

The Blech Book

B”H

The Complete & Illustrated Guide To Shabbos Hotplates
Rabbi Fishel Jacobs

Class: _____
Teacher: _____
Student's name: _____
Grade: _____

1 Background

1. "Do not ignite a fire on Shabbos in all your dwellings." This verse _____.
 - a) refers only to igniting a flame
 - b) includes not only lighting a flame, but also adding fuel, fanning, or otherwise increasing the heat—such as by stirring charcoals
2. Enjoying hot, tasty food on Shabbos is _____.
 - a) a custom
 - b) a mitzvah—an inherent part of Shabbos celebration and custom
3. The concept of a blech is based in _____.
 - a) contemporary custom
 - b) Talmudic legislation
4. Before Shabbos, a pot of food was left on a flame uncovered by a blech. On Shabbos, the pot was removed from this flame. Which of the following statements is correct?
 - a) This pot may not be returned to this uncovered flame on Shabbos.
 - b) The food may only be eaten after Shabbos, since a blech was not used according to custom.

2 Before Shabbos

5. The widespread custom is to always use a blech when leaving pots of food or water on a stove (gas flame or electric coil) for Shabbos use, and that these be already fully cooked.
 - a) True
 - b) False

6. According to the letter of the law, food or water which will be more than half cooked—or, in an emergency, a third cooked—by nightfall _____ left on the stove without a blech before Shabbos.
a) may not be b) may be
7. Raw meat was added to the pot immediately before Shabbos entered. According to the letter of the law, is a blech necessary?
a) Yes b) No
8. Food so well done that continued contact with heat only overcooks it _____ a blech to be left on the stove before Shabbos.
a) still requires b) does not require
9. It is best to always use a blech, and that the food be completely cooked prior to the onset of Shabbos.
a) True b) False
10. The stove is on its highest flame? A blech _____.
a) is not necessary b) is necessary
11. A pot has been placed on the blech. It is _____ to place another pot on that pot before Shabbos.
a) forbidden b) permissible
12. Some opinions do not require covering the knobs of the lit flames or coils, others do.
a) True b) False
13. Is it permissible to raise the flame once the blech has been placed?
a) Yes b) No
14. The blech has been placed. It is now _____ to lower the flame.
a) forbidden b) permissible

15. Before Shabbos, it is _____ to cover the pot (e.g. using a towel) while it is on the blech?
a) forbidden b) permissible
16. There is no blech available. Which of the following statements is correct?
a) According to the letter of the law, a pot containing food which is half-cooked—or in an emergency a third cooked—when Shabbos begins, may be left on this uncovered flame.
b) A blech must always be used, regardless of the state of the food.
17. A blech is not available. May I use aluminum foil to cover the flame?
a) Yes b) No
18. A pot was left on an uncovered flame. The pot was removed with the intention of returning it, and it was not placed on a table. Is it permissible to replace it, now?
a) Yes b) No
19. There is no blech available. Shabbos has still not begun. Which of the following statements is correct?
a) Food or water less than half cooked—or, in an emergency a third cooked—left on an uncovered flame must be removed before Shabbos arrives.
b) When no blech is available, we are permitted to leave food on an open flame, even if the food has barely begun being cooked.
20. Food or water less than half cooked—or in an emergency a third cooked—left on a stove not covered with a blech, _____.
a) may not be eaten until Shabbos has ended
b) may be eaten before Shabbos has ended
21. Using a crockpot whose temperature can not be adjusted _____.
a) is more lenient than using a blech
b) has the same laws as using a blech
22. A crockpot whose temperature can be adjusted _____ have a preventive-reminder inserted.
a) need not b) must

23. Is a blech needed when using a hotplate whose temperature can be varied?
a) Yes b) No
24. I have a stove with electric coils below a glass surface. Can I rely on this, rather than also requiring a blech?
a) Yes b) No
25. Before Shabbos, is it permissible to leave food in an oven for use on Shabbos?
a) Yes b) No

3 On Shabbos

26. On Shabbos, am I allowed to remove food from a pot while it is on the blech?
a) Yes, when it is completely cooked.
b) No, even if it is completely cooked.
27. Removing liquid food from a pot on the blech is _____.
a) permitted, when it is completely cooked.
b) forbidden, even if it is completely cooked.
28. You _____ remove food, _____ completely cooked, from a pot which has been moved to an area on the blech not directly over the fire.
a) may not, even if it is
b) may, that is
29. It is _____ to extract water from a pot on a blech using a ladle.
a) permissible b) forbidden
30. A pot is still 40-45 degrees C. Some of the food is not completely cooked. Which of the following statements is true?
a) You may remove this food from the pot, as long as it is not on the blech.
b) You may not remove this food from the pot, even when it is not on the blech.

