After having it checked at STAR-K by Dr. Pollak, I was told that the suit contained Shatnez. I went to a tailor to have the Shatnez removed and wore it on Rosh Hashana.

Rabbi G: I have been checking for Shatnez for 36 years.

Rabbi G: One erev Rosh Hashana, when I was a bochur in Ner Yisroel, I purchased a suit for Yom Tov. After having it checked at STAR-K by Dr. Pollak, I was told that the suit contained Shatnez. I went to a tailor to have the Shatnez removed and wore it on Rosh Hashana.
Leadership in Kashrus Education

**SABBATH MODE FAQs**

**MRS. RIVKA LEAH GOLDMAN**  
**LEAD STAR-K DATABASE SPECIALIST**

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**KitchenAid 1996:**

Dear Rabbi Rosen,

The STAR-K KitchenAid Sabbath Mode project had been evolving for 2 1/2 years. This novel venture was initiated by KitchenAid to address the needs of the Sabbath observant Jewish community that would not be able to use the new age KitchenAid ranges and wall units due to the new electronic technology and advanced features.

Jewish Sabbath observance does not permit the kindling or extinguishing of a fire or the cooking of food on Sabbath. Jewish Holiday observance does not permit the creation of a new flame, but cooking and adjusting fire as needed for cooking is permitted.

The issues that KitchenAid engineers had to address in order to create a user-friendly oven for the Sabbath observer were the following:

1. Could the 12-hour automatic shutoff be bypassed?
2. Could the oven be opened without lighting an icon on the control panel?
3. Could the oven door be opened without turning the oven cavity light bulb on/off?
4. Could the oven’s temperature be raised or lowered without reconfiguring the digital readout?
5. Could the oven door be opened without turning off the heating element?
6. In the event of a power failure, would the oven’s functionality be able to return automatically without having to be manually reset?

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**STAR-K 2018:**

To date, STAR-K has certified 25 companies with a variety of Sabbath mode designs. I have compiled a list of common Sabbath mode appliance questions that we will now share with our Kashrus Kurrents readers.

**MOST COMMON QUESTIONS REGARDING SHABBOS MODE**

**Q:** What do STAR-K certified ovens with Sabbath Mode allow me to do?

**A:** Our Sabbath Mode certification is not identical for all manufacturers and all models of ovens. The most important feature of the Sabbath Mode for an oven/range is an override to the 12-hour shutoff built into most ovens today (as a safety feature). This allows the consumer to leave the oven on for a 2-3 day Yom Tov.

If the oven has a Timed Bake feature, usually you can use that in the Sabbath Mode for Friday night. The oven stays on for a few hours and then shuts off automatically, without your having to press a button to cancel a tone or alarm.

Since the Sabbath Mode does NOT supersede the thermostatic regulation of the oven temperature, the consumer is advised to open the oven door only once to remove all the fully cooked food which was placed inside before Shabbos.

**Q:** I found an oven on an appliance website, but I couldn’t find it on the STAR-K website. What should I do?

**A:** Just because an appliance claims to have a Sabbath Mode, does not mean that it’s a STAR-K certified Sabbath Mode. There are companies who build into their appliances what they think is a Sabbath Mode, however, these modes may not meet our halachic standards. The best option would be to call 410.484.4110 or email us at star-k@star-k.org and we will try to help you.

**Q:** Can I assume that all STAR-K certified ovens operate the same way?

**A:** No. For example, there are several STAR-K certified ovens from a specific company that can only be set at 150°F for the whole Yom Tov. Newer models from this company have more flexibility.

The rule with Sabbath Mode is “DO NOT ASSUME”. Don’t assume that the manufacturer/dealer is posting accurate information. Don’t assume that the Sabbath Mode in the new oven you are purchasing works the same way as the Sabbath Mode in the old oven that you had. Don’t assume that the Sabbath Mode in the new oven you are buying is the same as the one in your neighbor’s oven. Buying an appliance these days is really a research project, since there are so many details and features to investigate.

