



- „ Compiled by Rabbi Moishe Dovid Lebovits
- „ Reviewed by Rabbi Benzion Schiffenbauer Shlita
- „ All Piskei Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita
are reviewed by Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita

Kashrus at a Shabbos Affair Part 1

Most people are aware that there are *halachos* that apply to the *Shabbos kiddush*, such as what is permitted to be used for *kiddush*, how much food may one eat when sitting down to a *kiddush* and not come into the problem of *kevias seuda*? These are important *halachos* to discuss. However, something which is much neglected on every *Shabbos* is the *kashrus* of the food being eaten at a catered affair.¹ In most cases many *issurim* are being done and the *ba'al simcha* is paying good money to this caterer. Everyone is very busy before a *simcha* to check every detail. However, someone has to make sure that everything is according to *halacha*.

Erev Shabbos

Outside Food

Since the status of baked goods which come from a private home may have *kashrus* concerns for some people, one should not accept any cake without reliable certification.

Food Arriving on Time

Many times the food will arrive very late on Friday. One has to make sure that the driver

delivering the food leaves early enough so that the food arrives well before *Shabbos* so not to have a *Shabbos* without food.²

Sealed Food

If a non-Jew is delivering meat one has to be careful that it is properly sealed to avoid the *issur* of *baser sh'nesalim min ha'ayin*.³ In a situation where there are non-Jewish employees, one must make sure that there is no access to the refrigerator etc (it must be locked).⁴

Waiters

Many times one hires a caterer for a job, and the *ba'al simcha* does not realize that this worker is a Jew who is not *frum* who drove on *Shabbos* to get to the *kiddush*. One is not allowed to invite someone to come to his house for *Shabbos* if he knows that he will drive i.e. he lives far away.⁵ One must be careful with this when hiring workers.

² Refer to Mesechtas Succah 44b, Shulchan Aruch 249:1, Magen Avraham 2, Mishnah Berurah 3, Ohr L'tzyion 2:16:6, Likras Shabbos 10:footnote 16.

³ Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 63:1-2. See Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 118:1 where it says that meat and other foods need two *simonim*.

⁴ OU document H-34.

⁵ Igros Moshe O.C. 1:99. Refer to Tzitz Eliezer 6:3.

¹ Although it is important to discuss the *halachos* that would arise in a hotel when it is being used for *kosher* etc, it is beyond the scope of this issue to do so.

Sechar Shabbos

A waiter may receive money for work done on *Shabbos*, as long as he is not being paid exclusively for *Shabbos*. For example, the waiter could set the tables before *Shabbos*.⁶ Furthermore, a waiter often has a tremendous amount of cleaning work to be done on *Motzei Shabbos*, so the payment for his job is *havlah*.⁷ One who has a job to cater an affair on *Shabbos* is permitted to take money for the job. The reason is since in all cases the caterer has to prepare the food, etc before *Shabbos* his payment is *havlah*. A *mashgiach* in a hotel for *Shabbos* should make arrangements to do some work on Friday in order for his payment to be considered *havlah*.⁸

Opening Packages

Ripping for a purpose on *Shabbos* is *ossur*.⁹ However, there is a big discussion in the *poskim* if ripping is permitted if the package is destroyed by the ripping.¹⁰ Many times one will not destroy the box etc, and the *halachos* of what is permitted to open and what is forbidden is difficult and well beyond this issue to discuss.¹¹ In addition, there are many *issurim* that one can transgress when opening a package or bottle such as *koreah*, *mochek*, and *makea b'patish*. Therefore, to go in accordance with all opinions one should open all packages

before *Shabbos* has begun.¹² The same applies to paper and plastic goods, silver foil, saran wrap and tablecloths.¹³ Some say one may open the thin layer surrounding the food which is usually thrown out such as the plastic covering on top of yogurt.¹⁴ One who does not open the packages before *Shabbos*, and opens those packages which are permitted to be opened, should be careful not to rip any letters or shapes.¹⁵ It is best to have a non-Jew open the packages.¹⁶

