

A Practical Guide to *Eiruv Tavshilin*

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When Yom Tov occurs on a Friday, whether it is the first day of Yom Tov or the second day, there is an obligation to establish an *eiruv tavshilin* prior to Yom Tov. This allows one to prepare food on Yom Tov that is going to be served on Shabbat. The Gemara, *Beitzah* 15b, presents two reasons for this obligation. First, the purpose of *eiruv tavshilin* is to ensure that there is specific food that is set aside for Shabbat. The concern is that all of the food will be eaten on Yom Tov and the Shabbat meals will not be given the due honor that they deserve. Therefore, the rabbis instituted that one must prepare a Shabbat meal (or a portion of a Shabbat meal) prior to Yom Tov, and by doing so, everyone will be cognizant of the importance of honoring the Shabbat with meals that are appropriate. Second, the purpose of *eiruv tavshilin* is to serve as a reminder that it is normally prohibited to prepare food on Yom Tov that is intended for after Yom Tov. The rabbis instituted the *eiruv tavshilin* as the only means of doing so. This guide will explore some of the relevant laws relating to *eiruv tavshilin*.

Who Must Establish an *Eiruv Tavshilin*?

- Although the rabbi generally establishes an *eiruv tavshilin* on behalf of the entire community, one may not rely on his *eiruv* instead of establishing one's own. One may only rely on it, *ex post facto*, if one forgot to establish one.¹
- If one is not planning on cooking or baking on Yom Tov in preparation for Shabbat, one should still establish an *eiruv tavshilin* without reciting a *beracha* in order to permit other Shabbat preparations.²
- A family that always eats together is only required to establish one *eiruv*.³ Some opinions require guests who do not live in the home to either establish a separate *eiruv* or have someone specifically acquire the *eiruv* on behalf of the guests.⁴

What to Use for the *Eiruv*

- The *eiruv tavshilin* consists of one cooked item and one baked item. If one is not planning on baking, only a cooked item is required.⁵
- The cooked item can be any item that is eaten together with bread (e.g. meat, fish, or eggs). Rice or pasta cannot be used for *eiruv tavshilin*.⁶
- The minimum size of the cooked item should be a *k'zayit* (the size of an olive)⁷ and the minimum size of the baked item should be a *k'beitzah* (the size of an egg).⁸ Nevertheless, in order to enhance the mitzvah, it is preferable to use a whole loaf or roll for the baked item and a respectable portion for the cooked item.⁹
- It is preferable to bake and cook items specifically for the purpose of *eiruv tavshilin*. Nevertheless, this is not required and one may use any cooked or baked item (that meets the other requirements) even if one did not personally bake or cook it.¹⁰

The Procedure, *Beracha* and Declaration

- If one wants to include others in the *eiruv*,¹¹ one should give the food items to an adult, preferably someone who is not a dependent,¹² and the other person should lift the food items more than a *tefach* (approximately four inches) for the purpose of acquiring the *eiruv* on behalf of the others.

- When the food items are prepared, one should hold both items and recite the following *beracha*:

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על מצות עירוב

Blessed are you Lord our God, King of the universe, who sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us on the mitzvah of eiruv.

Then,¹³ one should recite in a language one understands¹⁴ (the bracketed section should only be recited if one acquired the *eiruv* on behalf of the entire community):

With this eiruv, it will be permissible for us to bake, cook, insulate, light a candle and perform all of our needs on Yom Tov in preparation for Shabbat [for us and for all Jews who live in this city].

בהדין עירובא יהא שרא לנא לאפויי
ולבשולי ולאטמוגי ולאדוקי שרגא
ולמעבד כל צרכנא מיומא טבא לישבתא,
[לנא ולכל ישראל הדרים בעיר הזאת.]

Once Yom Tov Begins

- If one forgot to establish an *eiruv tavshilin* before Yom Tov and the rabbi or someone else in the community properly acquired an *eiruv tavshilin* on behalf of the entire community, one may rely on that *eiruv*.¹⁵ If this is not the first time this happened, consult with your local rabbi.¹⁶ When *eiruv tavshilin* is required multiple times over a short period of time (such as this year, when Rosh HaShanah, Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret all require *eiruv tavshilin*), and an *eiruv tavshilin* from a previous holiday is still available and edible, one may rely on it.¹⁷
- Once an *eiruv tavshilin* is established, one may perform *melacha* that is normally permissible on Yom Tov in preparation for Shabbat. One should ensure that these preparation take place early enough so that it is theoretically possible to benefit from the preparations on Yom Tov itself.¹⁸
- One should make sure not to eat the *eiruv tavshilin* until all preparations for Shabbat are completed (including candle lighting). It is preferable to use the bread for *lechem mishneh* at one of the Shabbat meals.¹⁹

