



TEVILLAS KEILIM



Items used in the preparation or consumption of food, which were once owned by a non-Jew and are now owned by a Jew, must undergo *tevillas keilim* (ritual immersion in a *mikvah*) before they can be used. The following is an outline of some of the basic *halachos* of *tevillas keilim*:

Tevillah is only required for items made of metal or glass, and this includes aluminum, cast iron, chrome, pewter, Pyrex, stainless steel, tin, and many other materials. *Tevillah* is not required for utensils made of cardboard, ceramic, cork, leather, paper, plastic, rubber, stone, Styrofoam, or wood. China should have *tevillah* without a *bracha*. Disposable aluminum pans do not require *tevillah* regardless of how many times they are used.

Tevillah is only required for utensils which have food contact. Therefore, a stovetop grate does not require *tevillah* since it never touches food, and neither does a water-pan used with a chafing dish, but *tevillah* is required for a barbecue spit or the food pan used with a chafing dish. The cover of a chafing dish must also undergo *tevillah*; although it seemingly does not have contact with the “actual” food, it is considered to have food contact because of the considerable amount of steam that rises up from the food to the cover.

A glass cake tray requires *tevillah* even if the cake is always placed in cupcake holders or on a doily (i.e., never touches the actual tray), because the doily etc. is considered *tafel*/negligible to the food. A can opener does not have (intentional) food contact, and therefore it does not require *tevillah*. The tray in a toaster oven or microwave requires *tevillah*, because people put food right onto it, but the chamber of those appliances does not require *tevillah*, since they do not have (intentional) food contact. The following are some other examples of items which have no food contact and therefore do not require *tevillah*: corkscrew, dishwashing basin, knife sharpener, and

napkin ring.

Tevillah is primarily required for utensils that have contact with food that is either “ready to eat” (e.g. flatware, plates), or used with the food to the point that it is ready to eat (e.g. pots, pans). If a utensil is intended for use with raw food, but the same item could also be used for meal-ready food, then *tevillah* should be performed without a *bracha*. For example, a pair of kitchen scissors bought to cut raw meat will not be used with meal-ready food, but since there are some who use those scissors for cutting vegetables, *tevillah* should be performed without a *bracha*. There is a difference of opinion as to whether *tevillah* is at all required if the utensil can only be used on raw foods (e.g., a metal rolling pin).

Peelers, graters, and food processors which will be used with meal-ready food (e.g., carrots) require *tevillah* with a *bracha*. If they will only be used for foods that require further cooking (e.g. potatoes), then *tevillah* should be performed but no *bracha* should be recited. Colanders, skewers, and spatulas are used with food that is fully cooked, and, therefore, they require *tevillah* with a *bracha* (assuming they are metal or glass).

Containers used for storage of food, and from which no one ever eats directly, should have *tevillah* without a *bracha*. Rav Gedalia Dov Schwartz, *shlita*, has ruled that any electrical appliance that might get ruined as a result of *tevillah*, is excused from the requirement of *tevillas keilim*, and may be used without *tevillah*.

The item undergoing *tevillah* must be free of *chatzizos* – items that block the water from having direct contact. This means that not only must all stickers and labels be removed before *tevillah*, but the person performing the *tevillah* should be sure not to grip the item too tightly when it is in the *mikvah* (for if he does, his hand will be a *chatzizah*).

The *bracha* of אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצוונו על טבילת כלים על טבילת כלים (“*asher kiddishanu b’mitzvosav v’tzivanu al tevillas keilim*”) is recited before *tevillah* begins. If more than one person will be performing *tevillah*, one person may recite the *bracha* for all of the participants.

The following is a list of items which do or do not require *tevillah*, based on the assumption that the utensil is both used and manufactured in the standard manner. Those which are listed as requiring *tevillah* is based on an assumption that they are made from a form of metal or glass which requires *tevillah*, as opposed to plastic, paper, rubber, wood, or other materials, which are excused.

| Item | Tevillah? | Bracha? |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Apple corer | ✓ | ✓ |
| Baking sheet | ✓ | ✓ |
| Barbecue grill (cover) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Barbecue grill (food-handling tools) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Barbecue grill (grate) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Basin for dishwashing | ✗ | ✗ |
| Blech | 2 | 2 |
| Bottle warmer | ✗ | ✗ |
| Bread box | ✓ | ✗ |
| Butcher’s knife | ✓ | ✗ |
| Cake tray | 2 | 2 |
| Cake tray cover | ✗ | ✗ |
| Can opener | ✗ | ✗ |
| Candy dish | 2 | 2 |
| Canister cover | ✗ | ✗ |
| Chafing dish (cover) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Chafing dish (food pan) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Chafing dish (water pan) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Coffee mill | ✗ | ✗ |
| Coffee mug | ✗ | ✗ |
| Colander (metal) | ✓ | ✓ |

