

Losh - Kneading:

A. Definition & Scope of the Prohibition:

1. Kneading is defined as binding together small particles (e.g. flour) , by means of a bonding agent (e.g. water) , to form one mass (e.g. dough).
2. Other applications of this prohibition are: mixing baby cereal with milk to form a gruel, and mixing egg or tuna with oil to form egg salad or tuna salad.
3. The prohibition extends to any similar activity which unites small particles into a body. Thus, stirring or beating food particles into one body (with an added liquid) is also forbidden.
4. Even if the final product will not have a thick consistency as dough, but will be slightly more fluid (like thick batter), creating the mixture is prohibited.
5. If there is no liquid added and there's no way that the ingredients will fuse it's permitted to mix the ingredients. e.g. it is permitted to mix sugar and cocoa powder or cinnamon. It is permissible to pour honey on whole nuts. One may pour gravy on rice and mix it.

B. The Components of a Kneaded Mixture:

1. There are two components to a kneaded mixture - the solid food particles and the liquid used to bind them together.
2. **Definition of a liquid:** It is forbidden to use any type of liquid, such as water, milk, juice, baby formula, or oil, to bind particles together.
3. The use of a thick, coagulated substance, such as mayonnaise, as a binder is also prohibited if it serves to bind together the solid particles of a mixture.
4. **Definition of food particles:** This includes, for example, flour, bread crumbs, farina, cereals which form gruel

when mixed with milk, chopped eggs or tuna, and chopped liver.

5. Whole foods which are small enough to be bound into amass (e.g. barley) are also prohibited.
6. The prohibition only applies to small bits of food, which, once combined, will not be recognized individually, but will be seen as one mass. Large chunks of food, which will remain clearly distinct even after they are stuck together, are not subject to this prohibition.
7. e.g. It is permitted to mix banana slices with sour cream or chunks of potato with mayonnaise, so long as the pieces are sizeable enough to remain clearly defined within the mixture.

C. The Kneading Process:

1. Step #1: Pouring liquid onto food particles (or vice versa) is considered an act of kneading, because some bonding occurs immediately, which is prohibited. (e.g. when baby cereal is prepared, it begins to bond as soon as milk is added); nevertheless it needs to be stirred....
2. Step #2: Mixing the ingredients afterwards is considered a separate act of kneading, which is prohibited as well. (e.g. stirring the baby cereal)
3. When a coagulated substance is used as a binding agent, only the actual kneading can be considered kneading.
4. “Blila Ava” - Preparing a thick, non-flowing mixture (e.g. dough, egg salad, chopped liver, charoses, baby cereal with thick consistency) is Biblically prohibited.
5. “Blila Raka: - Looser, flowing mixtures (e.g. applesauce, ketchup, loose batter bay cereal) is Rabbinically prohibited. Therefore, various leniencies may apply in this category.

6. Watery mixtures, which have no body at all, are not considered kneading and is permitted. e.g. preparing chocolate milk or baby formula.
7. Nevertheless, one must be careful to mix the powder with a lot of liquid at once. Mixing in gradually with small amounts of liquid will initially result in the formation of paste, which is prohibited.

D. Permitted Methods of Kneading:

1. Kneading is permitted when done through a Shinui - i.e. in an unconventional fashion.
2. According to Ashkenazim, One must employ a Shinui for each step of the kneading process....
3. STEP #1: When adding liquid to the solids, one must reverse the common order of combining the ingredients. ***This is valid only for loose mixtures, not thick ones.*** This shinui is not required when adding a coagulated substance.
4. STEP #2: To mix the ingredients, one may use criss-cross strokes to mix with a fork and spoon (preferably lifting the utensil out of the mixture with each change of direction) , or mix normally with one's bare hand or finger. (You may not wear a glove in this case) It is also permitted (for loose mixtures) to stir with the handle of a spoon, fork, or knife.
5. ***According to Sephardim it's permitted to mix a thin mixture if one either changes the order in which one puts in the ingredients or if one changes the way one mixes.***

E. Applying the Shinuim to Lose & Thick Mixtures:

1. A loose mixture may be made on Shabbos so long as a shinui (modification) is employed for each step of the combinations.

2. There is no valid shinui for the first step for thick mixtures. Thick mixtures may be made only if the ingredients are combined before Shabbos or if a coagulated substance is used as the binder. The stirring must then be only done in a criss-cross fashion or with the bare hand - not with a knife or the handle of a utensil.
3. In case of necessity (i.e. food may spoil if prepared before Shabbos or foods needed for a young child or ill person, when a loose mixture will not suffice) one may rely on the shinui in the order of combining the ingredients to prepare a thick mixture with a liquid binder. However, thick mixtures which bond spontaneously without stirring may never be made, even in the case of a necessity. (e.g. some baby and adult cereals or instant potatoes) They may only be prepared as loose mixtures.