¹ The Gemara, *Beitzah* 16b, states that Shmuel used to establish an *eiruv tavshilin* on behalf of the entire city. However, this *eiruv* was only effective for those who weren't able to establish their own *eiruv*. Those who intentionally relied on his *eiruv* were not included. According to Rabbeinu Asher, *Beitzah* 2:2, one can never forgo the obligation of establishing an *eiruv* and rely on the *eiruv* of another individual. This opinion is codified by *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 527:7.

² There is a dispute among the Rishonim as to whether an *eiruv tavshilin* is required for kindling a flame. Tosafot, *Beitzah* 22a, s.v. *UMadlikin*, note that if one does not specifically designate the *eiruv tavshilin* to permit the lighting of candles (*I'adlukei shraga*), it is prohibited to light the Shabbat candles. *Beit Yosef, Orach Chaim* 527, notes that Rambam, *Hilchot Yom Tov* 6:8, does not require *eiruv tavshilin* in order to light the Shabbat candles. R. Mordechai Karmy, *Ma'amar Mordechai* 527:18, rules that if one is in a situation where he does not need to prepare any food on Yom Tov for Shabbat, one should establish an *eiruv tavshilin* without a *beracha* and this will allow one to light Shabbat candles according to all opinions.

³ *Shulchan Aruch HaRav, Orach Chaim* 527:18. This ruling is also implicit in *Mishna Berurah* 527:34.

⁴ R. Avraham David of Butchatch, *Eishel Avraham* 527:7, questions the limitations of relying on someone else's *eiruv*. Clearly, one household only establishes one *eiruv*. What is more questionable is a situation where married children stay at their parents for the duration of Yom Tov. Are these children required to establish their own *eiruv* or should they rely on the *eiruv* of their parents? *Eishel Avraham* concludes that if the guests are eating together with the hosts they do not require their own *eiruv*. If a situation arises where the guests are eating separately from the host (or from other guests) then each group requires its own *eiruv*. Based on the various mitigating factors, R. Ovadia Yosef, *Chazon Ovadia, Hilchot Yom Tov, Hilchot Eiruv Tavshilin* no.3, concludes that married children staying at their parents' home are not required to establish their own *eiruv* in order to light candles. *Piskei Teshuvot* 527:17, presents the opinion of some Acharonim who hold that if the children have their own private quarters, they should establish their own *eiruv* without reciting a *beracha*.

⁵ The Mishna, *Beitzah* 15b, records a dispute between *Beit Shammai* and *Beit Hillel* regarding the necessary components for an *eiruv tavshilin*. *Beit Shammai* require that two cooked items be set aside for the *eiruv* and *Beit Hillel* only require one cooked item. Rabbeinu Tam (cited in Tosafot *Beitzah* 17b s.v. *Amar Rava*) suggests that while the opinion of *Beit Hillel* is accepted as normative, an *eiruv* of a cooked item is only sufficient for one who intends to cook on Yom Tov (for Shabbat)

but does not intend to bake. If one intends to bake on Yom Tov, a baked item is required in addition to the cooked item. Rambam, *Hilchot Yom Tov*, Chapter 6, does not mention any requirement to incorporate a baked item into the *eiruv tavshilin*. *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 527:2, rules that ideally one should use a cooked item and a baked item for the *eiruv tavshilin*. However, if only a cooked item was used it is permitted to bake. *Mishna Berurah* 527:6, adds that if one does not plan to bake, there is no requirement to use a baked item.

⁶ *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 527:4.

⁷ *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 527:3.

⁸ Rama, ad loc.

⁹ *Mishna Berurah* 527:8.

¹⁰ The Gemara, *Beitzah* 16a, states that if one used the leftover food from the bottom of the pot for the *eiruv tavshilin*, it is valid. R. Shlomo Luria, *Yam Shel Shlomo, Beitzah* 2:8, notes that it is not proper to use the leftovers at the bottom of the pot because it is a desecration of the mitzvah. *Mishna Berurah* 527:20, notes that R. Luria's primary concern was the quality of the food. However, if one used a respectable portion that wasn't prepared specifically for the purpose of *eiruv tavshilin*, it would not constitute a desecration of the mitzvah. Nevertheless, he notes (in *Bei'ur Halacha* 520:6) the opinion of R. Yoel Sirkes, *Bach, Orach Chaim* no. 527, that one should ideally (*mitzvah min hamuvchar*) prepare the food specifically for the purpose of *eiruv tavshilin*.

