



Removing a stain on Shabbat

1. One may not clean any garment with water, colored water, spit, or any cleaning agent.¹
2. If one's garment became dusty on Shabbat, if one isn't concerned about the dust on the garment (and would wear it without cleaning it) one may gently shake it out, or gently hit it with one's hand or dry rag, but one may not shake it out vigorously, rub it, or use a brush.² Some say that nowadays people are particular about their Shabbat clothes and so one may not remove the dust at all.³ Sephardim may be lenient to shake out any garment, however, one who is strict should be blessed.⁴
3. If moist mud, chulent, or a similar thick moist substance sticks to one's clothes, using one's fingernail or the back of a knife, one may scrape off the substance as long as a stain remains.⁵
4. If the mud dried on one's garment one may not rub it off. However, if food whose ingredients were previously ground (such as dough or farina) dried on one's garment one may remove it with one's fingernail or back of a knife as long as a stain remains.⁶

1. Shemirat Shabbat KeHilchata 15:27, Biur Halacha 302:1 D"H Yesh

2. Rav Huna in Gemara Shabbat 147a says that one who shakes out his garment has committed a Biblical violation of Shabbat. The Gemara limits this to a black new garment which one is concerned about. Rashi D"H Hamenaer explains that the person was shaking out the dust on it, whereas, Tosfot argues that shaking out dust isn't laundering but rather the Gemara means that the person shook out the dew which was on the garment.

Even though, the S"A 302:1 sides with Tosfot, Rama writes that it's proper to be concerned for the opinion of Rashi. Mishna Brurah 302:6 writes that one should only rely on the lenient opinion to ask a non-Jew to do it. Biur Halacha D"H Yesh quotes the Shiltei Giborim who asks how Tosfot could permit shaking dust out of a garment if one intends to clean it. Biur Halacha answers that Tosfot only permitted shaking it out (without cleaning it directly) however, all agree that rubbing it with one's hands to clean it is forbidden. Shemirat Shabbat KeHilchata 15:28 writes that one may only shake it out gently because shaking it vigorously reveals that one is concerned about the dust. He adds that hitting it gently with one's hand or a dry rag is the equivalent of shaking it out.

3. Shemirat Shabbat KeHilchata 15:29 (based on Biur Halacha 302:1 D"H Aleha) writes that a black or dark-colored new looking garment is assumed to be a garment which a person is concerned about and wouldn't wear without cleaning it and a light colored or old garment is assumed to be garments a person isn't concerned about. However, if one's personal attitude is different it would depend on that. 39 Melachos (Rabbi Ribiat, vol 3, pg 708-9) writes that nowadays people are particular about the appearance of one's Shabbat clothes even if they are light colored and old and so dust shouldn't be removed from one's garments in any way.

4. Even though the Ben Ish Chai (Vayechei #8) and Kaf

HaChaim 302:8 are strict, Yalkut Yosef (Shabbat vol 2, pg 76) permits like the opinion of Shulchan Aruch. Menuchat Ahava (vol 2, 12:17) writes that it is permitted but one who is strict should be blessed.

5. Rav Kahana in Gemara Shabbat 141a says that if mud sticks to one's garment one may rub it off from the inside but not from the outside. Then the Gemara quotes the Briatta which says that one may scratch it with one's nail. S"A 302:7 codifies this as halacha. Mishna Brurah 302:32 explains that rubbing it from the inside means holding the inside of the garment opposite where it's soiled and rubbing two sides of the garment together. Mishna Brurah 307:24 explains that one may scratch it with one's nail or the back of a knife even from the outside because that's not considered laundering. Yalkut Yosef (Shabbat vol 2, pg 81) agrees. 39 Melachos extends this to chulent or any similar thick moist substance.

Shemirat Shabbat KeHilchata 15:30 (based on Biur Halacha 302:1 D"H Aleha) rules that one may rub it from the inside or scratch it with one's nail until the mud falls off only if even after removing the mud a stain remains. Shemirat Shabbat KeHilchata adds that one may gently clean the garment using a dry rag if one is careful not to squeeze out the moisture in the garment. 39 Melachos (vol 3, pg 711-2) agrees but emphasizes that even when using a dry rag one may not remove the stain completely.

6. The Tur 302:7 quotes Rabbenu Peretz who says that if the mud dried it's forbidden to rub or scratch it because by making the mud crumble, one violates Tochen. S"A 302:7 quotes this as an individual opinion. Shemirat Shabbat KeHilchata 15:31 writes that if food whose ingredients were previously ground (such as dough or oatmeal) dried on one's garment one may remove it according to the conditions in 15:30. Yalkut Yosef (Shabbat vol 2, pg 81) writes that in a situation of need and one is embarrassed because of the stain one may rub off dry mud from the inside but it's preferable to have a non-Jew do it.