

3. A utensil which has a permissible use,¹⁸ or which is used for a forbidden *melachah* as well as for a permissible use, such as a pot which is used for cooking and for holding food, may be handled on Shabbat, even if only for its own sake to keep it from being stolen or broken. An unclean utensil may, likewise, be moved, as the prohibition of *muktzeh* does not apply if the object is repulsive.

There is one limitation placed on the types of objects listed above, that they should not be handled if there is no need to do so.¹⁹ This is

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17. **Artificial and Live Flowers and Plants** Artificial flowers and plants are not *muktzeh* and may be handled on Shabbat, since they are ornamental objects. Live, growing plants are *muktzeh* and may not be moved on Shabbat or Yom Tov. A vase with flowers is not *muktzeh* and may be moved, but you may not place the flowers in the vase containing water. See Part II, *Melachah* 3, note 2.
18. **Watches and Clocks** Watches and alarm clocks which operate mechanically, and electronic watches which display the time without pressing a button, are not *muktzeh*, so long as they are operational and running. If the watch is primarily regarded as jewelry, and it is normally worn even when it is not running, it is not *muktzeh*. As to considerations other than *muktzeh*, such as winding the watch or wearing it in the street, these questions are discussed relative to the *melachot* involved. A clock that hangs on the wall or stands on the floor, such as a grandfather clock, is *muktzeh* and may not be moved unless its space is needed; see Part II, *Melachah* 38, notes 13-15; Part III, Chapter 4, paragraph 2 and notes.
19. **Handling Toys, Games and Household Items** Articles and utensils that are not used for forbidden activities, such as furniture, clothing, etc., are not *muktzeh* and may be moved and handled for any purpose, although not needlessly. This restriction does not apply to *seforim* and food, and in the view of some authorities to tableware, such as plates, cups, glasses, knives, spoons etc., as well. Toys, games, balls, sporting goods and equipment, such as baseball bats, gloves, tennis rackets, etc., are not *muktzeh*. Their use, however, may be restricted or forbidden on account of other *halachic* considerations. Toys which emit a sound, such as musical toys, whistles, toy phones, talking dolls, etc., are not *muktzeh* and may be moved, provided it can be done without causing the sound to be made. However, such toys should not be given to children on Shabbat, but if a child too young to be aware of Shabbat regulations takes the toy, he or she may be allowed to play with it. Games such as checkers, chess, and other board games are

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as opposed to *seforim* or food, for example, which have no hint of *muktzeh* and may be handled indiscriminately even if there is no need to handle them.²⁰

4. You are forbidden to turn an object from non-*muktzeh* into *muktzeh*. For example, you cannot take a plate or a pot which you are permitted to move and place it where coins will fall into it, for once the coins are in the pot or on the plate, you have rendered the pot or plate unusable. This is referred to as the prohibition of “*bittul keli me-hecheno*” (בִּטּוּל כֶּלִי מֵהֶכְחֵנו) (ביטול כלי מהיכנו), or voiding a vessel from its state of usefulness. *Chazal* prohibited doing this because it is similar to demolishing.²¹ However, you are permitted to put an object into an animal’s cage. Even though it will be *muktzeh* when the animal is on it (as animals are *muktzeh*), when the animal moves, the object is not forbidden. However, if the animal was on the object when Shabbat set in, the object would be *muktzeh* all of Shabbat. This is the general rule with regard to *muktzeh*; an object which is *muktzeh* at the start of Shabbat (Friday evening during *bein hashemashot*, that is, between sunset and nightfall) remains *muktzeh* for the rest of the Shabbat.

5. You are permitted to move earth and sand that had been gathered in a pile in a corner of the yard or the house. Since it was piled, it is considered prepared for use.²² But if it is scattered, it is subordinate

not *muktzeh*, but those that involve keeping score should not be played on Shabbat. Children’s tricycles are not *muktzeh* and may be used in the house or within an *eruv*. However, two wheel bicycles should not be used even within an *eruv*.

Household items that are not used for forbidden activities are not *muktzeh*. A broom, with nylon or synthetic bristles which do not break off, that is used indoors on floored surfaces, such as tile, wood and linoleum, is not *muktzeh*. Perfumes, deodorant and perfume sprays are not *muktzeh* and may be used on your person, but may not be applied to clothing. Air freshener and room deodorizer sprays are not *muktzeh* and may be used on Shabbat. Furniture may be moved unless it is a base or a stand for an object that is *muktzeh*.