31. Am I permitted to remove a cover to check food in a pot which is on the blech?
a) Yes, and if the food is completely cooked, you may replace the cover.
b) Yes, and you may replace the cover even when the food is not completely cooked.
32. It is _____ to a pot which is on the blech.
a) forbidden to add food
b) permissible to add food which is completely cooked
33. It is _____ to add salt to a pot which is on the blech.
a) permissible b) forbidden
34. I removed my pot from the blech. What may I add to it now?
a) A moist food, completely cooked, which has not completely cooled off.
b) The above, and/or a completely cooked dry food, even if it has completely cooled off.
35. A pot has been removed from the blech. Its temperature is still 40-45 degrees C. What is forbidden to be added to this pot?
a) Any not completely cooked food, bread/challah, oil/water.
b) The above and spices or salt, as well.
36. It is forbidden to stir a pot whose contents are 40-45 degrees Celsius (110 degrees Fahrenheit) or above, and not completely cooked, even after it is removed from the blech.
a) True
b) False, this is only a custom, but not a prohibition.
37. The food on the blech is drying up. Is it permissible to: Place an empty pot upside down on the blech, then place the pot with the drying, and completely cooked, food on top of it?
a) Yes b) No
38. The food on the blech is drying up. The following "Action" is _____. Action: Place this pot, containing the drying and completely cooked food, on top of a different pot already on the blech.
a) permissible b) forbidden

39. The food is drying up on the blech. Choose a permissible course of action.
- a) Remove the pot with the drying, completely cooked food, from the blech. Your intention should be that you will replace it to the blech, and you should not let go of it.
With a cup, take some hot water from a water urn, and pour it into the pot with the drying water.
Then, replace the pot onto the blech, or if you wish, use its contents.
- b) Remove the pot with the drying, completely cooked food, from the blech. Your intention should be that you will replace it to the blech, and you should not let go of it.
Hold it under the spigot of a water urn, which is on the blech. Open the spigot. Then, replace the pot onto the blech, or if you wish, use its contents.
40. May I move the contents of one pot on the blech into another pot on the blech?
- a) Yes, as follows: Lift both pots off the blech. Pour the contents from one to the other. Replace both pots, or either, according to need.
- b) No, it is forbidden to move the contents of one pot on the blech to another pot on the blech.
41. Does the following "Action" completely fulfill the requirements to remove a pot and thereafter replace it onto the blech?
- Action: When you remove the pot, it should be with the intention of replacing it, before it has cooled off, to the blech afterwards. Continue holding it until you do so. It is best to hold it in the air.
- The food must be completely cooked, and not have been transferred to another pot. Finally, though it may not be as hot as when you took it off the blech, it must have retained at least some of its original heat.
- a) Yes b) No
42. I removed a pot from the blech and mistakenly placed it onto the table. Which of the following is most accurate?
- a) If you removed a pot from the blech and mistakenly placed it onto a table, it is forbidden to replace it to the blech.
- b) If you removed the pot from the blech and mistakenly placed it onto a table, it is best to refrain from replacing this pot to the blech.
- If a strong need exists, you may replace this pot to the blech, as long as it is completely cooked and has not completely cooled off.

43. I removed the pot from my blech and then replaced it, conforming to all the requirements. Is it permissible to do this numerous times on Shabbos?
- a) Yes b) No
44. I moved a pot which was on the blech directly over the flame to a place on the blech which was not directly over the flame. May I move it back?
- a) No, not even if you had this in mind when moving it and the food is completely cooked.
b) Yes, as long as the food is completely cooked, and still warm enough to be edible, you may move this pot back to a place on the blech which is directly over the flame.
45. When I removed my pot, the blech fell off the stove. May I replace it, on Shabbos, and then replace the pot to it?
- a) Yes b) No
46. On Shabbos, I took food out of the oven. May I replace it?
- a) Yes, if you had this in mind and the food is completely cooked.
b) No, not even if you had this in mind and the food is completely cooked.
47. The flame went out under my blech. What may I do with my pot of food?
- a) Place this pot—as long as it has not completely cooled off, and is completely cooked—on another blech.
b) The above is forbidden.
48. Which are true statements regarding the covering (e.g. a towel) on a pot, which is on a blech?
- a) If the covering falls off it is permissible to replace it. More coverings may be added for additional heat.
b) If the covering falls off on Shabbos it is forbidden to be replaced. and for sure it is forbidden to add more coverings.
49. May I remove a pot from the blech and completely cover it with blankets?
- a) Yes. Covering a pot which was on the blech with blankets is permissible.
b) No. Completely covering a pot with blankets even when it was on the blech from before

Shabbos, is forbidden. Surrounding this pot with blankets, towels etc., on the sides, leaving the top uncovered, is permissible.

50. I removed a pot from the blech. On top of this pot was seated another pot. Choose which of the following is a correct statement.
- a) The top pot may be placed on another pot seated on the blech.
 - b) The top pot may be placed directly onto the blech.