Taping down Lights

Opening a light on *Shabbos* involves an *issur d'oraisa* of *mavier*.¹⁷ Therefore one should tape down the light switches before *Shabbos*. Another instance where it is common that one may accidentally turn on a light is in a refrigerator. Today refrigerators have lights in them and when one opens the door, a light goes on. To avoid this on *Shabbos*, one should tape down the switch before *Shabbos*, or remove the bulb if there is no switch to tape down.¹⁸ If one forgot to do so, he may ask a *goy* to open the refrigerator for him.¹⁹ It is

¹² Kaf Ha'chaim 314:38, Igros Moshe O.C. 1:122:10, Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso 9:1, Teshuvos V'hanugos 1:231, Orchos Shabbos 12:page 366, Opinion and custom of Horav Chaim Kanievesky Shlita quoted in Am Mekadshei Sh'viey 2:page 176.

¹³ Refer to Nishmas Shabbos 7:243.

¹⁴ Refer to Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso 9:11, see *ibid*:footnote 11, Am Mekadshei Sh'viey page 177:10. Avnei Yushfei 3:33, Tzitz Eliezer 14:45, Doleh U'mashka page 164:footnote 441, Nishmas Shabbos 7:248, 254, Teshuvos V'hanugos 3:108, Opinion of Horav Korelitz shlita quoted in Am Mekadshei Sh'viey 2:page 18:footnote 17.

¹⁵ Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso 9:12:2, Piskei Teshuvos 314:3. Refer to Shulchan Aruch 340:3, Mishnah Berurah 15-17.

¹⁶ Igros Moshe O.C. 1:122:10.

¹⁷ Refer to Achiezer 3:60, Minchas Shlomo 1:12, Tzitz Eliezer 1:20, 3:17, 18:25, Be'er Moshe Electric 6:23.

¹⁸ Har Tzvi O.C. 151.

¹⁹ Igros Moshe O.C. 2:68, Be'er Moshe Electric 6:9. This is permitted because it is an *eino mischavein* even though it is a *pesik reisha* (Igros Moshe *ibid*, Be'er Moshe *ibid*).

⁶ Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso 28:59.

⁷ Refer to *ibid*: 28:62.

⁸ Binyan Sholom page 68, Yabea Omer *ibid*, Yalkut Yosef 306:5.

⁹ Mesechtas Shabbos 73a, Shulchan Aruch 340:14.

¹⁰ Refer to Igros Moshe O.C. 1:122, 4:78, Minchas Yitzchok 1:77, 6:27, Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso 9:footnote 20, Be'er Moshe 3:39, Ohr L'tzyion 2:27:5, Rivevos Ephraim 3:267:page 180, Oz Nedberu 4:33, 11:12, Lehoros Nosson 3:16, 7:19. Orchos Rabbeinu 1:page 148:183, Piskei Teshuvos 314:footnote 7 in depth, Chut Shuni Shabbos 1:page 146, 2:page 273.

¹¹ Refer to Am Mekadshei Sh'viey 2:pages 13-25 in great depth.

advisable to hint to the *goy* to remove the bulb if it is possible that there will be no other *goy* to open the refrigerator at a different time on *Shabbos*.²⁰

Maintaining Food on a Flame on *Shabbos* – *Blech*

In the days of the *Gemorah* the ovens contained coals, and *chazal* were concerned that one may come to mix the coals and hasten the cooking process. Therefore, *chazal* required that either the coals be removed or covered in order to permit uncooked food to remain over a fire on *Shabbos*.²¹ Even though there are no coals in our stoves one must cover the fire (and knobs, see below) to make sure that he will not come to adjust the flame on *Shabbos*.²² One should try to have all of the food off the fire before *Shabbos*,²³ but in most cases this is not possible, especially if it is a big affair. In order to make sure that the fire is covered we put on a *blech* before *Shabbos*.²⁴ The custom is that a *blech* is put on a fire even if the food is completely cooked.²⁵ There are two reasons for placing a *blech* over the flame. It reduces the heat output serving as

a reminder that the flame must not be raised.²⁶ In addition, the *blech* serves as a reminder that *Shabbos* is different and the flame must be left alone.²⁷