20. **Handling Books** You may handle all books that you are permitted to read on Shabbat.
21. **Placing a Plate Under Candles** You may not place a plate under an oil lamp or Chanukah *menorah* to catch the dripping oil. You may, however, do so before Shabbat begins. You are permitted to place a plate under a burning candle, even on Shabbat, if you fear that it may fall and start a fire.
22. **Playing in a Sand Box** Although sand would be considered *muktzeh* in ordinary circumstances, sand in a sandbox is not, as it was designated for use before Shabbat.

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to the ground and may not be handled. Similarly, if you cut off a branch from a tree before Shabbat to use it for a permitted purpose, you may use it on Shabbat, since you designated it for that purpose and through that designation transformed it from a stick with no purpose to a utensil with a purpose.

6. Boards belonging to private individuals that are not intended for sale may be handled on Shabbat. But if they belong to a craftsman, they are *muktzeh* and may not be handled, unless he had in mind before Shabbat to make use of them on Shabbat.

7. You may not handle any *muktzeh* articles, but you are permitted to merely touch a *muktzeh* article without moving it.²³ For example, you are permitted to touch a *leichter* even when the candles are burning. However, you are forbidden to touch a hanging lamp, because it will move from a mere touching. You may also remove an object that is not *muktzeh* even if it is resting on something that is *muktzeh*. You are also permitted to cover an article that is *muktzeh* with something that is not *muktzeh* to protect it from the rain, or other hazards.²⁴

8. You may move an object that is *muktzeh* if you do it in an indirect manner.²⁵ For example, if you left a *muktzeh* object on some utensil

If the sand is loose, digging poses no problem as well. However, if the sand is firm, no digging or building is allowed.

23. **Touching a Muktzeh Object** While you are allowed to touch a *muktzeh* object without moving it, the common custom is not to do so without a compelling reason.
24. **Covering a Lamp** You may remove an object that is not *muktzeh* even if it is resting on a *muktzeh* article that is suspended and will move as the object is removed, because the movement caused to the *muktzeh* object is indirect (טלטול מן הצד). This type of indirect movement is allowed for the sake of the permitted object. By the same token, you may place a permitted object on a *muktzeh* article even if it will move. For example, you are permitted to cover a lamp in order to darken the room, even if it is a hanging lamp that will move as it is covered. (Of course, in covering a lamp, you need to take the fire risks into serious consideration as placing a cloth over a light bulb may cause burning.)
25. **Moving a Muktzeh Object Indirectly** Moving a *muktzeh* object with an object such as a stick or a knife is considered indirect handling by some *poskim*, while others consider the stick an extension of your hand. Moving it with a part of your body other than your hand is considered indirect handling and is permitted. For example, you may sit or lie on a *muktzeh* object, even if it moves under your weight. Similarly, you may kick it out of

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and forgot to remove it, or if it fell there on Shabbat, and you need the utensil or the place it occupies, you may shake it off, or carry the utensil to another place and shake it off there. You may do the same if you forgot money in the pocket of your clothes and you need that garment. But you may not do this only for the sake of the *muktzeh* object.²⁶ However, if you intentionally placed the *muktzeh* object on the utensil before Shabbat and purposely left it there, the utensil becomes a base (“basis”) for the *muktzeh* object and you are forbidden to move it.

9. If you do not need the utensil which is not *muktzeh*, you are forbidden to move it if there is a *muktzeh* object on it. For example, you are not permitted to hold a child (even in an *eruv*) if the child is holding a stone or some other object that is *muktzeh*. However, if the child will be very upset or become sick unless you pick him or her up, and you cannot make the child drop the stone or the *muktzeh* object without crying, you are permitted to hold the child. However, if the child is holding a coin, you are forbidden even to hold the child’s hand walking by himself or herself, even in an *eruv* and even if it causes the child distress. The *halachah* is stricter in regard to a coin because there is a fear that the coin may fall from the child’s hand and, forgetting that it is Shabbat, the adult will pick it up and actually handle a *muktzeh* object.²⁷ Of course, the *halachah* is only stringent if there is no danger to the life of the child if he or she is not held.

the way with your foot, or move it by blowing on it. Some *poskim* advise that the above indirect methods of handling a *muktzeh* object be resorted to only in case of necessity.

