

Food Preparation on Shabbos:

“Bishul” - Cooking - Part 7 - “Hatmana” - Insulating:

A. Definition, Application, & Limitation:

1. No pot of warm food may be wrapped in a forbidden insulation on Shabbos. ‘Insulation’ refers to a supplementary covering (e.g. a towel) that is wrapped around a container of food to retain its heat.
2. The Rabbis prohibited ‘Insulation’ because it may lead to stirring coals, or he may come to heat it up the food on Shabbos, thus transgressing the melacha of cooking
3. If Hatmana was done (even inadvertently), the wrapping must be removed immediately since as long as it is wrapped, the concern remains.
4. The prohibition applies to completely cooked as well as partially cooked foods.
5. In order for hatmana to be forbidden, four conditions must be present:
 - 1 הטמנה לגמרי – it must be fully wrapped,
 - 2 בכלי ראשון – the food must be in its original pot,
 - 3 כוונה – one must have intention to insulate it,
 - 4 נוגע בקדירה – the covering/wrapping must touch the pot/food.
6. If ALL of the above conditions are present, it is considered hatmana and it is forbidden. However, if even ONE of the above conditions is missing, it is not considered hatmana and may be done even on Shabbos.
7. A primary wrapping is not considered insulation. (e.g. aluminum foil whose main purpose is to keep the food from drying out, even though it also helps retain its heat)
8. The prohibition applies only to wrapping or enclosing a container **completely** (i.e. on top and on all sides).
9. If a substantial part of the container is left exposed it is not considered insulated.
10. One may wrap a pot/food if one’s intention is to: a) Retain the moisture, b) Protect it from insects/dust etc, c) Hold the food together in one piece, d) Prevent it from spilling.
11. The prohibition of hatmana does not apply to covering a pot with a lid.
12. Hot liquids may be poured into a thermos on Shabbos.
13. One may fill up a hot water bottle that is enclosed in its thick protective cover
14. *Sefardim* may insulate any pot that is under the temperature of *yad soledes bo*.

B. Two Types of Insulation:

1. Those that simply retain heat - “Davar Hama’amid Hevel”
2. Those that intensify the heat of food which they enclose - “Davar Hamosif Hevel”

C. Insulating with a Heat - Retaining Material:

1. Most materials, when wrapped around a container of hot food, serve simply to retain its heat or to slow its cooling process.
2. These materials include cloth, aluminum foil, paper, wool, cotton, and the like.
3. A pot of hot food may be wrapped in heat-retaining material on Erev Shabbos. (e.g. towel or blanket)
4. On Shabbos, however, it is forbidden to insulate a pot in any such material.
5. Even a pot that was partially insulated on Erev Shabbos may **not** be enclosed completely on Shabbos.
6. Example: It is permitted to wrap a pot in a towel or blanket before Shabbos in order for it to stay warm for the evening meal. However, a pot left unwrapped before Shabbos may not be insulated on Shabbos.
7. If a pot was wrapped from before Shabbos (with an הבל אינו מוסיף e.g., towels), one may add more layers on Shabbos, provided the food is fully cooked.

D. Exceptions:

1. Re-insulating a Previously Wrapped Pot:

- I. A pot of fully cooked food, which was wrapped in a heat-retaining material before Shabbos and became uncovered on Shabbos, may be re-wrapped.
- II. It is even permissible to unwrap the container on Shabbos to remove some food and then re-insulate it.
- III. It is permissible to add an extra layer of insulation (e.g. another towel) to a pot that was insulated before Shabbos.

2. Kli Sheni:

- I. The prohibition of insulating with heat-retaining materials applies only to a Kli Rishon (the original pot which was heated on the flame.) If the food is transferred to a Kli Sheni, it is permitted to insulate that vessel with a heat-retaining material.
- II. If the need arises to insulate hot food on Shabbos, one should transfer the food to a Kli Sheni and insulate that second container.
- III. A baby bottle filled with a warm drink (Kli Sheni) may be wrapped in a towel to retain its heat.

3. Cases of Necessity:

- I. Even while in a Kli Rishon, if the food has cooled below 110 degrees F, you may insulate a pot with a heat-retaining material even on Shabbos.
- II. If there is no container available to transfer the food, you may insulate the original pot to preserve hot food essential for the Shabbos meal.

E. Insulating with a Substance Which Intensifies Heat:

1. Some materials actually have the ability to intensify the heat of an item that they enclose.
2. These materials include salt, peat, lime, sand, wet cotton, grass or straw.
3. It is forbidden ***without exception*** to insulate any container (i.e. even a kli sheni) in such a material, even on Erev Shabbos.

