

SEPARATING CHALLA (HAFRASHAT CHALLA)

INTRODUCTION TO SEPARATING CHALLA

Introduction to Separating Challa

Although challa refers to the two loaves of bread (or matza) over which we say the ha'motzi blessing at Shabbat and Jewish festival meals, challa also means the portion of dough or bread that we are obligated to give to the cohen/priests during Temple times. Today, we burn a token portion (“challa”) of dough.

NOTE Burning the challa is not considered to violate bal tashchit (needless destruction), since the challa is separated and destroyed to fulfill a mitzva.

SEPARATING THE CHALLA PORTION

Separating the Challa Portion

Separating Challa from more than 5 lbs. of Dough

After you knead more than 5 lbs. (2.3 kg) of flour at one time:

- Hold part of the dough (at least 1 fl. oz.) while it is still part of the main mass of dough;
- Say the blessing lehafrish challa min ha'isa;
- Separate a small amount (1 fl. oz. is sufficient) of the dough as challa; and
- Say harei zu challa.

Separating Challa from between 2.5 and 5 lbs. of Dough

SITUATION You prepare dough, in a single batch, from more than 2.5 lbs. (1 kg), but less than 5 lbs. (2.3 kg), of flour.

WHAT TO DO Separate a small amount (1 fl. oz. is sufficient) of the dough as “challa.” Don't say the blessing; just say harei zu challa.

NOTE If you mix at least 2.5 lbs. (1 kg) of dough, you must separate challa (without a blessing) even if you will not be baking some of the dough until another time.

Separating Challa from less than 2.5 lbs. of Dough

Don't separate challa if the dough was prepared from less than 2.5 lbs. (1 kg) of flour.

Separating Challa from Dough Mixed by Non-Jew

Don't separate challa if you acquire dough that had been owned by a non-Jew at the time it was mixed.

Separating Challa after Baking

You may separate challa after baking (on weekdays only) if you forgot to separate challa before baking.

SITUATION You forgot to separate challa from dough made of at least 2.5 lbs. (1 kg) of flour, it is now Shabbat or a Jewish festival. You want to eat the bread.

WHAT TO DO

- If you are outside Eretz Yisrael: You may leave part of the challa until after Shabbat or Jewish festivals. After havdala, separate the challa from the part that you had set aside.
- If you are in Eretz Yisrael: You may not use bread from which challa was not separated. Once Shabbat or the Jewish festival ends, you may separate challa and then eat the bread.

BURNING THE CHALLA PORTION

Which Piece of Challa To Burn

Once you intend a particular piece of dough to be the challa portion, you must burn that piece and not put it back into the main dough.

When To Burn the Challa Portion

There is no time limit for burning "challa." You may save several pieces for burning together, but you may not keep them in a place where they might get used.

How To Burn the Challa Portion

You may burn the challa portion any way you wish. You must burn it completely.