Hotplate

A hotplate is usually capable of cooking. Therefore, some say it is not considered as if the fire is covered, and one must cover the hot plate with thick silver foil in order to allow the food to remain on it during *Shabbos*.²⁸ Controls on the hot plate which can be used to raise the fire must be covered or taped.²⁹

According to some *poskim*, a hot plate which is not able to cook and may not be adjustable to make it warmer (no knobs etc) may have food placed on it before *Shabbos* without any silver foil.³⁰

Some say the whole discussion of the hotplate is only when it comes to returning food on

Some say a child under four should be asked to open the door and keep the door opened the rest of *Shabbos* (Orchos Rabbeinu 1:page 143:171).

²⁰ Igros Moshe O.C. 2:68. See Be'er Moshe *ibid*. Refer to Nishmas Shabbos Electric 43.

²¹ Refer to Shulchan Aruch 253:1.

²² Igros Moshe O.C. 1:93, Ohr L'tzyion 2:17:14, see Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74:25. One should cover the entire fire (Opinion of Horav Elyashiv Shlita in Shevus Yitzchok page 32).

²³ Biur Halacha 253 "v'nohagu."

²⁴ Igros Moshe O.C. 1:93, Rivevos Ephraim 1:186, Shevet Ha'Levi 1:91, Pnei Shabbos page 203. Refer to Chazzon Ish 37:9:11 who is stringent. See Da'as Chazzon Ish 253:page 21, see *ibid*: page 91. In regard to placing a *blech* on *Shabbos* see Rivevos Ephraim 1:185, 2:115:26, 2:122, 5:466:1.

²⁵ Biur Halacha 253 "tavshil," Thirty Nine Melochos page 609, Ohr L'tzyion 2:17:2, Teshuvos V'hanugos 1:206:2, Klalim Ofeh pages 66-69. Refer to Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74:25. This is the custom in *Yerushalayim* as well (Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso 1:footnote 54).

²⁶ Mesechtas Shabbos Rashi 36b "oy."

²⁷ Refer to Igros Moshe O.C. 1:93, see Thirty Nine Melochos page 611.

²⁸ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, see Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso 1:25, Be'er Moshe Electric 7:3-4, Shevus Yitzchok page 96 quoting this as the opinion of Horav Elyashiv Shlita, Chut Shuni Shabbos 2:page 116, see *ibid*:pages 214-215, Rivevos Ephraim 1:186, 3:246, 5:253, 7:265, 8:118:3, 145, 164:1, 412:2. Refer to Am Mekadshei Sh'viev 2:page 39:footnote 22. This is true even according to the stringent opinion of the Chazzon Ish zt"l if the silver foil is thick (Am Mekadshei Sh'viev 2:page 39:footnote 23 quoting the opinion of Horav Elyashiv Shlita and Horav Korelitz Shlita, Da'as Chazzon Ish page 22:9). See Orchos Rabbeinu 1:page 102:11.

²⁹ Thirty Nine Melochos page 614 quoting the opinion of *poskim*.

³⁰ Refer to Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74:35, Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso 1:25:footnote 71 quoting the opinion of Horav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach zt"l, Yaskil Avdi 7:28:8, Teshuvos V'hanugos 1:207:6, Tzitz Eliezer 8:26:5, Am Mekadshei Sh'viev 2:page 38:footnote 21, Klalim Ofeh pages 79-80, Ohr L'tzyion 2:17:1.

Shabbos, and not when leaving food on it from before *Shabbos*.³¹

Warmers

For a Friday night meal some caterers will use Sterno gel cans which when lit keeps the food hot. One should be careful to cover them before *Shabbos*. In addition one should be careful that there is enough water in the pans before *Shabbos*.

Ovens – Leaving food there from *Erev Shabbos*

We have established that in order for one to keep food (even if it is fully cooked) one should place a *blech* before *Shabbos* on the fire. However, by an oven although the fire is covered by the oven walls, this is the normal way of cooking. *Horav Moshe Feinstein zt"l*³² holds that one may place food which is not fully cooked in an oven before *Shabbos* as long as he covers the fire beforehand.³³ Some say this should be done with a metal insert placed in the oven.³⁴ However, if one does not plan on returning food in there on *Shabbos* one does not need an insert.³⁵ One who wishes to put food which is not fully cooked into an oven before *Shabbos* should cover the fire with aluminum foil or a *blech*.³⁶

In most catered affairs the food is fully cooked so there is not need to cover the fire with aluminum foil or a *blech*.

