

Introduction to Holy Written Objects

By surrounding ourselves with reminders of the commandments and with objects for observing the various Jewish rituals, we can be constantly aware of what we should be doing to live our lives as Jews.

There are two categories of items used for mitzvot:

- Holy items (tashmishei kedusha), such as tefilin and its boxes, Torah books and commentaries, and Torah scrolls and covers.
- Items used for mitzvot (tashmishei mitzva), such as lulav, etrog, and talit/tzitzit.

Women

Sacred scrolls (Torah, mezuzah, tefilin) may not be written by women for sacred purposes. However, if they were written by a woman, you may study from them. You may not use them for public Torah reading, putting on tefilin, or affixing to doorposts (for mezuzah).

Disposal

Both tashmishei kedusha and tashmishei mitzva should be disposed of in a respectful manner.

Tashmishei kedusha should ideally be buried. Newspapers with Torah or Torah commentary must be double-wrapped and then may be put in the trash, since they contain material that should not be buried with holy writings (only a newspaper's Torah or Torah commentary contain inherent holiness).

To dispose of tashmishei mitzva, you may wrap in one layer of plastic and throw it in normal garbage.