



STAR-K SHEIMOS GUIDELINES

The Torah forbids discarding objects with innate *kedusha* (holiness) into the trash or recycling bin. Objects which have *kedusha* must be placed in *sheimos*, which must be buried. Objects that acquire *kedusha* after being used for a mitzvah do not need to be placed in *sheimos* but do need to be disposed of with special care.

Is it Sheimos?

See the chart below to determine which objects need to be put into *sheimos* and which do not.

YES

- Any of the names of Hashem.
- *Sefer Torah* or *Sefer Torah* cover
- *Seforim*, whether handwritten, printed, photocopied, or downloaded and printed (e.g., *Chumashim*, *Siddurim*, *Machzorim*, *Gemara*, *bentchers* etc.)
- Pages or fragment of a *sefer* that got detached, even if there is no writing or print on it
- Cover of a *sefer* or binding tape that became detached from a *sefer*
- Printed material primarily intended to quote or to explain Torah, even when containing non-Torah portions. This includes Mishna, Midrash, Gemara, Rishonim, Achronim, and any three consecutive words of a *posuk* from Tanach that have been written in one line, with the intention of quoting Torah (as opposed to a *melitza*, an incidental use of a common expression, which is not *sheimos*)
- Homework and test papers in *limudei kodesh* subjects when containing any of the above
- Material written or printed in English or any other language if they conform with the above
- Halachic and other Torah material (such as this poster)
- Tefillin or tefillin bag
- Mezuzah or mezuzah cover
- Invitations from organizations or individuals that contain parts of *pesukim*, written with the intention of quoting Torah (as opposed to a *melitza*, which are often included in wedding invitations)

NO

Items that should be double-wrapped (*kli besoch kli*) when placed into the trash (can be single-wrapped if placing in a recycling bin)

- Jewish books, newspapers, etc. which primarily contain non-Torah information. (Pages that contain Torah may be removed and placed into *sheimos* if the other side also contains Torah or is blank.)

- Missionary material that contain *pesukim*

Items that should be single-wrapped before placing into the trash

- Talis, talis bag, tzitzis (Ideally, strings of a talis or tzitzis should be removed and placed in *sheimos*.)
- *S'chach*, *esrogim*, *lulavim*, *hadasim*, *aravos*
- Tapes and CDs containing *divrei Torah*
- *Gartel*

Items that can be placed directly in the garbage/recycling bin

- Plastic case used to protect a talis or tefillin bag
- Hebrew letters ב"ס"ד (*B'siyata D'Shmaya*)
- Hebrew letters א"י"ה (*Im Yirtzeh Hashem*), ה"ב" (*Baruch Hashem*), and ה"ב"ע"ז"ה (*Be'ezras Hashem*). It is considered an act of piety to tear off those letters and put them into *sheimos*.
- Yarmulka
- Bookmark used in a *sefer*
- Hebrew language books, newspapers, etc. that are completely secular