**Q:** Can I put food into a warming drawer on Shabbos?

**A:** Warming drawers have the same halachic status as ovens. They are all thermostatically controlled and are above the temperature of yad soledes bo. Just as you would not put food into an oven to warm it up on Shabbos, you may not place food into a warming drawer during Shabbos. Unfortunately, many people are misled by the term “warming drawer.”

If we certify a warming drawer, our website clearly indicates how it may be used on Shabbos and Yom Tov. For simple warming drawers that don’t have any digital controls, lights, tones or icons but do have a cycling light to show when there’s power flowing to the drawer, the setting can be adjusted on Yom Tov. The temperature can be increased when the light is on, and decreased when the light dims.

**Q:** How can you kosher an oven that only has Aqualift™ cleaning?

**A:** Since this type of cleaning reaches only about 250°F, it would not reach a high enough temperature for kashering. If the oven doesn’t have a regular self-clean cycle then, after being thoroughly cleaned, it should be turned on to the highest setting (at least 550°F) for 45 minutes.

**Q:** In a double oven, can you use one oven for meat and the other one for dairy?

**A:** If the double oven has two separate cavities, one can be designated for milk and the other for meat. The consumer would need to verify that they do not vent into each other. Often, the ovens share a common vent outlet. Therefore, in order to prevent the steam from mixing we advise cooking at least one item covered or dry at the end of cooking.
Since the tailor was not certified to remove Shatnez, Dr. Pollak took the suit and examined the repair that was made and determined that the fabric used to repair the suit was, in fact, Shatnez! I took a personal vow to not let this ever happen again.

I asked Dr. Pollak and Zev Bitman if they would take me under their wing, and within two years I was trained as a certified Shatnez examiner.

KK: Why did it take two years?

Rabbi G: A level of expertise needs to be developed whereby one can identify strands of wool and linen.

KK: Is there a unique composition of wool and linen under the microscope?

Rabbi G: Interestingly, the Ribono Shel Olam has created wool and linen to have unique structures. A wool strand under the microscope looks jagged on both sides, almost scale-like; linen resembles a bamboo shoot. One could say that Hashem has made specific markings for each and every type of fiber.

Under the microscope (the main vehicle through which to identify these fibers) hemp, rami and linen look similar. However, when cross-sectioning the fibers under the microscope one can tell the differences between them. Therefore, we permit a garment containing wool and rami or wool and hemp.

KK: In earlier times, people would purchase clothes by feeling the stiffening of the collar. Can you identify if a fabric is Shatnez by feeling it?

Rabbi G: In earlier times, linen was very coarse thereby allowing one to identify it through the sense of feel. The Gemara tells us that linen was a fabric that did not accept a dye. So, you can tell a linen strand in a fabric by virtue of the fact that it didn’t absorb any color. Today, with modern manufacturing techniques, linen is as fine as any other fabric and can accept a color dye.

KK: In years past, when one would visit Mr. Rosenberg’s Shatnez lab on Lee Avenue, he would be using chemicals to identify Shatnez.

Rabbi G: Yes. He was testing with a chemical treatment to see if the linen fiber showed a color reaction. Today, this “chemical” test would be obsolete, as the unfailing identification for Shatnez is the microscope.

KK: Have you ever found a garment that actually lists wool and linen as the composition of fabric?

Rabbi G: Interestingly, a bochur from yeshiva came to STAR-K a few weeks ago with a few pairs of pants. I asked him, “Why did you buy these? It states on the label ‘Wool and linen pants!’”

It’s very important to always read the label before purchasing a garment.

KK: What comprises Shatnez mideoraisa?

Rabbi G: There are different opinions amongst the Rishonim as to what is considered Shatnez mideoraisa.

The word “Shatnez” is an abbreviation of three words: shua, tuvi and nuz – which describe three different stages in the processing of the wool and linen fibers. Shua refers to the combing of the raw fiber; tuvi is the process of spinning fibers into a thread; and nuz refers to the twisting or weaving of the threads into cloth. The Torah expresses and combines these three processes in one word, “Shatnez”. The Rishonim offer differing opinions as to how to interpret the term “Shatnez”.