³¹ Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso 1:25:footnote 72.

³² Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74:27. See Shevus Yitzchok pages 32 and 36 quoting the opinion of Horav Elyashiv Shlita.

³³ Oz Nedberu 8:16. Refer to Klalim Ofeh pages 709-716 who says according to Horav Moshe Feinstein zt"l you would need a metal box insert in order to place foods in there on *Shabbos*.

³⁴ Refer to Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74:26-27, Klalim Ofeh pages 73-74.

³⁵ Thirty Nine Melochos page 612.

³⁶ Opinion of Horav Korelitz Shlita quoted in Am Mekadshei Sh'viy 2:page 40:footnote 30. Chut Shuni Shabbos 2:page 113.

Covering Knobs on an Oven

There is a *halacha* that one is not allowed to raise or lower a fire on *Shabbos*.³⁷ In order to make sure that one does not come to do this on *Shabbos*, one should cover the knobs on an oven from before *Shabbos*.³⁸ If this is not possible then one can be lenient if it is a pressing situation.³⁹

Wine

There is an *issur d'oraisa* to drink or have benefit from wine that a *goy* made for *avoda zara*.⁴⁰ The *chachumim* made a *gezeirah* not to drink nor have enjoyment from any wine of a *goy* even if it is not used for *avoda zara*. Such wine is called *stam yayin*.⁴¹ When wine is cooked, the *gezeirah* does not apply.⁴² Some say the reason is since it was not common to have *yayin nesach* it was not included in the *gezeira*.⁴³ The *Rambam*⁴⁴ says the reason is

³⁷ Shulchan Aruch 252:1, Mishnah Berurah 253:2.

³⁸ Igros Moshe O.C. 1:93, Rivevos Ephraim 8:390:23, Be'er Moshe electric 7:3, Divrei Chachumim page 127:363, Hechsheiros 5:18, Klalim Ofeh page 71. Some say one could remove the knobs as well (Orchos Shabbos page 516, see Chut Shuni Shabbos 2:pages 111 and 113). If the knobs are higher than usual they still have to be covered (Divrei Chachumim *ibid*). Refer to Ohr L'tzyion 2:17:3.

³⁹ Igros Moshe O.C. 1:93, Klalim *ibid*. Refer to Orchos Shabbos page 65 who quotes the opinion of Horav Elyashiv as being lenient, see Meor Ha'Shabbos 2:page 628 quoting the opinion of Horav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach zt"l who is lenient. The opinion of Horav Ben-zion Abba Shaul zt"l is also to be lenient (2:17:2, see Orchos Rabbeinu 1:page 102:13 who says the Chazzon Ish zt"l did not cover the knobs of the stove).

⁴⁰ Shulchan Aruch 123:1.

⁴¹ *Ibid*.

⁴² Mesechtas Avoda Zara 30a, Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 123:3. There is a discussion in the *poskim* if this applies only to a Jew's wine or even to *stam yayin* (Refer to Har Tzvi Y.D. 111, Igros Moshe Y.D. 2:52). One is permitted to cook wine to make it exempt from *yayin nesach* (Yabea Omer Y.D. 8:15).

⁴³ Bais Yosef Y.D. 123, Avnei Nezer Y.D. 116:4, Darchei Teshuva 10. Refer to Noam Halacha page 146:footnote 3. See Minchas Yitzchok 7:61 if this would change if

because a non-Jew does not use cooked wine for *avoda zara*.

Therefore, one should make sure all the wine to be served at the affair are cooked wines.

Meat and Fish

One who eats fish and meat that were cooked together is putting himself in danger.⁴⁵ Accordingly, one has to make a separation between meat and fish in order that one does not come to eat them together.

