

4. A Base (“*Basis*”) for a Forbidden Article

דִּינֵי בְּסִיס לְדָבָר הָאָסוּר

1. An additional category of *muktzeh* is called (in Hebrew) “*basis ledavar ha’asur*” (henceforth referred to as *basis*) or a base for a forbidden article. A *basis*, such as a table, drawer, or plate, is not *muktzeh* of its own accord, but rather is *muktzeh* because it is subordinate to the *muktzeh* which rests on or in it. The conditions by which something becomes a *basis* are as follows: If on *Erev Shabbat* you placed an object that is *muktzeh* on a utensil that belongs to you, with the intention that it should remain there as Shabbat began, the utensil becomes a *basis* and is *muktzeh*.

Even if the *muktzeh* article is removed on Shabbat, nevertheless, since it was there at *bein hashemashot*, and the object became a *basis* for a forbidden article, it is independently *muktzeh* and may not be handled afterward for the entire Shabbat, even if there is need for the object or for the place it occupies (צורך גופו ומקומו).¹

1. **Conditions Regarding a Basis** An object becomes a *basis*, with the same restrictions of movement and handling applying to it as apply to the *muktzeh* article that is resting on it, under the following conditions: (1) The *muktzeh* article is on it during *bein hashemashot*. (2) You have in mind that it remain there all of Shabbat. This is the view of many *poskim*, which you can rely upon in case of necessity. (3) If you put it there intentionally for Shabbat, but not if you intended to remove it before Shabbat and left it there inadvertently. (4) You placed the *muktzeh* article on a *basis* that is owned by you and not someone else, unless it

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2. If, when Shabbat began, there was also a *non-muktzeh* object on the *basis*, so that it is a *basis* for both a forbidden object and a permitted one, if the permitted article is of greater value to you, the *basis* is not considered *muktzeh*. However, if the forbidden object is of greater value to you, the *basis* is considered *muktzeh* and you may not move it. Therefore, if your practice is to light candles on the table, it is best to put the *challot* on the table before the beginning of Shabbat, so that it will be permissible to move the tablecloth and the table² on Shabbat, since they will be a *basis* for both the candles and the *challot*.³ If you did not do so, the tablecloth⁴ and the table have become a *basis* for the *muktzeh* candles alone and may not be moved. However, in a case of necessity, as when a candle falls on the table, it is permitted to shake it off the table. In this case, you may rely on the opinion of those *poskim* who hold that

is with permission. (5) You put the *muktzeh* article deliberately in place and not just by chance or casually, as you might pile objects one upon the other. While some *poskim* consider it a *basis* regardless of how it is placed, you may follow the former view in case of necessity. (6) You put the *muktzeh* article on the object itself and not on something subordinate to it. (7) The *muktzeh* article is on the object by itself, and not there with a permissible article of greater value to you.

2. **Moving the *Leichter*** The device of placing a *non-muktzeh* object of value on the *leichter* itself does not, in the opinion of many *poskim*, make it permissible to be moved, since the *leichter* is essentially made to serve the candle and the flame, and it is therefore considered a *basis* for a *muktzeh* object even if something else is on it. It is, however, permitted to have a non-Jew remove the candlestick from the table. The tray upon which the *leichter* rests is, likewise, considered *basis* for a *muktzeh* object, and you may not move it even if a non-Jew removed the candlestick. Placing a *non-muktzeh* object such as a *Kiddush* cup or a *siddur* on the tray is not, in the view of many *poskim*, sufficient to permit the tray to be moved. Unlike the table which is made to hold many things, the tray is intended essentially as a *basis* for the *leichter* and the candles; simply placing a *siddur* on the tray does not change that.
3. **An Expensive *Leichter*** The *challot* in this case are more important because they are needed for the Shabbat meal. This is so even if the *leichter* is made of silver and more expensive, because it is only a base for the burning flame of the candle which is the actual forbidden article.
4. **Moving the Tablecloth** In the view of many authorities, you may move the tablecloth in any case, as it is not considered a *basis* for a *muktzeh* article, since the tablecloth serves the table and your intention is that the candles rest on the table and not necessarily on the tablecloth.