¹¹ Rambam, *Hilchot Yom Tov* 6:7, recommends that everyone should arrange an *eiruv tavshilin* on behalf of the entire city.

¹² The laws of who may be used to acquire the *eiruv* are found in *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 366:10. While one may use adult dependents, ideally, one should try to find someone who is not supported by the owner of the food items.

¹³ *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 527:12.

¹⁴ Rama, ad loc. and *Mishna Berurah* 527:40.

¹⁵ Rama, *Orach Chaim* 527:9 and *Mishna Berurah* 527:32.

¹⁶ *Mishna Berurah* 527:22, notes that if this is not the first time forgetting, one is considered negligent, and one is not covered by the rabbi's *eiruv tavshilin*. However, *Mishna Berurah* 527:26, does note that some Acharonim permit relying on the rabbi routinely and perhaps one can rely on those opinions in a pressing situation. Furthermore, there are numerous other solutions for someone who has not established an *eiruv tavshilin*.

¹⁷ As noted in the introduction, there is a dispute regarding the reason for *eiruv tavshilin*. Rabbeinu Asher, *Beitzah* 2:1, notes that there is an important practical difference between the two reasons. According to the opinion that the purpose of *eiruv tavshilin* is to prepare properly for Shabbat (Rava), the *eiruv* must be established on Erev Yom Tov and may not be established prior to Erev Yom Tov. However, according to the opinion that the purpose of the *eiruv* is to provide a reminder (Rav Ashi), the *eiruv* may be established prior to Erev Yom Tov. Additionally, if on Sukkot, both the first days of Yom Tov and the last days require an *eiruv tavshilin*, one may establish one *eiruv* that will serve as the *eiruv* for the first and last days. *Shulchan Aruch* 527:14, rules that one should not establish an *eiruv tavshilin* prior to Erev Yom Tov *l'chatchilah* (*ab initio*). However, if this was done, it is permitted *b'dieved* (*ex post facto*).

¹⁸ The Gemara, *Pesachim* 46b, cites a dispute between Rabbah and Rav Chisda whether one is culpable for baking on Yom Tov with intent to eat the food item after Yom Tov. Rav Chisda is of the opinion that one is culpable. Rabbah disagrees and maintains that one is not culpable because there is always the possibility that guests may come and the food will in fact be served on Yom Tov. This principle is known as *ho'il* (based on the term *ho'il umikla'ei lei orchim*, translated as "since there is a possibility of guests arriving"). Rabbah attempts to prove the principle of *ho'il* from the concept of *eiruv tavshilin*. If there is a concept of *ho'il*, one can understand why it is permissible to prepare food on Yom Tov that is going to be eaten on Shabbat. The concept of *ho'il* permits all food preparation on a biblical level even if one intends to eat the food item after Yom Tov. The prohibition of preparing food on Yom Tov with intent to eat it after Yom Tov is rabbinic in nature. However, the rabbis permitted food preparation for Shabbat if one establishes an *eiruv tavshilin*. Rav Chisda responds that the reason why *eiruv tavshilin* works is because on a biblical level one may in fact prepare food on Yom Tov for the purpose of eating it on Shabbat.

While Rabbah's opinion does seem to be the lenient opinion, Tosafot ad loc., s.v. *Rabbah*, note that the principle of *ho'il* does not apply if there is no possibility of actually eating the food on Yom Tov. Therefore, any food that is prepared at the very end of Yom Tov is not subject to the leniencies of *ho'il*. R. Avraham Gombiner, *Magen Avraham* 527, suggests that according to Tosafot, it is prohibited to prepare food at the end of Yom Tov for the purpose of eating it on Shabbat even if one establishes an *eiruv tavshilin*. *Magen Avraham* further notes that many communities have the practice of accepting Shabbat early in this instance in order to avoid this problem. *Mishna Berurah* 527:3, adopts *Magen Avraham's* position.

¹⁹ *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 527:16, and *Mishna Berurah* 527:11 and 527:48. See also *Mishna Berurah* 274:4.