Urn

One should see to it that the water in an urn is cooked before *Shabbos*.⁴⁶ When one caters an affair where a lot of people will want tea and coffee, the caterer needs to put up a lot of hot water before *Shabbos*. An urn with an inlet valve which adds cold water to the urn automatically should not be used⁴⁷ unless the inlet valve is turned off.⁴⁸ Similarly, a non-Jewish waiter may not put cold water into the urn on *Shabbos* either.⁴⁹

According to many *poskim* an urn which has a tube on the side to let one know how much water is left in the urn is permitted to be used

on *Shabbos*.⁵⁰ A knob with which one can raise or lower the temperature of the water should be taped down before *Shabbos*.⁵¹

Utensils

Borer is one of the forty nine *melachos*,⁵² and it is the only *melacha* which if it is *ossur* it is an *issur d'oraisa*, since there are no *d'rabbannans*. *Borer* is generally permitted if three conditions are met. 1. One is separating good from bad, 2. by hand 3. within close proximity of a meal.⁵³ Therefore, one is not allowed to use any perforated spoons or strainers on *Shabbos* for the purpose of straining and one should make sure before *Shabbos* that these spoons are not around.⁵⁴

Removing *Muktzah* Items from Counters

Many times one has items on counters which he forgot to remove before *Shabbos*, and he wishes to place food on the counter. In order to avoid any questions of *tiltul muktzah* on *Shabbos*⁵⁵ one should remove all *muktzah* items from the counters before *Shabbos* has begun.

Kashrus of Coffee and Tea

One must make sure that the tea or coffee is kosher. Regular coffee does not need a *hechsher*, but flavored coffee does need a *hechsher*.⁵⁶

cooked wine is common. See Kinyan Torah 6:65, Shevet Ha'kehusi 1:228.

⁴⁴ Hilchos Machalos Asuros 11:9.

⁴⁵ Mesechtas Pesachim 76b, Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 116:2, Chochmas Adom 68:1, Tov Yehoshua page 109:82, Kaf Ha'chaim O.C. 173:9, Y.D. 116:15, The Magen Avraham O.C. 173:1 says today maybe it is different (see Darchei Teshuva Y.D. 116:16, Mishnah Berurah O.C. 173:3, Aruch Ha'shulchan Y.D. 116:10, V'Ein Lumo Michshal 4:page 96:6).

⁴⁶ Igros Moshe O.C. 4:73:23. No *blech* is needed for an urn not placed on a fire (Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74:22, see Shevet Ha'Levi 5:30, Oz Nedberu 9:14, Chut Shuni Shabbos 2:page 114:footnote 45).

⁴⁷ This is forbidden even for a non-Jew to do on *Shabbos* (Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita, see OU document S-32).

⁴⁸ Hechsheiros 5:25.

⁴⁹ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita (OU document S-32).

⁵⁰ Shalmei Yehuda page 53, see *ibid* quoting the opinion of Horav Elayshiv Shlita who is stringent. *Ibid*:page 219, Yechaveh Da'as 6:21, Opinion of Horav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach zt"l quoted in Otzros Ha'shabbos page 529. See Minchas Yitzchok 3:137. 6:21, 10:28. Horav Elayshiv Shlita is stringent (Shevus Yitzchok page 142).

⁵¹ Minchas Yitzchok 5:91.

⁵² Mesechtas Shabbos 73a, Shulchan Aruch 319:1-17.

⁵³ Shulchan Aruch 319:1-2.

⁵⁴ Refer to Shevet Ha'Levi 8:58, Chut Shuni Shabbos 2:page 69, Eyal Meshulash (Borer) 7:34, see Ohr L'tzyion 2:31:10. The same applies to a grater etc (Refer to Shulchan Aruch 321:7, Mishnah Berurah 45, Rivevos Ephraim 1:248, 2:196, 5:265).

⁵⁵ Shulchan Aruch 308:1. Refer to Hechsheiros 5:2.

⁵⁶ Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita.

Friday Night

Meat and Fish

One should be careful when cutting the *gefilte* fish that separate knives are used.

Disposable cup for *Kiddush*

Many times at a catered affair many people want to make *kiddush*. However, in most cases there are not enough *bechers* and only plastic cups are available, is using these cups permitted?