26. **When a Muktzeh Object May Be Handled Directly** If you forget and pick up a *muktzeh* object, you do not need to not drop it immediately. You may carry it and put it down where it belongs or where it will be safe. You may, furthermore, handle a *muktzeh* object directly in the following instances: (a) Where it is necessary for the sake of human dignity, as in removing soiled or offensive matter, or in the care of the deceased; (b) Where it involves a hazard to safety or health; (c) Where there is a monetary loss involved due to fire, looting, or when delayed on the road with your valuables as Shabbat begins; (d) For the sake of a person who is ill. Even in these instances, if possible, you should attempt to move the objects in some other permissible way, either indirectly or with the help of a non-Jew.

27. **Holding a Child Carrying a Coin** Some *poskim* maintain that it is only forbidden to *carry* a child who has a coin in hand, but it is not forbidden to hold the child’s hand while he or she is holding a coin.

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10. A dead body is *muktzeh*.²⁸

11. Any foul object,²⁹ such as human or animal waste or discharge that is in a house or in a courtyard where people live, may be removed³⁰ and taken to the garbage. When a bedpan or urinal is removed to be emptied, so long as it is still in hand, you are permitted to return it, in keeping with the rule that while a *muktzeh* object is in hand, you may continue to handle it and put it wherever you like. However, after you

28. **Laws of Muktzeh Relating to a Dead Body** If, God forbid, someone dies on Shabbat at home, and the *chevra kadisha* cannot be immediately contacted, the following laws should be applied. As a whole, the *halachot* attempt to balance the considerations of *muktzeh*, on the one hand, and *kevod hamet*, on the other: As a general rule, you are not allowed to move the body of a dead person on Shabbat. You are permitted to slip the pillow out from beneath the body so as to prevent giving off a malodor, provided you do not move any of the limbs. If you must move the body, as for example to keep it from the indignity of decaying in the sun, or to protect it from fire, you may move it by way of an object that is not *muktzeh*, that is, by placing some food on the body or by its side and moving them together. If there is no food available, you can use a utensil or an article of clothing that is not *muktzeh*. If this too is not available, you may move the body by itself. In any case, you may carry the body only to a place where it is permitted to carry. If it is to a place where it is not permitted to carry, you should ask a non-Jew to do so. In the view of some *poskim*, in order to prevent dishonoring the deceased in these circumstances, you are permitted to carry the body outside the permissible premises into a *karmelit*. A non-Jew may carry it out into the *reshut harabim*. Furthermore, if the mouth is distending, you are permitted to fasten the jaw to keep it from opening further. Some are accustomed to close the dead person's eyes and to straighten the limbs so that they should not become bent. While this custom has no basis in law, but is attributed to the *Zohar*, it is customary to be lenient with regard to this practice on Shabbat. There is no distinction made between a righteous person and a wicked person.

29. **Removing Diapers, Bedpans, Garbage Cans** You may remove soiled diapers, urinals, bedpans, etc., from your living quarters despite their being *muktzeh*. Garbage cans, which may contain *muktzeh* items, should not be moved on Shabbat or on Yom Tov if possible. However, if a foul odor from the garbage causes discomfort they may be removed to a permissible place.

30. **Removing Untidy, Dirty and Foul Objects** You may remove *muktzeh* objects lying on the table or scattered around the house which make your home dirty and unpleasant, preferably indirectly. If it is not possible, you may remove them directly. For example, you may remove bones, shells, peels and other waste that is on the table or on the floor, giving the house an untidy appearance. You may, likewise, remove dead bugs, roaches, rodents etc., as well as live ones, provided you do so without trapping them.

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have put it down, you are forbidden to handle it, because it is extremely repulsive and considered inherently *muktzeh*, and therefore dealt with more stringently than objects which are *muktzeh* because they are repulsive. However, if it is still needed, you are permitted to return it to its place in deference to human dignity. If you clean it while it is still in hand, you may return it under any circumstance.

12. You are permitted on Shabbat to place a pot under a leak or a drip, and when it is full, you may empty it and return it to its place, provided the water is fit for washing. But if the water is dirty and unfit for use, you may not put the pot there, as it is forbidden to make an object which is not *muktzeh* a receptacle for *muktzeh* on Shabbat, as discussed in paragraph 4. However, if you placed it there, and it is in a place where it is repulsive to you, you may remove it, as discussed in the previous paragraph.