The status for some entries is marked with a “1” or a “2” which refers to the following:

- 1 If this person will sometimes use the utensil with meal-ready food (e.g. many fruits and vegetables), *tevillah* is performed with a *bracha*. If it will only be used with food that requires further cooking, *tevillah* should be performed but no *bracha* should be recited.
- 2 If the utensil ever has food contact, *tevillah* is required with a *bracha*; if the utensil never has food contact, no *tevillah* is required.

| Item | Tevillah? | Bracha? |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Colander (plastic) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Cookie cutter | ✓ | ✗ |
| Cookie sheet | ✓ | ✓ |
| Corelle (cup) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Corelle (plate, bowl) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Cork | ✗ | ✗ |
| Corkscrew | ✗ | ✗ |
| Corn holders | ✓ | ✓ |
| Corn popper | ✓ | ✓ |
| Crock pot (“pot” made of ceramic) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Crock pot (“pot” made of metal) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Crock pot (base) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Crock pot (cover of metal or glass) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Cup (metal, glass) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Cup (plastic, ceramic) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Double boiler (food pot) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Double boiler (water pot) | 2 | 2 |
| Dough hook | ✗ | ✗ |
| Egg slicer | ✓ | ✓ |
| Electric knife | ✓ | ✓ |
| Electrical appliances | ✗ | ✗ |

| Item | Tevillah? | Bracha? |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Flour sifter | ✗ | ✗ |
| Food processor | ✓ | 1 |
| Food scale | ✗ | ✗ |
| French fry cutter | ✓ | ✗ |
| Fruit juicer | ✓ | ✓ |
| Grater | ✓ | 1 |
| Grill (actual part which touches food) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Grinder | ✓ | 1 |
| Hot plate | 2 | 2 |
| Ice cream scooper | ✓ | ✓ |
| Immersion heater | ✗ | ✗ |
| Juicer (for fruit) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Kiddush cup (metal, glass, porcelain enamel) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Knife sharpener | ✗ | ✗ |
| Knife, electric | ✓ | ✓ |
| Knife, for butchering | ✓ | ✗ |
| Knife, for eating with | ✓ | ✓ |
| Measuring cup (metal or glass) | ✓ | 1 |
| Measuring cup (plastic) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Meat hammer | ✗ | ✗ |
| Meat slicer | ✓ | ✓ |
| Meat tenderizer | ✗ | ✗ |
| Meat thermometer | ✗ | ✗ |
| Melon baller | ✓ | ✓ |
| Microwave (chamber) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Microwave (plate) | 2 | 2 |
| Mug | ✗ | ✗ |
| Napkin ring | ✗ | ✗ |
| Onion chopper | ✓ | 1 |
| Oven rack | ✗ | ✗ |

| Item | Tevillah? | Bracha? |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Pasta extruder | ✗ | ✗ |
| Peel (pancake flipper) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Peeler (standard) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Peeler (used only for potatoes) | ✓ | ✗ |
| Pet food dish | ✗ | ✗ |
| Piping bag | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pizza cutter | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pot (metal, glass, porcelain enamel) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Pot cover (metal, glass, porcelain enamel) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Poultry shears | ✓ | 1 |
| Rolling pin | ✗ | ✗ |
| Sandwich maker | ✗ | ✗ |
| Saucer | 2 | 2 |
| Scissors (for food) | ✓ | 1 |
| Serving tray | 2 | 2 |
| Shredder | ✓ | 1 |
| Skewer (metal) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Skewer (wood or bamboo) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Spit | ✓ | ✓ |
| Spoon rest | ✗ | ✗ |
| Storage container | ✓ | ✗ |
| Stovetop grate | ✗ | ✗ |
| Strainer (metal) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Strainer (plastic) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Sugar canister | ✓ | ✗ |
| Toaster | ✗ | ✗ |
| Toaster oven (chamber) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Toaster oven (rack, tray) | ✓ | ✓ |
| Urn (electric) | ✗ | ✗ |
| Whisk | ✗ | ✗ |