Preferably one should not use a disposable cup for *kiddush*, since one is required to make *kiddush* on a nice respectable cup.⁵⁷ In addition, some say such a cup is not classified as a utensil at all. Nonetheless, since others argue with this,⁵⁸ in a situation where one does not have anything to use he may use a disposable cup.

Serving Soup

When one serves soup (or any other food) he has to take the soup pot off the fire.⁵⁹ According to the *Mishnah Berurah*⁶⁰ one should be stringent and not mix food which is in a *kli rishon* even if it is off the fire.⁶¹ Others say there

is no reason for this if the food is fully cooked.⁶²

Many times the soup served at a catered affair is too hot to serve and the waiters may be interested in pouring some cold water into the soup to cool it down. However, it is forbidden to pour cold water into a *kli rishon*, even after it is removed from the fire, since doing so will cook the cold water. Nonetheless, it is permitted to do so if the soup is in a *kli sheini*.⁶³

The Ladle

Before using a ladle one should make sure it is completely dry so that the soup does not cook the water on the ladle. If the ladle still has some warm moisture on it then one can put the ladle back into the soup pot. The best way to serve soup is to leave the ladle in the pot between servings.⁶⁴ There is a discussion in the *poskim* regarding the *halachic* status of a ladle. Some say a ladle is a *kli sheni* and the bowl in which the soup is served is a *kli shlishi*. According to this view one would be able to add noodles, croutons and spices to the bowl. Others say the ladle is considered a *kli rishon* since it is submerged in the pot. Therefore, the bowl into which the soup is placed is a *kli sheini*,⁶⁵ and one would not be allowed to add uncooked spices or baked items.

Adding Noodles

Noodles should only be added to the soup once it is in individual bowls and not while it is

⁵⁷ Refer to Igros Moshe O.C. 3:39, Minchas Yitzchok 10:33, Rivevos V'yovlos 2:359, Shraga Hameir 1:55:2, 2:80, Kinyan Torah 1:49:2. Some say you should make sure to use it many times and then it is permitted (Rivevos Ephraim 7:372).

⁵⁸ Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchoso 47:footnote 51, Be'er Moshe 1:49, V'Yan Yosef O.C. 65, Tzitz Eliezer 12:23, Oz Nedberu 6:48, M'ein Omer 1:page 234:15, Orchos Rabbeinu 1:page 110:44.

⁵⁹ Refer to Mishnah Berurah 318:117, Igros Moshe O.C. 4:61. See Mishnah Berurah 318:118, Shar Ha'tzyion 148.

⁶⁰ 318:117.

⁶¹ Refer to Biur Halacha "sh'nimtzah" who says *b'dieved* if one mixed the food which was cooked a third it does not make the food forbidden to eat, even if it was done while the food was on the fire.

⁶² Igros Moshe O.C. 4:74:9 (bishul). Refer to Shar Ha'tzyion 148, Thirty Nine Melochos page 469 (Hebrew section).

⁶³ Thirty Nine Melochos page 653.

⁶⁴ Thirty Nine Melochos page 582.

⁶⁵ Refer to Taz Y.D. 92:30. Refer to Mishnah Berurah 318:87 who he seems to say a ladle is like a *kli rishon*, and see Mishnah Berurah 45 where he says the opposite. Refer to Minchas Yitzchok 5:127:3 who offers an answer.

still in the pot.⁶⁶ Croutons which are deep fried may be added to a *kli sheni* on *Shabbos*.⁶⁷

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מרת יענטא בת ישראל חיים

הרב משה בן יששכר בעריש

הרב יעקב אריה בן שבת

Halachically Speaking

„ Halachically Speaking is a bi-weekly publication compiled by Rabbi Moische Dovid Lebovits, a former *chaver kollel* of *Yeshiva Torah Vodaath* and a *musmach* of *Horav Yisroel Belsky Shlita*. Rabbi Lebovits currently works as the Rabbinical Administrator for the KOF-K Kosher Supervision.

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⁶⁶ The Shabbos Kitchen page 38.

⁶⁷ Teshuvos V'hanhugos 1:207:6.