The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Mon, Jan 5, 2026 ■ ט״ז טבת, תשפ״ו
סימן מ׳ סעיף א׳-ב׳

Overview

Siman 40 Seif 1:

It is forbidden to suspend *tefillin* whether by the *bayis* or whether by the *retzuos*. It is, however, permitted to suspend them while in their bag.

- If momentarily one holds his *tefillin* and the *retzuos* hang down it is not an issue but one may not allow the *bayis* to hang even momentarily. However, it is permitted for one to hold the *retzuos* with the *tefillin* hanging down as one puts it on his head. (M.B. 2)
- A *Sefer Torah* may never be suspended even if the *Sefer Torah* is in an *aron kodesh* and the *aron kodesh* is suspended. According to Chaye Adam, it is prohibited even if the *aron kodesh* is attached to the wall with pegs and there is nothing beneath it. (M.B. 3)
- *Sefarim* have the same status as *tefillin* and may not be suspended but in a utensil it is permitted. (M.B. 3)
- The custom is that one fasts if he drops his *tefillin* if they are out of their case as well as if a *Sefer Torah* falls even while in the case. Elya Rabba writes that if one's *tefillin* fall while in the case one should give a *perutah* to *tzedaka*. (M.B. 3)

Siman 40 Seif 2:

It is prohibited for one to have relations in a room that has *tefillin* unless they are removed or if placed in a utensil that is in a utensil. The second utensil cannot be a utensil that is designed for the *tefillin* because if it is designed for the *tefillin* even one hundred utensils count as no more than a single utensil. If both utensils are not made for the *tefillin* or if the inner utensil was not made for the *tefillin* it is permitted even though the outer utensil was made for the *tefillin*.

- The *halacha* that sacred items must be in two utensils applies to *sefarim*, whether written or printed and the cover of the *sefer* does not count as one of the utensils. (M.B. 4)
- Instead of removing it from the room one could also construct a partition that is ten *tefachim* tall. (M.B. 6)
- Two utensils are not required as two coverings will also suffice. Furthermore, as long as it is covered on top and the sides it is sufficient and does not have to cover the bottom of the object as well. (M.B. 7)
- If one puts his *tefillin* and *talis* bag into a larger bag, that larger bag is considered a utensil designed for the *tefillin* and the tefillin *still* require an additional covering unless the *talis* covers the *tefillin* since the *talis* is not a utensil designed for the *tefillin*. (M.B. 7)
- Magen Avrohom writes that a *mezuzah* that is inside a room must also be covered with two utensils, one of them not designed to cover the *mezuzah*. A clear covering is considered a utensil but the second one must be opaque. (M.B. 7)
- If one made for a *mezuzah* or other *sefarim* two utensils to serve as the double utensil it is acceptable. (M.B. 7)
- As long as one of the utensils was not designed for the sacred item it is acceptable. (M.B. 8)

Halacha Highlight

Suspending one's *tefillin*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 40 Seif 1

אסור לתלות תפלין

It is prohibited to suspend one's *tefillin*

The Gemara Berachos (24a) notes a contradiction whether one is permitted to allow his *tefillin* to hang. The Gemara offers two resolutions to this contradiction. According to one resolution we differentiate between a case in which the *retzuos* of the *tefillin* are supported and the *bayis* is dangling which is prohibited and a case in which the *bayis* is supported and the *retzuos* are dangling. According to the second resolution, if either the *bayis* or the *retzuos* are dangling it is prohibited and what is permitted is to hang a bag that contains *tefillin*. It is evident from Rashi's commentary (ד״ה התולה תפיליו) that the Gemara is discussing hanging the *tefillin* from a hook or peg and not when the person is holding one part of the *tefillin* with another part dangling. This implies that it is prohibited to hang *tefillin* on the wall since it is degrading to the *tefillin* but it is not prohibited for one who is holding his *tefillin* to allow a part of it to dangle. Magen Avrohom (סק״א), however, states that allowing part of one's *tefillin* to dangle even if it is held in one's hand is also prohibited. Taz (סק״א) rules that it is permitted to allow part of one's *tefillin* to dangle while putting on the *tefillin* since it is necessary in order to don it.

Mishnah Berurah (סק״ב) rules in accordance with Taz that the *tefillin* may dangle while one is donning it. Kaf Hachaim (אות א׳) cites many authorities who disagree with Taz's ruling and writes that one should make an effort to avoid allowing part of one's *tefillin* to hang as he puts it on, unless this creates difficulty for him. Tiferes Shmuel (על הרא״ש ברכות פ״ג סי׳ ל״ח) writes that the preferable way to don the *shel rosh* is to hold the knot with one's right hand and the *bayis* with one's left hand. Shelah (במצות תפילין עמ רי״א) also advises donning one's *shel rosh* in this manner.

Stories to Share

Showing Respect

ש״ע מ׳, א׳: ״וספרים כגון ספרי תלמוד וכדומה דומה לתפילין...״

We find on today's amud that one must treat seforim with respect.

A certain person learned that the Sefer Chassidim prohibits carrying seforim by hanging them from his belt behind him. He wondered whether this also applies to putting them in a bag slung on his back. And what about the rack of a bike which is positioned behind him? Would keeping seforim in such a rack a lack of proper respect for the sefer?

When these questions reached Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, he permitted the use of both. "The Sefer Chassidim never meant caring the sefer behind him in a manner that is not noticeable, like seforim in a bag. It also does not mean a basket which is no sign of disrespect."

שו״ת אבני ישפה, ח״א, קט״ו