

What is Kosher?

The Basics of Jewish Dietary Law

"Kashrut" is the Jewish laws pertaining to what foods can be eaten and how they should be prepared. When you eat in accordance with Jewish law you are "keeping Kosher".

There are three categories of Kosher food: dairy, meat, and parve. Dairy and meat foods cannot be mixed or eaten together, this includes utensils and cookware. Parve foods can be combined with either meat or dairy.

- **Dairy:** foods such as cheese, milk, yogurt, ice cream
- **Meat:** foods that are or have any ingredients from any Kosher animals, fowl and by-products that are prepared following kosher law
- **Parve:** food that is neither meat or dairy, which include eggs, fish, and vegetables

Some food is not Kosher at all and cannot be consumed. These food are known as "treif", which most often refers to shellfish and pork.

There are many different opinions about which foods need a "Heksher", which is a rabbinic kosher certification, to be considered Kosher. Restaurants must be certified as well. There are many different levels of Kosher certification depending on level of observance.

You may see something referred to as "Kosher-style". This would imply that a meal does not include anything "treif", and does not break the rule prohibiting the mixing of meat and dairy, but may include foods that don't have a "Heksher" or that are from a non-Kosher restaurant.

Your Federation may have a policy about Kosher rules for your office or events that you can consult.

[Click here to read more about Kosher](#)