Rashi – All the wool and linen fibers have to be combed, twisted and spun together into a wool or linen thread to qualify as Shatnez mideoraisa.

Tosfos – A wool thread or a linen thread combed, spun and twisted separately and then connected together will comprise Shatnez mideoraisa.

Rambam – Rambam agrees with both Rashi and Tosfos and additionally states that any combination of wool and linen connected together, including felt – which is pressed wool and linen – is considered Shatnez mideoraisa.

Shulchan Aruch – Follows the opinion of Rambam incorporating all three opinions.

KK: Please review the following items to determine if they require checking:

Rabbi G:

a) Expensive wool scarves – Linen may have been used to stitch the seam of the scarf so it would be a good idea to check.

b) Wool or linen ties – Need to be checked

c) Wool socks – At one time, Gold Toe socks did contain Shatnez; however, I have not recently found this to be so.

d) Polyester suit – The shoulder pads, stiffening collar and other internal parts (e.g., pockets, etc.) should be checked.

e) Silk ties – Do not need to be checked

f) Plain wool caps – Do need to be checked

g) Russian hats made of fur – These should be checked because the lining inside the hat could, and often does, use...
As the Shulchan Aruch HaRav states, “Just like a person must be careful with his body not to cause it to perish, deteriorate or be harmed, so must a person be careful with his assets not to cause them to deteriorate or be harmed. Anyone who breaks utensils, tears clothes, destroys a building, seals a spring, ruins food/drink or causes them to become repulsive, or ruins anything that is fit for the benefit of man violates a negative commandment. As the posuk in Parshas Shofrim relates, “When you lay siege to a city for many days, do not destroy the fruit trees there ...” If the Torah wanted us to be careful with the fruit trees of our enemies, certainly we should be careful with assets that are hefrer or belong to our own people. Thus, we see that the Torah is sensitizing us to appreciate each physical and spiritual gift that Hashem has bestowed upon us and encouraging us to use them constructively.

The Chinuch outlines the idea behind this mitzvah as we refer to it, “Bal Tashchis.” He explains that the mitzvah of bal tashchis, which is based on the mitzvah not to cut down a fruit-bearing tree (as previously mentioned), is rooted in the idea that we should sensitize ourselves to love that which is good and beneficial to us. When we do this, measure for measure, ‘good will cleave to us and misfortune and destruction will be distant from us. This is the practice of the pious and meticulous who love peace, rejoice in what is good for people and bring them close to the Torah. They will not squander even a mustard seed. They will be troubled by waste and senseless destruction. If they are able to save something from being senselessly wasted, they will muster the effort.'

We derive the general parameters of the halachos of bal tashchis in everyday life from the halachos pertaining to cutting down a fruit-bearing tree. In order for this prohibition to apply, the tree has to be beneficial to us. The Gemora quotes Rav, “A tree that bears a lev is forbidden to be cut down. As the verse says, Only a tree that you know is not a food tree - that tree you may destroy and cut down and build bulwarks against the city that makes war with you ...”. The Gemora notes the phrase ‘eitz ma’achal’ (a food tree) is used instead of an ‘eitz pri’ (a fruit tree). According to Rav, the posuk implies that the prohibition applies only if a ma’achal, a significant amount of fruit, grows annually. The Poskim also understand that even if the tree bears fewer fruits annually, but currently bears edible fruits that have grown at least one-third of their full growth, the tree cannot be cut until the fruits have been consumed.

EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE

At the same time, the basic halacha allows for cutting down any fruit tree if we need its place for a significant need, such as a mitzvah (e.g., mikvah) or if the owner would benefit more by selling its wood than its fruit. Additionally, a tree that causes damage can be cut down. In these cases, it is preferable to cut a branch instead of the whole tree.

