

Muktzah at the Shabbos Table & Kitchen:

- It is forbidden to **move** articles on Shabbos which fall into the category of **Muktzah** (set aside not for Shabbos use)
- There are a number of reasons why the Rabbis forbade moving certain items on Shabbat.
 1. The rabbis understood that just like the prophets forbade speaking on Shabbat just like one speaks during the week (Dabber Dvar) and they forbade walking just like one walks during the week (MeAsot Derachecha), so too the items a person moves on Shabbat should differ from what he moves during the week. Considering that a person can't do any melacha, he might begin to move all sorts of items around the house in an effort to organize or clean. If one does such, one will have violated the Torah's commandment to rest.
 2. The rabbis prohibited moving items lest one come to use them for a prohibited use on Shabbat.
 3. The rabbis felt that some people don't do any particular work during the week. If such people were able to speak, walk, and move items just like they do during the week, the "resting of Shabbat" wouldn't be distinguishable from one's rest the other days of the week.
 4. The rabbis were concerned that if one were to move any item one would come to carry outdoors
- There are four categories of Muktzah which most commonly occur in the kitchen:

A. “Kli Shemelachto Le’Issur” - Utensil of Prohibited Use:

1. These are utensils that are primarily used for activities prohibited on Shabbos (e.g. hammers, screwdrivers)
2. These items may not be moved except when needed for the following purposes:

- I. **“Letzorech Gufo”** - when needed to perform a permissible act if no other implement is available. (e.g. a hammer may be used to crack open a coconut)
 - II. **“Letzorech Mekomo”** - when the place on which it rests is needed. (e.g. a hammer that was left on a table may be moved if one needs the place at the table.)
3. It is forbidden to move these utensils simply to put it away or to prevent it from being damaged. (e.g. bringing it in from the rain.)
 4. Practical Applications:
 - **Pots & Pans:** A large pot that is primarily used for cooking (not for storage) is a utensil of prohibited use. While empty, such a pot may be moved only for a permissible use (e.g. to store food) or for its place (e.g. to clear off the countertop) - but not simply to be put away. The same holds true for pot covers.
 - If the pot is dirty and constitutes a source of discomfort or embarrassment, it may be moved to a different location.
 - However, while the pot contains food it is not considered muktzah and may be moved (with its cover) for any reason (e.g. to put in the refrigerator.)
 - **Pyrex, CorningWare, Small pots:** are commonly used for both cooking and food storage are not muktzah and may be moved for any reason. Small pots are included in this category, since they are often used to store leftovers.
 - **Dishwashers:** You are permitted to put dishes in dishwasher.
 - **Small Appliances:** crockpots, urns, hot plates and similar appliances are considered utensils of prohibited use.
 - **Blech:** A Shabbos Blech is not Muktzah.

- **Brooms:** Soft-bristled brooms are not Muktzah. Brooms with hard bristles, which break easily, are considered utensils of prohibited use.
- **Sponges & Mops:** Are utensils of prohibited use.

B. “Muktzah Machmas Gufo” - Inherently Muktzah:

1. An item which has no practical function on Shabbos (e.g. rocks, empty nut shells) may not be moved for any purpose.
2. Practical Applications:
 - **Inedible Raw Food:** Is considered inherently Muktzah since it has absolutely no function on Shabbos. Therefore, flour, yeast, dough, uncooked spaghetti, rice, beans, raw potatoes and raw fish, meat, and poultry may not be moved at all on Shabbos.
 - **Other Raw Food:** that is edible is not Muktzah. Even foods which were purchased for cooking are not Muktzah if people occasionally eat them raw (e.g. cauliflower, broccoli)
 - Raw eggs are not Muktzah because there are people who occasionally eat them raw.
 - When moving food from the freezer, one should avoid moving aside any raw Muktzah food which is in the way.
 - In cases of necessity, one is permitted to move Muktzah foods in the freezer.
 - If the muktzah foods make it impossible to reach the foods in the freezer, the food may be moved.
 - **If a Freezer Breaks Down:** would be considered a case of necessity in order to avoid financial loss, so the Muktzah items may be moved.

C. Inherently Muktzah Food Waste:

1. Food waste which is not fit for consumption (e.g. egg shells, nutshells, pits, bones) is considered inherently

Muktzah, and may not be moved on Shabbos. How do you clear away leftover shells and pits?

2. **Eggshells:** It is best to peel eggs over a trash can. Where this is impractical, one is advised to follow the procedure described below for nutshells.
3. **Nutshells:** Shells which contain some food remnant (as is often the case with walnuts) are not Muktzah. When completely devoid of food, nutshells are inherently Muktzah. When nuts are served at a meal, leftover shells which contain no food may not be cleared off the table by hand. Instead, one of the following procedures should be used:
 - Shell the nuts over a plate which has on it a morsel of food. One may then take the entire plate and empty it into the trash.
 - If shells spilled on the table and one 'needs the place' of the shells (e.g. to serve other food) or wants the table cleaned in honor of Shabbos, it is permissible to use a napkin or utensil (egg, a knife) to push the shells into a plate or dustpan, which may then be emptied into a trash can.
 - If the table is full of shells, constituting a source of discomfort, one may clear off the shells by hand.
4. **Pits:** Inedible pits are inherently Muktzah and should be cleared off in the same manner of shells. Pits which have some food remnants attached (e.g. peach pits) are not Muktzah.
5. **Bones:** any bones which have some meat attached to them, or which are themselves edible (e.g. chicken bones) , are not Muktzah.
 - In a neighbourhood where dogs are common, bones fit for canine consumption are not Muktzah, even to one who does not own a dog.