F. Improving Upon an Existing Mixture:

1. Improving upon an existing mixture can also fall under the category of kneading.
2. Adding solids to a completed mixture is considered kneading, since one works the added particles into the rest of the mixture. (e.g. so it is forbidden to add cereal grain to a previously mixed bowl of cereal or add mashed eggs or tuna to a prepared salad.)
3. This will only be permitted by employing the same type of shinui employed to permit the original mixture.
4. A loose mixture may be thickened - only in a case of necessity - by employing a shinui for each step of the process. If the mixture will remain loose even with the added solids, it may be thickened (with the proper shinuim) in all circumstances.
5. Solids may always be added to a thick mixture, but it must be stirred with a shinui. (e.g. vegetable bits may be added

- to completed egg salad, but must be stirred with a shinui.)
6. Liquids may be added to any mixture (as it is the opposite of kneading) - without a shinui - but only if its particles have already been fully kneaded already. (if not, the proper shinuim must be used. If the final product will remain a thick mixture, this is permitted only in cases of necessity.) e.g. One may add milk to a bowl of thick cereal. However, if some dry cereal has not yet blended with the rest , one must employ a shinui in pouring and in stirring. If the cereal is thick mixture, and will remain thick even with the added liquid, one may not mix in the loose particles, except in case of necessity.
 7. Two loose mixtures or two thick mixtures may be combined without any shinui, as this is not an act of kneading. e.g. one may mix a completed egg salad with tuna salad or chopped liver (both thick) or blend applesauce with another fruit puree (both loose) without any shinui.
 8. Combining a loose mixture with thick mixture requires the proper shinuim, but is only permitted if the combination will result in loose mixture. If the combination will be a thick mixture, it is permitted only in a case of necessity, and with proper shinuim.

G. Practical Applications:

1. **Egg or Tuna Salad with Mayonnaise:** Chopped egg or tuna may be combined with mayonnaise in the usual order. It must be mixed with criss-cross strokes or with the bare hand. You are not permitted to mix it with the handle of the utensil.
2. **Egg Salad with Oil:** Should be prepared before Shabbos. If this is not possible, or in case of necessity, one may make it on Shabbos by adding the ingredients together in

reverse order, and mixing with criss-cross strokes or bare handed.

3. **Baby Cereal - Loose Mixture:** Baby cereal may be prepared with milk, formula, water or applesauce to form loose mixture, so long as the proper shiniim are employed. Pour the liquid first and stir in any irregular manner. One should be sure that a lot of liquid is used to avoid forming thick mixture.
4. **Baby Cereal - Thick Mixture:** Cereal may be prepared as thick mixture only in a case of necessity; e.g. for a bay who does not eat loosely mixed cereal. When doing so, pour the liquid first and only mix in a criss-cross fashion or with the bare hand.
5. **Highly Absorbent Cereal:** Instant oatmeal as well as many baby cereals may not be made on Shabbos unless they were mixed with a lot of liquid, with the proper shiniim, to form a loose mixture.
6. **Adult Cereals:** Ordinary breakfast cereals such as Cornflakes, Rice Krispies, and Cheerios, do not bond with milk, and there is no prohibition of kneading. (Unless they have been crushed before hand). Bran cereals, oatmeal, farina, and similar cereals are subject to the laws of kneading.
7. **Baby Formula & Powdered Milk:** Mixtures that are completely fluid, and are initially mixed with large quantities of liquid, are not subject to the prohibition of kneading.
8. **Vegetable Salad:** It is permitted to mix vegetable salad using oil, vinegar, or mayonnaise, so long as the pieces are large enough that they are recognized individually, and are not perceived as one body.
9. **Mixing Horseradish or Ketchup with Mayonnaise:** is permitted.

10. **Fruit with Cream:** It is permitted to mix chunks of fruit with cream, as long as they remain clearly defined within the mixture.
11. **Instant Potatoes:** It is forbidden to mix instant potatoes on shabbos, even by means of a shinui.
12. **Instant Pudding:** Instant pudding may not be made into a thick mixture on shabbos, except in case of necessity, such as for a sick person. A loose mixture may be made with the proper shinuim.
13. **Peanut Butter:** If oil separated from peanut butter and floats on top of it, it is permissible to remix it with a shinui.
14. Many hold that there is no prohibition of kneading on a cooked food. Therefore, one may mix margarine into a baked potato or mix cinnamon or raisins into a cooked cereal (like oatmeal).

NOTE: When preparing pudding with hot water, the laws of bushel must be taken into account.