



Kashering Utensils for Pesach

1. If one isn't going to put any hot food on the counters on Pesach, it is sufficient to clean the counters very well. If one is going to put hot food on the counters on Pesach, one should clean and cover the counters. Regarding kashering the counters, see the footnote.¹
2. If the microwave walls are made out of metal, many hold that one can kasher the microwave by cleaning it thoroughly and boiling a cup of water in the microwave until it steams. If the walls are made out of plastic, many say that one can follow the above procedure and then cover the food put in the microwave on Pesach.²
3. If the walls of the dishwasher are made out of plastic or porcelain, many hold that one cannot kasher the dishwasher.³

1. The Tur and S"A 451:20 write that the minhag is to pour hot water on the tables and cabinets used for food during the year because sometimes hot liquid chametz spills onto them. The Magen Avraham 451:38 quotes the Maharil who records the minhag to cover the tables and cabinets after this kashering procedure because perhaps some actual chametz was stuck onto the table or cabinet.

Kaf HaChaim 451:233 notes that wooden tables which one always eats on with a tablecloth don't need to be kashered and one should simply remove the actual chametz and wipe down the surface. Rav Mordechai Willig ("Shiur 64 – Pesachim" min 80-82) says that strictly speaking this is also true for countertops on which people don't put chametz directly. Rav Hershel Schachter (OU Pre-Pesach Webcast 5769, min 11-13) adds that one could either kasher the counters or cover them, but if one isn't going to put any hot food on the counters on Pesach one could simply clean the counters well.

Rav Shimon Eider in Halachos of Pesach (p. 137) rules that one may not kasher plastic utensils for Pesach based on Igrot Moshe 2:92 who doesn't allow kashering synthetic rubber since it is a new material that wasn't discussed by the Rishonim. Thus, Rav Moshe Feinstein (quoted by Halachos of Pesach p. 140) maintains that one should not kasher Formica countertops, which are made out of hardened plastic, rather these should be washed and covered. See Chazon Ovadia (p. 151) who allows kashering plastic.

2. The Mishna (Avoda Zara 75b) writes that utensils, which absorbed the taste of forbidden food through fire, can be purified through Libun. Tosfot (Chullin 8a s.v. SheLivna) explains that since when chametz is absorbed into the utensils before Pesach the chametz taste was permitted, utensils that usually required Libun, can be kashered with Hagalah. The Ran (Pesachim 8b s.v. Devarim) explains that the Rif considers chametz taste to be a forbidden taste since it has a status of chametz even before Pesach. Although S"A and Rama 451:4 rule stringently, the Mishna Brurah 451:32 notes that in some cases we rely on the lenient opinions.

Yalkut Yosef (Moadim p. 600-8, Pesach p. 38) writes that if a microwave is used mostly to reheat and the walls of the microwave don't reach a temperature of Yad Soledet Bo, one could kasher it by heating up a cup of water with some soap in the microwave for a few minutes.

He explains that since most of the time the microwave doesn't reach Yad Soledet Bo it may not require kashering. Even if it does reach Yad Soledet Bo, heating up water in the microwave until it steams up the microwave is considered Hagalah. He reasons that steam suffices since the taste was only absorbed through steam. He adds several other reasons to be lenient with absorptions through steam such as perhaps the walls don't absorb through steam, perhaps steam applies only to liquid foods, and perhaps steam absorptions are only d'rabanan altogether. He adds that it is still preferable to cover foods on Pesach in the microwave. Lastly, if the microwave is mostly used to cook or is a commercial microwave that is used very frequently and the walls usually reach Yad Soledet Bo, it shouldn't be used on Pesach.

Rav Moshe Feinstein (*ibid.* p. 182) agreed that a microwave can be kashered with steam just as it absorbed through steam. Rav Mordechai Willig (*ibid.* min 66-8) agrees if the walls are metal the microwave can be kashered with steam, but if the walls are plastic it shouldn't be kashered. Rav Hershel Schachter ("Kashering the Kitchen for Pesach" min 10-13) said that if the walls are plastic one could kasher it with steam as long as one covers one's food on Pesach because it is improbable that forbidden taste is transferred in the air. Similarly, Rav Shimon Eider (*ibid.*) writes if the walls are plastic one may cover the interior completely and cook in it when the food is covered.

3. Rav Hershel Schachter (*ibid.* min 13-15) said that dishwashers which have a plastic or porcelain walls can not be kashered for Pesach, however, the stainless steel ones can be kashered but one must be sure to remove all the particles of chametz stuck in the drain. Halachos of Pesach (p. 175) agrees. See, however, Yalkut Yosef (451:11) who writes that dishwashers can be kashered by cleaning it well and running an empty cycle with soap.