui*) – by means of a spoon or the handle of a fork (in a bowl or on the table, but not in a utensil designated for grinding). It is preferable to do so just before the meal.

Is it permitted to grind with a utensil?

It is prohibited to use a utensil designated for grinding, e.g., a grater, both in terms of the prohibition of Grinding and in terms of performing a weekday action. If what the utensil does is not characterized as Grinding, it is permitted.

Therefore, it is permitted to use **an egg slicer** or a cheese slicer.

Manual vegetable chopper: It is prohibited to use blades that produce a finely cut salad even just before the meal. There are grounds to be lenient and use blades that produce larger pieces, and one should do so just before the meal.

Is there a prohibition of Grinding with regard to items that do not grow from the ground?

Items that cannot be eaten without grinding

It is prohibited to grind them (e.g., raw meat for birds), but it is permitted to grind just before the meal.

Items that can be eaten without grinding

It is permitted to grind it even for later use, and even for a child or an elderly person who is unable to eat it without grinding (if most people are able to eat it without grinding).

In any event, one may not use a utensil designated for grinding

Grinding after grinding

It is permitted to grind after grinding; therefore, it is permitted to crumble bread on Shabbat (*Yere'im*; Rema).

***Ḥazon Ish*:** The reason is that the prohibition of Grinding applies only to the dissolution of a natural connection, not to dissolution of a man-made connection.

Therefore, it is permitted to grind bread or cookies, and it is permitted to crumble lumps of sugar, salt, pills, or chocolate, etc.

Yet, even in these cases:

It is prohibited to use a utensil designated for Grinding.

It is prohibited to grind the item beyond its original status; therefore, it is prohibited to transform sugar into powdered sugar.

Does the prohibition of Grinding apply to cooked items?

Rambam: It is permitted, but perhaps only cooked, soft, and mashed fruit and vegetables; therefore:

Not just before the meal

It is advisable to mash them only if they are extensively cooked so they are soft and easily mashed.

Just before the meal

It is permitted to mash soft, cooked fruit and vegetables even if they were not mashed (perhaps the Rambam permitted this even in this case, and one may take into account the opinions that even actual grinding is permitted for immediate use).

When the vegetables are soft and mashing them is permitted, it is permitted also to mash **several types together** even though a single mixture is formed. It is also permitted to spread fruit marmalade on bread, even though it contains fruit pieces that were not yet dissolved.