

## Halakhic Guidelines for Shabbat without an Eruv<sup>1</sup>

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Since we are not accustomed to Shabbat without an *eruv*, it is a good idea to spend some time thinking through your Shabbat routine to determine what you can do to prepare for Shabbat without the *eruv* (i.e. carrying keys, carrying a paper with addresses or times for Shabbat meals on it, bringing food to meals). Please feel free to call or text me if you have any questions (203-962-2512).

Without an *eruv*, you cannot carry *anywhere* outside and to and from some places inside (more details below). This includes carrying anything in your pockets or hands/your body. You may not carry more than 6 feet (4 *amot*) outside.

### **I) What should I do about my house keys?**

To manage getting into your home, you have two choices:

- 1) Leave it unlocked.
- 2) Hide a key outside within 6 feet of the door. Pick up the key; unlock the door; remove the key; open the door; and put the key back in its hiding place. If you have an enclosed porch, you can ignore the 6-foot limitation, and put it anywhere on the porch.

"Wearing" a key (e.g., hanging from a bracelet or a belt) is equally forbidden, unless it is actually serving a purpose for your clothing (e.g., serving as a belt buckle).

If you live in an **apartment building**:

A) Key to the building: If you don't want to have to wait for somebody else to come along to open the door, follow the above instructions, leaving the key outside the building. Please note, however, that if your building has two sets of front doors, and it is the inner set that is locked, you must hide the key in the vestibule between the doors, as you may not bring it from outside into the vestibule.

B) Key to your apartment: Follow the above instructions, though you may hide the key anywhere in the building hallways (with no 6-foot limitation).

### **II) Can I carry in my apartment building's hallways?**

1) You should not carry anything into or out of your apartment, but in extenuating circumstances may be lenient regarding this if you live in a rental building (e.g., if there is garbage that is causing a bad odor).

2) You may carry anywhere within the hallways and other public areas of the building. E.g., you can carry your keys more than 6 feet in the hallway outside your actual apartment or you may leave some toys in the hallway before Shabbat, and they may then be used throughout the common areas of the building.

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<sup>1</sup> Thank you to multiple rabbanim who have shared their guides with me; much is taken with permission.

3) You may carry to and from your apartment to other parts of the building if the apartments are rental units owned by a common owner and if the appliances or other furniture is owned by the building's owner—with the following condition: You may not carry to or from the common areas of a condo building without first making an “*eruv chatzeirot*.” The process for making an *eruv chatzeirot* is found in the Koren Siddur on page 305 and in the Artscroll Siddur on page 656.

The most efficient way to establish an *eruv chatzeirot* is for someone to purchase a box of matza and hand that box of matza to another person. The person who receives the box of matzot should ideally not be a member of one's family, even one's spouse or adult child. Rather it should be someone who is above the age of bar or bat mitzvah and is not a member of the family. That person will lift the box of matzot a tefach (approximately 3.5 inches) and have in mind that by doing so the *matzot* become the possession of all the inhabitants of the building. The text *בהדין ערובא* that is found in most siddurim should then be recited, however the *beracha* on the *eruv* should not be recited. Even if the text is not recited the *eruv* is still kosher and it is permitted to carry inside the building.

If you have non-observant Jews or non-Jews in your building, you cannot make an *eruv chatzeirot* in the ordinary way. Instead, you can perform a *sechirat reshut* (a halakhic property rental) with a representative of your building (i.e. a super or maintenance person). If you live in a building with condos, you can perform a *sechirat reshut* with a staff member who is hired by the condo association (whether they can actually “rent” you the space is not important). The procedure: you say to the individual ‘I would like to rent the spaces in the building in order to permit Jews to carry there on Shabbat.’ Once they agree, give them an object of minimal value—even a quarter, it can be less than the value of a *peruta*. After you do this, you do the *eruv chatzeirot* procedure as outlined above. If you do this, you can carry from your actual apartment to any parts of your building.

### III) What about the dorms?

In terms of getting into your dorm building, you can (1) either wait for someone to open the door for you and follow after them, or (2) you can hide your key within 6 feet of the door and follow the above-mentioned procedure (in II). It is likely unideal to this if your dorm has a lot of foot traffic and your keys can go missing, in which case option 1 is likely your best bet.

In terms of getting into your dorm room, you can hide your key under a matter or other hiding place on your floor or in your building. You can carry anywhere within your building, but you cannot carry from one room to another room (i.e. from your room to the hallway; by contrast you could carry your key 20 feet down from one end of your hallway to another). Procedure: Pick up the key; unlock the door; remove the key; open the door; and put the key back in its hiding place.

If you want to carry to and from your dorm room to other parts of the building, you can do the above-mentioned *sechirat reshut* with a Harvard maintenance/staff person to “rent” out the

building to use and then perform an *eruv chatzeirot* (also explained above). If you need matza, Hillel should have/message me.

#### **IV) What can I wear or carry on my person?**

You can wear any article of clothing even if it is not a piece of clothing you need at that moment: your glasses, your watch, your jewelry, your hearing aid, and even a shoe insole, a bandage, or a wrist guard. Canes, walkers, crutches etc. may be used on Shabbat if one cannot walk without them.

If you wear a *talit* or bring your own *siddur* to shul, make arrangements to bring them to shul before Shabbat or else wear a *talit* under your coat when you come to shul on Shabbat morning (or use a *talit* or *siddur* from the shul's supply).

You will not be able to carry shoes or any other personal items that you might normally bring to shul, so if you need to wear other shoes in shul, you may want to bring them to shul before Shabbat.

#### **V) What about small children?**

Strollers may not be wheeled outside, and children may not be carried. If a child can walk, you may hold his/her hand, and, if the child needs comforting, you may pick him/her up while standing, but may not walk.

With wishes for a Shabbat Shalom,  
Rav Noah