

הלכות רב קהילה

Electricity
on Shabbos



The Prohibition of Activating Electric Appliances

Introduction



“לֹא תִבְעֲרוּ אֵשׁ בְּכֹל מִשְׁכְּתֵיכֶם בְּיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת”
You shall not kindle fire in any of
your dwelling places on Shabbos

Shemos 35:3

“המחמם את הברזל
כדי לצרפו... הרי זה תולדת מבעיר וחייב”
One who heats iron to strengthen it...
is liable for a *tolda* of Mav’ir

Rambam

אדם שמחמם משהו למצב שיכול לשרוף הרי זה מבעיר
Heating something to the extent that it can
burn something else is like kindling a flame

Maggid Mishneh

The Prohibition of Activating Electric Appliances

Introduction

Based on this the *Acharonim* rule:

Appliances with
incandescent filament

Appliances with electric
heating element



Forbidden min hatorah under Mav'ir

The Prohibition of Activating Electric Appliances

Introduction

Appliances without incandescent filament



Forbidden *miderabonon* under *molid*:
Powering device with electric current



Appliance with screen
Prohibition of Koseiv





Resetting Tripped Breaker Involving Only Miderabonon Prohibition

Through a non-Jew

If the fuse blows in Shul

(and all lights or appliances connected to it don't contain an incandescent filament)
May one ask a non-Jew to turn it back on?



Permitted for mitzvah purpose,
especially for public need

It's a shevus d'shevus, which is
permitted for mitzvah purposes

Resetting Tripped Breaker Involving Only Miderabonon Prohibition

Through a non-Jew

ה' ל' דבר שאינו מלאכה ואינו אסור לעשותו בשבת אלא
משום שבות מותר לישראל לומר לעכו"ם ב' לעשותו
בשבת והוא שיהיה שם ז' מקצת חולי או יהיה צריך לדבר
צורך הרבה או ב' מפני מצוה כיצד אומר ישראל לעכו"ם

שו"ע
ש"ז, ס"ה

The act itself is a shevus
Asking a non-Jew to do it is shevus d'shevus

Resetting Tripped Breaker Involving Only Miderabonon Prohibition

Through a child



If no non-Jew is available, may one ask a child?

Mishna Berura
Based on R. Akiva Eiger

For child's need

Permitted

If not for child's need

Forbidden

Resetting Tripped Breaker Involving Only Miderabonon Prohibition

Through a child

Alter Rebbe - Based on Ran, Rashba

Once in a while, for a mitzvah, and non-Jew not available

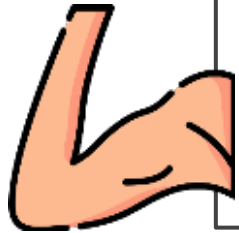


Permitted even if not for child's need

This includes even child above age of chinuch,
but preferable to ask child below that age

Resetting Tripped Breaker Involving Only Miderabonon Prohibition

Adult Jew with *shinuy*



If there is no other available option,
many an adult Jew do it with shinuy?

View #1

Heter of shevus d'shevus
is only when Jew doesn't do any act

View #2

Heter of shevus d'shevus
applies even when Jew does act

Piskei
Teshuvos

Those who are lenient once in a while have whom to rely upon
(especially mitzvah of public)

Resetting Tripped Breaker Involving *Min Hatorah* Prohibition

Sugyos in Gemoro

עירובין סח, א

והקונה שדה
בסוריא כקונה בפרוארי ירושלי' למאי הילכתא
אמר רב ששת לומר ^אשכותבין עליו אונו
ואפילו בשבת בשבת ס"ד כדאמר רבא אומר
לעובד כוכבים ועושה י"ה"ג אומר לעובד
כוכבים ועושה ואע"ג ^בדאמירה לעובד כוכבים
שבות משום ישוב א"י לא גזור רבנן:

For mitzvah of settling Eretz Yisroel,
one may have non-Jew do
even Melacha min hatorah