Many commentators understand that despite the sanction to cut down a fruit tree in these circumstances, we should not cut it down ourselves. After all, R’ Chanin11 tells us that his son passed away as a result of cutting down a fruit tree that was still bearing fruit. For this reason, the minhag is to sell the branch or tree to a non-Jew and allow the non-Jew to cut the branch or tree - even in circumstances where we have a clear-cut heter (approval) to cut down the tree.12

Similarly, the Poskim inform us that bal tashchis applies to our other possessions, as well. We are mandated to make sure that we do not waste the items with which Hashem has blessed us. The Rambam states, “Anyone who breaks utensils, tears garments, destroys buildings, stops up a spring, or ruins food with a destructive intent transgresses the command, ‘Do not destroy.’” However, he is not lashed. Instead, he receives stripes for rebellious conduct as instituted by the Sages. Furthermore, the Poskim mention that misusing an item and causing it to break or wear out in an untimely manner or in anger violates this prohibition.17

Since the posuk focuses on destructive intent, “l’hashchis,” we can infer that when the purpose of the act is constructive it is permitted. Thus, the Mishna relates that the manager of the Har Habayis would walk around the area and observe the Kohanim and Levim who were the honor guards for the Beis Hamikdash. If it was apparent that a guard was sleeping on duty, the manager would hit the guard with his stick. If the manager felt that the discipline needed to be more dramatic, then he even had permission to set fire to the clothes of the sleeping guard. This would not qualify as bal tashchis, since it is for a constructive purpose i.e., ensuring the proper conduct of a guard in the Beis Hamikdash.
Under which circumstances is a person obligated to erect a fence around the roof of his house?

The Torah in parshas Ki-Setze states, “When you build a new house make a railing for your roof, and you shall not bring blood on your house if someone falls from there.” The Torah requires one to build a maakeh – a fence – around a flat roof that people walk on, so as to protect them from falling. The mitzvah applies not only to someone who builds a house but also to someone who buys, inherits or is gifted a house. A person who rents a house is also to protect them from falling. The house should not have gaps through which a child could fall. When a person builds a maakeh, he recites a brocha. If he is building the maakeh on his own property, the text of the brocha is different. If he is building on someone else’s property, the text of the brocha is different. One does not recite a brocha of Shechechiyonu on the building of a maakeh. Some Poskim suggest that when a person performs this mitzvah for the first time in his life, he should recite the brocha. If he is building it on someone else’s property, the text of the brocha should also include the building of the maakeh.

The Poskim debate whether the brocha is recited at the beginning or end of the building of the maakeh. Rabbi Heinemann, shlita, paskens that it is recited immediately prior to the end of construction. If a Jewish person hires a non-Jew to build the maakeh, the Jew should finish the construction and recite the brocha at that time. A person may build a maakeh and recite the brocha after purchasing a house before moving in. Under those circumstances, he should demonstrate that he is residing in the house by eating a meal there at the time that he builds the maakeh.

One is required to build a maakeh only on a roof which people use and upon which they walk. A roof which is rarely accessed does not require a maakeh. For this reason, sloped roofs generally do not require a maakeh. If a person has a flat roof and has not built a maakeh, he should lock the entranceway to the roof so that people cannot access it.

The mitzvah of building a maakeh applies to buildings owned by an individual but not to public buildings, such as a shul or beis hamedrash. However, if the roof of those buildings is accessed by the public then a fence should be built due to safety concerns, as the Torah obligates us to ensure that the welfare of others is not put at risk. In that case, no brocha is recited.

The Chazon Ish states that a maakeh is required only on the roof of a room or building in which people live. Therefore, a deck or porch would not require a maakeh. However, due to safety concerns, a deck which is raised ten tefachim above the ground should be fenced in. If falling from the deck may potentially be dangerous, this barrier should be ten tefachim high; no brocha is recited over its construction.
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

a natural fabric such as wool or linen. The same applies to Russian wool army jackets. Countries behind the Iron Curtain frequently used linen as part of the internal linings of garments.

h) Pillows that state they are stuffed with “unknown fabric” need to be checked, including Bed Rest Pillows.

i) Products listing “Unknown Fibers” – should be avoided.