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the table becomes a *basis* only if you intend that the *muktzeh* object remain there for the entire Shabbat.⁵

3. If there is money in a pocket of your clothing, you may still move the garment, because only the pocket and not the entire garment is considered a basis to a *muktzeh* article, and the pocket is subordinate to the garment.⁶ (However, you should not wear the garment even in the house, since you may forget and wear it outside, into a *reshut harabim*.) By contrast, if there is money in the drawer of a table, you are not permitted to move the table, because the drawer is considered an object of independent stature⁷ and is not subordinate to the table.⁸

5. **Removing a Muktzeh Object from a Sefer** You should not put an object that is *muktzeh* on a *sefer* before Shabbat. Nevertheless, if, for example, you put a pen on a *sefer* before Shabbat, you can tilt it and remove the *muktzeh* object so that you can learn from the *sefer*.
6. **Money in the Pocket of a Garment** Before wearing the garment the money should be removed by shaking it out of the pocket. If you found money, or something *muktzeh* in a pocket of a garment you are presently wearing, you should find a safe place to empty the pocket of its *muktzeh* contents. If it is impossible to remove the garment, you may continue to move about with the *muktzeh* on you until the opportunity to remove it presents itself. You may never directly touch the *muktzeh* object.
7. **Money in the Drawer of a Table or Desk** A drawer in a table, dresser or desk is considered an object of independent stature only if it is removable. If it is not removable it is considered subordinate and the table may be moved. If the drawer contains, in addition to the money, other non-*muktzeh* items of greater value, you may open and close the drawer as well. If the drawer containing the money, even if removable, is primarily intended as a storage area for other objects that are permitted to be handled, such as silverware, etc., you may move the table even when the permitted articles are not in the drawer at the time. Likewise, you would be permitted to move the table if at the beginning of Shabbat there is on the table a permitted article of greater value to you than the money in the drawer. The money in the drawer should be an appreciable amount if the drawer is to be considered a *basis* for a *muktzeh* object. If it is only a few coins, the drawer does not lose its individual status.
8. **A Purse Hanging on a Door** If a purse containing money is hanging on a doorknob or on the door itself, you may still open and close the door. The reason is that since the door is part of the house, it cannot be considered a *basis* for (and secondary to) the money.

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4. An object, such as a tray, does not become a *basis* for *muktzeh* unless the *muktzeh* article was on it at *bein hashemashot* on *Erev Shabbat*.⁹ If it was not there at that time,¹⁰ but was only put there afterwards, the tray will not become a *basis* and you are permitted to move it if the *muktzeh* article is still lying on it. For example, you are permitted to tilt the table or shake the tablecloth to remove the bones and peels, so long as they have not become a *basis* for the candles, as noted above.

5. An object does not become a *basis* unless the *muktzeh* article was deliberately placed on it with the intention that it remain there during *bein hashemashot* on Friday evening. But if it was left there inadvertently because you forgot, or it fell there of itself, the object does not become a *basis*.

6. An object does not become a *basis* unless it is made so intentionally by its owner. If you put a *muktzeh* article on someone else's object, it does not become a *basis*, because you cannot make someone else's objects prohibited without his or her consent.¹¹

9. **An Article That is Muktzeh Bein Hashemashot** An article which was *muktzeh bein hashemashot* on Friday evening, remains *muktzeh* all of Shabbat day. Opinions differ as to whether or not the object must be *muktzeh* during the entire *bein hashemashot* period. Rav Moshe Feinstein *zt"l* is of the view that if it is *muktzeh* for any part of *bein hashemashot*, it remains *muktzeh*.

10. **Status of Muktzeh After Kabbalat Shabbat Before Bein Hashemashot** This principle of *muktzeh* applies in this instance only if the *muktzeh* article is on the object *bein hashemashot*. However, if you made Shabbat early (and even *davened Maariv* and made *Kiddush*) and the *muktzeh* article was not there by the time actual *bein hashemashot* arrived, it is not considered a *basis* and may be moved.

11. **Making Someone Else's Object Muktzeh** You cannot make someone else's object a *basis* even if the *muktzeh* article also belongs to the other person. However, if it is done for the other person's benefit, and he or she would be pleased by it because it is in the person's interest to have *muktzeh* placed there, it does become a *basis*. For example, if you placed a tray beneath your neighbor's *menorah* so that if a candle should fall it would not start a fire, and the candle did indeed fall into the tray before Shabbat and remained there until nightfall, the tray is considered a *basis* and may not be moved on Shabbat.