גיטין ח, ב

הזאה שבות ^א ואמירה לנכרי שבות
מה הזאה שבות ואינה דוחה את השבת אף
אמירה לנכרי שבות ואינה דוחה את השבת
א"ל ולא שני לך בין שבות דאית ביה מעשה
לשבות דלית ביה מעשה ^ב דהא מר לא אמר
לנכרי זיל אחים

Even for mitzvah (bris mila) one may only have
non-Jew do derabonon prohibition (דלית ביה מעשה)
and not one that is min hatorah (דאית ביה מעשה)

Apparent contradiction



Resetting Tripped Breaker Involving *Min Hatorah* Prohibition

Views of *Rishonim*

Most Rishonim

One may not have non-Jew do min hatorah prohibitions; in Maseches Eiruvim there is a unique heter for mitzvah of settling Eretz Yisroel

Ba'al Ha'itur

(Based on Ba'al Halachos Gedolos)

One may have non-Jew do min hatorah prohibitions for any mitzvah; his girsa in Maseches Eiruvim also mentions mitzvah of bris mila



Resetting Tripped Breaker Involving *Min Hatorah* Prohibition

Rulings of *Acharonim*

Like most <i>Rishonim</i> – forbidden to ask non-Jew	Mechaber
Common custom follows permissive view of Ba'al Ha'itur, but one should be stringent when not a great need	Rama
One shouldn't be lenient at all, even for a great need, but don't reprimand those who are lenient	Alter Rebbe
Permits for sake of mitzvah of public (or maybe only to save public from transgressing)	Mishna Berura



Resetting Tripped Breaker Involving *Min Hatorah* Prohibition

Views of contemporary *poskim*

Yalkut Yosef:

If the shul's electricity went out in the middle of davening on Friday night, one may ask a non-Jew to turn it on. For a mitzvah of the public, we can rely on the Ba'al Ha'itur who permits having non-Jew do even Melacha min hatorah... it is proper to ask one non-Jew to instruct another non-Jew.

But this heter should not be relied upon to enable an individual to perform a mitzvah.

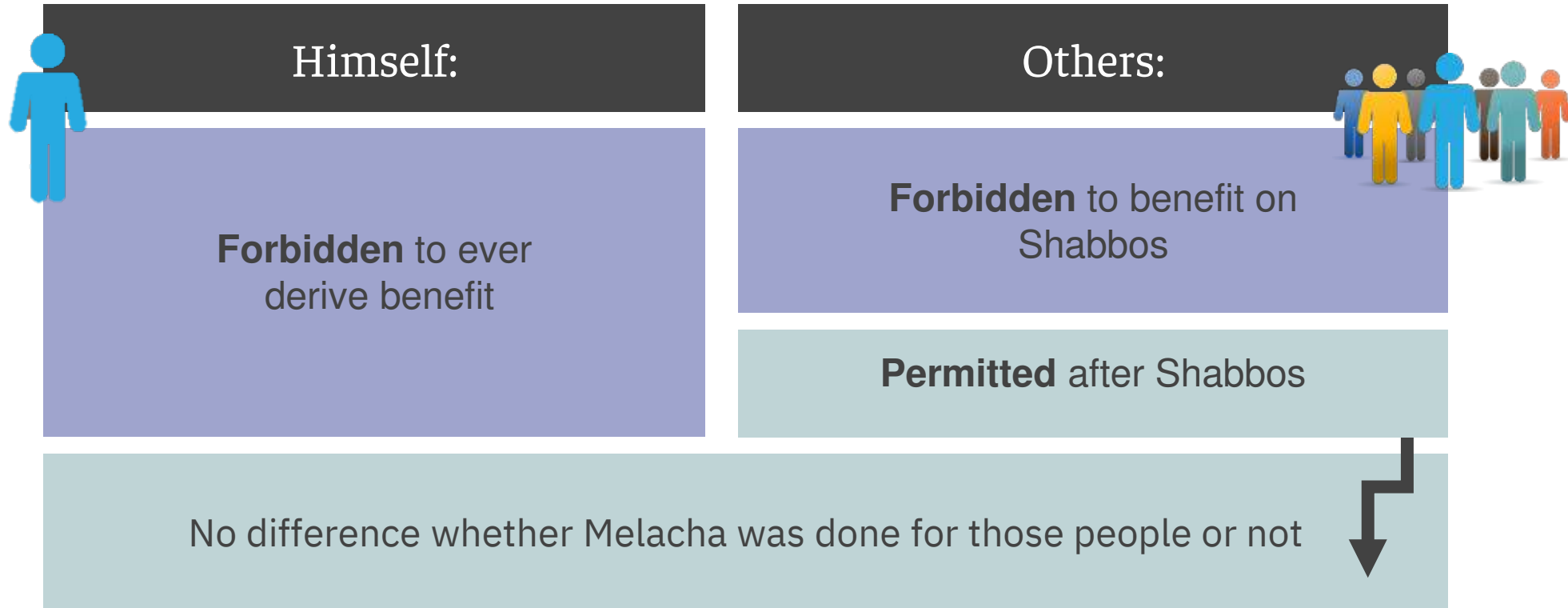
Piskei Teshuvos:

Discusses at length the views of the poskim, and concludes that those who are lenient with regard to asking a non-Jew to turn the shul's lights back on, when it was extinguished for reasons beyond one's control, and unexpectedly, have whom to rely upon.

If a Jew Transgresses and Turns On Electricity

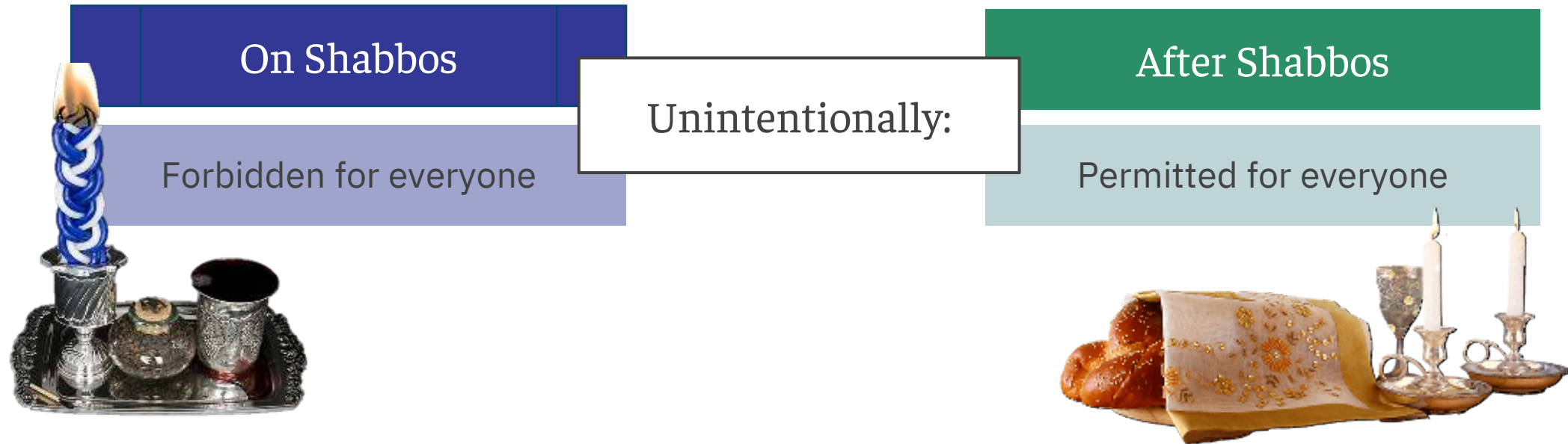
Melacha *min hatorah* done intentionally

One who did Melacha min hatorah intentionally:



If a Jew Transgresses and Turns On Electricity

Melacha *min hatorah* done unintentionally



If the hot plate or hot water urn is activated due to a Jew's transgression (even unintentional) — and otherwise the cholent wouldn't be cooked or the water wouldn't be hot — it is forbidden to benefit from them on Shabbos



If a Jew Transgresses and Turns On Electricity

Derabonon prohibition

When prohibition is *miderabonon*:

Intentionally

Unintentionally

Forbidden for everyone

Permitted for everyone

This applies both on Shabbos itself and afterwards

* Even though Magen Avrohom seems to treat derabonon prohibitions just like min hatorah ones, the Alter Rebbe rules leniently



If a Jew Transgresses and Turns On Electricity

When Melacha wasn't done on desired item itself

If the Melacha wasn't done on the desired item itself, only that the item became available indirectly through the Melacha (e.g. food was brought in a car)

If it wouldn't be possible to benefit from it if not for the Melacha

Debated by contemporary poskim

If it would have been possible to benefit from it without the Melacha

Permitted



If Timer Was Set Incorrectly

The *heter* to use a timer

It is widespread custom, supported by the majority of contemporary poskim, to set timers for lights, air conditioners, and the like

There are reasons to be stringent and not set timers to turn on an appliance that will heat up food or the like

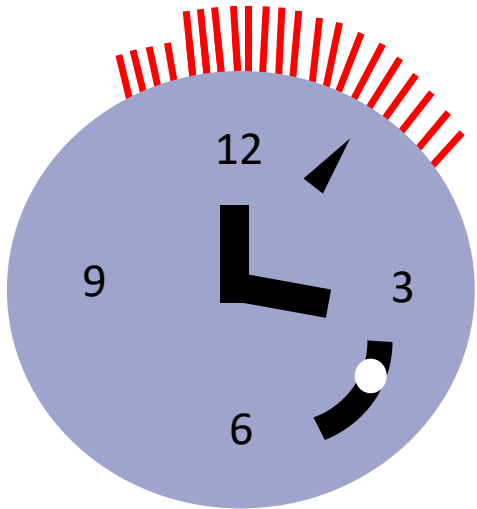
It is forbidden to set timer for appliance that causes public zilzul Shabbos (e.g. radio)



If Timer Was Set Incorrectly

Continuing current state

Extending the time
it will be on



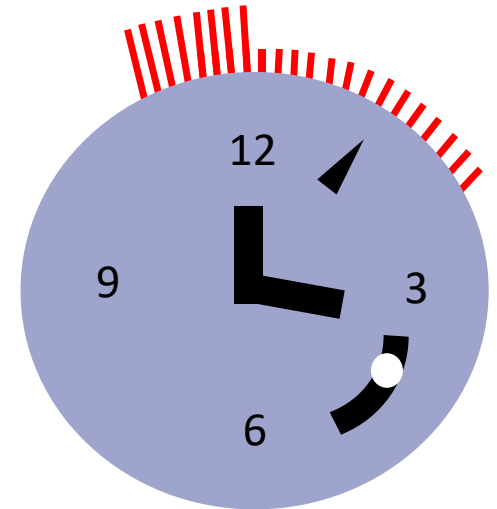
Some prohibit

1. The act is being done on the appliance (unlike closing the window from afar)
2. The timer is muktza

Some
permit

Like closing door to prevent
wind from extinguishing candle

Extending the time
it will be off



Shortening the current state of being on or off is forbidden according to all

Refrigerator Was Not Placed in “Shabbos Mode”

Older models

By older fridges where the primary issue is the light that turns on

If there is need of mitzvah – oneg Shabbos:

One may have non-Jew disable light (and fan)

If no non-Jew available, one may ask child



Refrigerator Was Not Placed in “Shabbos Mode”

Modern models

Modern fridges often have many other sensors that are activated each time the fridge is opened

One should buy a refrigerator which has a “Shabbos mode” or in which a “Shabbos mode” can be installed



If there is need of mitzvah
(oneg Shabbos)
or need of the public (in shul):

One may ask non-Jew to take food out

If none available, may ask child