F. Modern Applications:

1. Insulating a Pot with a Towel that is on the Blech or Hot Plate
2. Insulating a Hot-Water Urn with a Towel
3. Submerging a Container in a Pot of Hot Food
 - I. Submerging a small pot in a larger pot of hot food
 - II. Food that is wrapped in aluminum foil may not be submerged in a pot of hot food.
 - III. It is permitted to submerge the food in the above case if one's intention is for it to absorb the flavour of the surrounding food. e.g. submerging a foil-wrapped piece of kishke or kugel in a pot of cholent on Erev Shabbos.
 - IV. If you simply desire to keep the kishke hot, it may not be completely submerged.
 - V. Unwrapped food may be immersed in hot food on Erev Shabbos, as this is not considered insulating at all.
 - VI. It is prohibited to completely submerge a baby bottle in hot water on Shabbos. However, a bottle may be immersed in hot water (where the prohibition of cooking does not apply) if part of it is left uncovered.
4. Heating up dry food e.g., kugel on top of a hot plate if the kugel is wrapped with foil
 - I. If it is wrapped with one piece of foil it may be placed on top of the hot plate, since the foil is put on for the sake of hygiene, to retain the moisture or to hold the food together as one piece.
 - II. Nevertheless, a second layer of foil around it would be considered hatmana.
 - III. A large piece of foil (cut before Shabbos) may be folded over many times to make a thick "lid" and is still considered as one layer. This covering may be placed over or around the food to be warmed up on top of a pot.
 - IV. One layer may be wrapped fully around the food/container, and all other layers should have a substantial amount of space exposed.
 - V. If the extra layers are being put on to stop a leakage (e.g., very oily food) or to keep the shape of the food, it is permitted, since it is not being put on with the intention of insulating.

G. Permissible Methods of Insulating:

1. The Pot is Left Partly Exposed:

- I. The term insulating refers to enclosing a pot completely, on top and on all sides.
- II. If a **substantial** portion of the pot is left uncovered, wrapping the remainder does not constitute insulating and is permitted.
- III. Poskim dispute as to how much has to be exposed in order that it should not be considered hatmana. However, most agree that if a significant amount of the pot is exposed, it does not constitute hatmana.
- IV. If one wishes to enclose a pot in a permitted manner to retain the heat of the food on Shabbos, one may drape a towel around the pot or wrap the pot/container with (pre-cut) aluminum foil, provided that one leaves a significant amount exposed.
- V. According to *Sefardim*, even if the pot/container is partially exposed, it is still considered hatmana and is forbidden in a case when insulating with a substance which intensifies heat.

2. The Wrapping Does Not Touch the Pot:

1. It is permitted to insulate spot if a substantial part of the wrapping does not touch the surface of the pot.
2. A loose wrapping is not considered 'insulation' and is therefore not prohibited.
3. One may drape a towel over spot or urn, allowing it to hang loosely, even though the entire pot is covered.
4. A pot covered with a wide plate may be wrapped in a towel, as the towel will not touch the entire pot, but will slope inward from the plate to the base of the pot.
5. Leaving food in an oven is not considered hatmana. Since the oven does not touch the walls of the pot, it is not considered enclosed.
6. If there are several pots on a blech or hot plate, one may not drape a towel over all of them since it is considered as if one big pot is on the blech and is being covered with a towel.

H. Crock - Pots:

1. Crock-pots have an outer pot which has a heating element that surrounds the inner pot of food enabling the food to be uniformly cooked. Since the pot of food is completely surrounded by heat, Poskim debate as to whether we consider the pot of food to be insulated with something that adds heat

(מוסיף הבל). If so, it would be forbidden to use the crock-pot even if everything was set up from before Shabbos.

2. According to some Poskim, a crock-pot does not pose a problem of hatmana, since the lid area of the pot is exposed i.e., it is not surrounded by the heat element.
3. According to other Poskim, a crock-pot does pose a problem of hatmana since the entire height of the walls of the pot are surrounded by the heat element.
4. Some Poskim permit the crock -pot since the pot holding the food does not touch the outer pot that has in it the heating apparatus, this is not considered hatmana and is permitted.
5. However, others contend that even the lenient opinion would agree that a crock-pot would be forbidden, since this is the normal method of cooking during the week, and therefore the small amount of airspace between the pots does not help
6. Conclusion: Although there are Poskim who hold that a crock-pot may be used normally on Shabbos , many hold that it poses a problem of hatmana.
7. There is a method that would be acceptable to all Poskim. If before Shabbos one places an item (e.g., a ball of rolled up aluminum foil, empty tin can, stone etc.) at the base/ bottom of the outer pot which raises the inner pot when it is placed inside. a) The pot no longer touches any part of the heating element, creating significant airspace between the pot and the heating element, which, as stated above, does not render it hatmana. b) Since the inner pot protrudes above the outer pot, it no longer gives the appearance of typical cooking.