

Shoel U'Mashiv

Sleeping Away from Home and Eating Out Friday Night

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Q - “This *Shabbos* I am going to be sleeping over at someone’s house and eating the Friday night meal in the *Shul*, where should I light my *Shabbos* candles?”

A - What is the purpose of the *Shabbos* candles?

The *Mishnah Berurah* 263:1 says the reason is because of *Oneg Shabbos*, the enjoyment of *Shabbos*. Having light helps increase one’s enjoyment and the opposite is true as well, that a lack of light contributes to one’s frustrations. The *Mishnah Berurah* 263:2 gives a second reason that the *Shabbos* candles are for *Shalom Bayis*, marital peace. Having light ensures that people will not fall or bump into things, thus ensuring peace and tranquility amongst all present. *Rashi* on the *Gemara Shabbos* 25b says the purpose of the *Shabbos* candles is for *Kavod Shabbos*, honoring *Shabbos*. Adding light gives it a feel of being a distinguished meal.

According to the first two reasons, the purpose of the *Shabbos* candles is practical. Therefore, one must benefit from their light. The *Shulchan Aruch* 263:9 says that if one lit *Shabbos* candles with a *Bracha* and did not get any benefit from the light, it is a *Bracha L’Vatala* (a blessing in vain).

Where should one light?

The *Mishnah Berurah* 263:2 says to put candles in every room that one is going to use during *Shabbos* to ensure that one will be able to see in every room, but to light in the room in which they are going to eat. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein is quoted in *The Radiance of Shabbos* (pg. 23) that one should light where they sleep. The reason is because one is supposed to light in their home and where one sleeps on *Shabbos* is considered their “home” for that time period. However, she must make sure to benefit from the light.

What should a person do if they are sleeping in one location and eating at another?

A person should light where they are going to sleep, and they should make sure to benefit from the light before leaving. Practically speaking, this either means to use the light of the candles to navigate or use it to read (either to learn or to daven). Alternatively, one can light in a location that the host will benefit from the light.