KK: Are there other things of which a consumer should be aware?

Rabbi G: The Rama states that one should not wear a wool garment with a linen garment on top it, or vice versa – e.g., jacket made of linen, topcoat of wool, where it is impossible to remove one garment without first removing the top garment. With a shirt and pants, one could wear a linen shirt with wool pants because they can be removed separately.

KK: Can you share a memorable Shatnez checking story with our readership?

Rabbi G: When I was first married, we lived on Yeshiva Lane. One erev Rosh Hashana, there was a knock on my door.

4. Banim/Pirur 11/20-28

A yeshiva bochur was standing there in his Yom Tov suit and said that one of the rabbonim told him that his suit needed to be checked for Shatnez. I first checked the jacket, and it had Shatnez – so I gave him my robe. Next, I checked the pants – and they also had Shatnez. The bochur then said, “Rabbi Goldfeiz, you ruined my Rosh Hashana!” And I said to him, “No, I saved your Rosh Hashana.” We know that Shatnez is the combination of wool and linen, also known as כאלאים wearable. When הדרים and הדרים were prophesizing in the machane about Moshe Rabbeinu’s demise,” Yehoshua remarked, “איןות כלי הטהרה כאלאים”. Our rabbis tell us that one explanation of the word כאלאים is to imprison. Since the Zohar HaKadosh says that כאלאים and כאלאים stem from the same root word, I reckoned that I had saved that young bochur from incarceration!

KK: Thank you, Rabbi Goldfeiz, for a fascinating interview.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

For this very reason, at a wedding we break a plate at the Tana'im and a glass under the Chuppah20 to teach us that Yaakov Chazal helped his family pass over the Yabok River. The posuk21 relates that after Yaakov Ravina made a wedding for his son. When he saw that the rabbis were too joyful, he broke an expensive glass to affect the mood and made a wedding for his son. When he saw that the rabbis were no longer using the older one,22 it is concerning a bal tashchis.

HIDDUR MITZVAH

Another situation where there is no problem of bal tashchis is concerning a hiddur mitzvah. Therefore, we can exchange an old kosher mezuzah for a more mehudar one or an old yeri'ah of sefer Torah for a new one.21 Even if we can't give away an older sefer and must designate it for shamos, it is not considered to be wasteful to buy a new edition of a sefer at the expense of no longer using the older one.22

20. Berachos (31a)
21. Berachos (31a)
22. Ginzei Hakodesh (8, 2)
23. Berachos (32, 25)

Thus, we see that although there are many times when we are faced with situations of waste, we are urged by the Torah to cherish every item that Hashem has bestowed upon us and not to discount its importance. As we learned in Parshas Vayishlach, when Yaakov Avinu traveled back home after being away for over 20 years, he helped his family pass over the Yabok River. The posuk24 relates that after Yaakov helped carry all the animals and movables across the river, he returned alone to the eastern side of the river. Chazal teach us that Yaakov returned alone to retrieve a number of small jugs. These jugs might have seemed unimportant and trivial to many, however, Yaakov Avinu lived this mantra: Every item that Hashem has given us is a blessing. No matter what the size, we need to treasure them as Heavenly gifts and use them accordingly.

Shulchan Aruch

Bereishis 11:26-28

Chasidim (31a)

21. Ginzei Hakodesh (8, 2)
22. Ginzei Hakodesh (8, 2)
23. Berachos (32, 25)

Bal Tashchis

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*Leadership in Kashrus Education

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7
STAR-K Kosher Certification
A non-profit agency representing the Kosher consumer in promoting Kashrus through Education, Research and Supervision.

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Subscriptions
110 USD/year for 4 issues - US & Canada
210 USD/year for 4 issues - Overseas

This publication is dedicated to the memory of M. Leo Storch, of blessed memory, through a grant from Mrs. M. Leo Storch & Family.

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