- Bones fit for neither human or canine consumption are inherently Muktzah and may be cleared away only in the manner described above. (Pt. #3)
- 6. Fruit & Vegetable Peels:** edible peels (e.g. apple peels) are not Muktzah. Peels fit for canine consumption are also not Muktzah in a neighbourhood where dogs are common. Peels that are not fit for humans or dogs are inherently Muktzah and may only be moved in the manner described above. (Pt. #3)

D. “Bosis Ledavar Ha’Asur” - A Base for a Muktzah Article:

1. An item that is used to support a Muktzah article has the same Halachik status as the article which it supports.
2. Furthermore, an item that served as a base for Muktzah at the onset of Shabbos retains its Muktzah status for the entire shabbos, even if the Muktzah article is removed.
3. **Candlesticks on a Table:** A table on which kindled candlesticks were left at the onset of Shabbos, is considered a base for a muktzah article (i.e. the flame). Therefore, the table may not be moved at all, even after the candles burn out.
 - If a significant non- Muktzah item (e.g. Challah) is also on the table when Shabbos arrives, the table does not get the status of a base for a Muktzah article, but rather a base for Muktzah and non-Muktzah , which may be moved in certain cases. That is why it is customary to place Challah on the table before lighting candles. A base for Muktzah and non-Muktzah may be moved *Letzorech Gufo* (if the table is needed in different location), or *Letzorech Mekomo* (if one needs to make use of the area on which the table rests). Even in these cases, it is preferable , if possible, to first shake the Muktzah item off the table.
4. **Candlesticks on a Tray:** The tray is considered a base for a Muktzah article. According to some Poskim, if one

places an item of significance (like challah) on the tray on Erev Shabbos, the tray is considered a base for muktzah and non-Muktzah, which may be moved if one needs to use the area on which the tray rests. This would enable you to change the tablecloth, by lifting the tray containing both the candlesticks and the Challah.

E. Ways of Moving Muktzah:

1. If a Muktzeh item is on top of a non - Muktzeh item, it is permitted to move the Muktzeh indirectly if one's intent is to use the non - Muktzeh item but not if one's intent is to move the Muktzeh. This assumes that the non - Muktzeh item isn't a Bosis and one can't remove the Muktzeh by tilting.
2. It is permitted to move a Muktzeh item with one's body.
3. It's permissible to blow on Muktzeh to make it move if it's for a permissible purpose.
4. Additionally, it's permissible to cover a Muktzeh item with a vessel even if the vessel will touch the Muktzeh as long as placing the cover on the Muktzeh will not move it.
5. If one has picked up a Kli Sh'Melachto LeIssur in one's hands in a permissible fashion then it's permissible to place it anywhere one likes. However, if one picked it up in a forbidden way or one has an absolute Muktzeh item in one's hand, then one should drop it.

F. Other Related Practical Applications:

- **"Molid" - creating a new entity:** It is forbidden to transform an item from solid to liquid form, or vice versa, for by doing so one produces a new object. Freezing and defrosting liquids on shabbos are subject to this prohibition.
 1. **Dissolving Frozen Liquids:** Liquids may be defrosted at room temperature, but should not be placed in a hot area (e.g. near an oven). ***Sefardim are lenient in this area.***

However, once partially melted, they may be moved to a hot area to dissolve completely.

- In cases of necessity (e.g. if needed immediately for guests), liquids may be initially dissolved in a hot area. Crushing or shaking them is forbidden even in cases of necessity, unless immersed in liquid.
2. **Making Juice from Concentrate:** To dissolve frozen concentrate, one should follow the procedure mentioned above. In addition, one may immerse the concentrate in water and place it near the oven to dissolve. However, one should not crush the concentrate or stir the mixture until completely dissolved.
 - In case of necessity, one may stir the mixture or crush the frozen concentrate while submerged in water.
 3. **Freezing liquids for Storage:** Liquids may not be frozen on Shabbos for storage, except to prevent spoilage.
 4. **Making Ice Cubes or Frozen Juices:** Some Poskim rule that it is permitted to make ice cubes for shabbos use, even without a particular necessity.
 - Other Poskim rule that one should not make ice cubes for Shabbos except in cases of necessity.
 - One may return an ice tray to the freezer on Shabbat even if he will not need any more ice until after Shabbat.
 - One should not make frozen ices , except in cases of necessity.
 - ***Ashkenazim should not take ice out in a bowl for guests unless one is certain all the ice will be removed quickly. Sfardi are lenient in this area.***
 5. **Dry Foods:** Dry foods (e.g. challah, chicken, kugel) may be frozen or defrosted near an oven for Shabbos use.
 - A food that contains gravy is subject to the same restrictions as a liquid.
 - Meat with congealed fat should not be placed in a hot area to dissolve the fat.

- Dry food that is coated with some ice should, preferably, have the ice removed before it is defrosted in a hot area.