

ב"ה

The Halachot of Separating Challah

From Shulchan Aruch
Rabbanit Iris Odani Elyashiv

“When you come to the Land I bring you, and it will be when you will eat from the bread of the land, you should separate a portion for Hashem”(Bamidbar 15:18)
“The first of your dough you shall separate Challah”(Bamidbar 15:20)

To determine if one has to separate the challah from her dough, it is necessary to take into account the amount of flour in the dough and the ingredients from which the dough was made.

The Flour

- For dough to qualify for separating the challah it must be made out of flour from one of the five varieties of grains: **Wheat, Barley, Spelt, Rye or Oats.**
- To separate the challah with a blessing, the dough must be comprised of a sufficient amount of flour. The minimum amount of dough from which you must separate challa is an amount containing 5 quarters of flour, which is equivalent to 43 and 1/5 eggs.

The Halachic Authority	Amount Required to Separate challah Without a Blessing from-to (grams)	Amount Required to Separate challah With a Blessing from and more (grams)
HaGaon Rav Chaim Naehana and the Alter Rebbe Chabad	1230-1666.6	1666.6
The Chazon Ish	1200-2250	2250
HaRav Mordechai Eliyahu by the Ben Ish Chai	1666-2486	2486
HaRav Ovadiah Yosef	1514-1560	1560
HaRav Yitzhak Ratzabi Customs of Yemenites	1200-1666	1666

By all Halachic Authoritys, if the amount of flour was less than 1200 grams – in this case, one would not separate the challah at all.

(Separating challah without a blessing from 2.5-4lbs, and with a blessing ideally from 5lbs. However, in a situation that we have a dough that contains only 4lbs of flour it is permissible to separate challah with a blessing.)

It is *important* to note that even the flour that was used for rolling the dough should be entered into one's calculation.

The Liquids

- A. For a dough to qualify for separating the challah most of the liquids it contains should be at least one of the following:
Water, wine, milk, bee honey, or olive oil.
- B. It is doubtful whether or not a dough that contains only fruit juice or eggs can be used for separating the challah, therefore, it is best to add some water, wine, milk, bee honey, or olive oil when kneading the dough. Then the challah may be separated with a blessing.

The Resultant Mixture

- A. One does not only separate the challah from bread or challah mixtures. Rather, any dough mixture that is comprised of a sufficient amount of flour (see table above) and the above mentioned liquids – like cake dough, cookie dough, and pizza dough – qualifies for separating challah.
- B. Dough that is designated for cooking or frying (as opposed to baking) – such as donut dough, crepe/blintz dough, and the like – only qualifies for “separating challah without a blessing. If, however, a portion of this dough is set aside for baking as well, then one separates challah with a blessing
- C. If one prepared many different dough mixtures, neither of which individually have the required amount of flour for separating challah, then one may place them in one container, the container combines them into one unit and you must separate challah. If it is difficult to conjoin the mixtures, then one may leave them in their respective bowls and cover them with a tablecloth, big towel, sheet or anything that can cover all the mixtures, the cover is considered like a container and it combines all the mixtures into one unit. This way, it appears as though it is all one mixture.
- D. If you forgot to separate challah on **Erev Shabbat**, **in countries outside the land of Israel** you may eat it on Shabbat, but you must set aside one piece, and separate challah from it after Shabbat is over. The piece should be large enough for the separation of challah with some remaining dough unsanctified, for there must be a noticeable remainder. **In Eretz Israel**, where it is a *de'oraisa*, you may not eat from it before separating challah (Shulchan Aruch Yoreah Deah 4:323).
- E. The mitzvah of separating the challah is the province of the woman of the house. But if the woman is not home, and there is concern that by the time she returns the dough will be ruined, and then someone else may separate the challah.
- F. **Laws of Yom Tov** Flour that has already been sifted, but you wish to sift it a second time, should be sifted by a non-jew or you may do it in an unconventional manner, turning the sieve upside down. Flour that has never been sifted may be sifted only by a non-jew, in an unconventional way. It is forbidden to pick out refuse from flour, for example, if pebbles or something similar fell into it.(with his hand, but you are allowed to sift it a second time if something fell into it, like pebbles on Yom Tov even in a conventional manner, Shulchan Aruch with Piskai Admor H zaken 98:8, Yalkut Yosef 506:4, CHzon Ovadiah Yom Tov p. 67).

- G. **Dough for noodles and farfel** used in soups should be kneaded on **erev Yom Tov**, for if they are older they taste better. But if you did not knead it erev Yom Tov, you may knead it on Yom Tov in an unconventional way. For example, if you usually knead it on a board, you should knead it on a tablecloth or on something similar. Cooked food that does not spoil, like dried fruits and similar food should be cooked on erev Yom Tov.
- H. **Kneading is permitted on Yom Tov.** However, you should not measure the flour but should take it by estimate.
- I. **If you knead dough on Yom Tov**, you may take challah from it. But you may not burn the challah portion, because **holy things may not be burned on Yom Tov**. It is also forbidden to bake, the challah portion (Shulchan Aruch 506:4) because it is not fit to be eaten, for we are all considered as ritually unclean due to having come in contact with corpses, or with people who have been in contact with corpses. And it is forbidden to handle the challah portion, but while it is still in your hands, you should put it in a safe place until **after Yom Tov**, and then burn it. If you knead dough on **Erev Yom Tov**, it is forbidden to take challah portion from it on **Yom Tov** (When kneaded *before Yom Tov*, it is prohibited, rabbinically, because it looks like you are fixing it. However, when kneaded *on Yom Tov*, they did not prohibit it. (Misnah Berurah 506:17, Yalkut Yosef 506:8), but you may bake the bread and eat it, leaving a little bread from which to take challah portion right after Yom Tov. The portion you leave should be sufficient for separating challah and have some left over. **This is only permitted outside of Eretz Israel**, where separating challah is a rabbinic ordinance. **In Eretz Israel**, where it is a *de'oraisa*, you may not eat from it before separating challah. (Shulchan Aruch Yoreah Deah 4:323). **If you want**, you may knead a new dough on Yom Tov, put it next to the other dough, and separate the challah of both from the erev Yom Tov dough and the dough of Yom Tov (Mishnah Brurah 506:21).

References:

שו"ע מרן רבי יוסף קארו, עיקרי הלכות עפ"י מרן הרשל"צ הרה"ג אליהו מרדכי, ילקוט יוסף קשו"ע הרה"ג יצחק יוסף, קשו"ע עם פסקי אדמו"ר הזקן, משנה ברורה הרה"ג ישראל מאיר הכהן מראדין, קשו"ע בלדי ושאמי הרה"ג יצחק רצאבי.

**“And Yitzchak brought her into the tent of Sarah his mother”
(Beraishis 24:67)**

