

Head Covering For Men

The Gemara in **Masechet Kiddushin** on (31A) says “one is not allowed to walk four amos in a very erect position (a gayvadic position). Because one has to realize that Hashem is on top of him and that he’s not the boss. Rav Huna would wear a head covering to show that the shechina was on top of his head.” So from this Gemara, it sounds that most people did not do this, and that this was a chumra of Rav Huna alone.

The Gemara in **Masechet Shabbos** says on (118B) that Rav Huna says that he should get schar because he did not walk 4 amos without a head covering. From here it’s still hard to say that a head covering is a requirement.

The Gemara in **Masechet Kiddushin** says on (29B) that Rav Chisda was praising Rav Huna in front of Rav Hamnuna because he was a great person. So he said to him that when Rav Hamnuna comes to visit you, I’d like to meet him. When he saw him, he saw that he was not wearing a turban on his head, (which was surprising for him) so he asks him, how come you don’t have a turban on your head? He said, because im not married yet. So from this Gemara there was a minhag that married people would cover their heads in a certain way, but it would seem that unmarried people did not cover their heads.

The Gemara in **Masechet Berachos** says on (60B) that “when someone wakes up, he says *Elokai Neshama*, then he says each bracha after each specific thing that he would do (when he puts his turban on his head he says *oter yisrael betifara*). This Gemara makes it seem that putting on the head covering is just like any other act someone does, and since its not first, we see that one can do other things without a head covering on.

The **Sefer Kol Bo** says that one who covers his head when he sees an important person, so too one should cover their head when they daven. But it’s only a “middas chasidos” to cover your head. So from here we would learn out that one doesn’t need to cover their heads, lefi hadin,.

The **Sefer Baal Itur** says that one should cover their head with a tallis so they wont have a “gilui rosh”. So from here we learn out that we only cover out heads in davening., but outside of davening, no.

The **Mahari Bruna** says that there is no issur to go with an open head, except that you’re losing

out on the middas chassidus. He quotes a Gemara in Kiddushin (20B) which says that Rav Kahana accepted a turban by pidyon haben because he would cover his head, so for him it was worth 5 selaim, but for somebody else, it wouldn't be worth it because they wouldn't use it. Even the married people who would cover their heads, would do a minhag. Also, the Gemara says that a talmid chacham would wear a turban. So everyone wore something, but everyone else would wear a special turban.

The **Rambam** writes that the derech of talmidei chachamim and their students is that they will only daven when they are "atufim". So pshat is that no one had their heads covered and only talmidei chachamim would wear turbans.

The **Beis Yosef** (R' Yosef Cairo) says that everyone wore kippas, but the derech of the modest people was to put something else on their heads in addition. He thinks its pashut that the people that were single did not go with their heads uncovered. Everyone covered their head, and certain people put a special covering. This is similar to the Mahari Bruna.

The **Ramah** in the Darkei Moshe says that by davening you put it on but for everything else you do not put on a head covering. For sure, when they were not davening they went around with a bare head covering.

The **Rabbeinu Yerucham** says in the Sefer Adam that normally people didn't cover there heads, but in shul or when they needed to make a bracha they would put it on.

The **Terumas Hadeshen** says in Breslov they had a gezeira that somebody would go to goyish courts and swear, that he would have to swear bare headed with G-ds name. Is this called sha'as hashmad or are they just doing this so the Jew will say the truth? But he doesn't see an issur of saying Hashems name without having your head covered. It's not le'vatala. We don't find anywhere that it's assur to say shem Hashem without a kippa on.

In **Maseches Sofrim** says that it's a machloket whether you're allowed to say shema with a head that is bare.

The **Medresh Rabbah** quotes a mashal of a king sending a decree to the people of his city. So when the letter is being read to the city, everyone stands up, takes off their head coverings, and they read the letter with fear. This is what Hashem said to Bnei Yisrael, He also has a letter of decree (krias shema), but by krias shema, a regular king is makpid that everyone should stand and take off their hat, but by Hashem you could do whatever you want, you could sit and maybe even say it without a head covering.

The **Beis Yosef** says in hilchos tefila that he paskens that you have to make a bracha with a head covering. (Rabbeinu Yerucham says you have to cover your head by birkas hamazon) By hilchos birkas hamazon, the Beis Yosef says that it means that by birkas hamazon you put a special headcovering and all other times people would have a head covering. This is the source why people put on a hat when they do bentching.

The **Ramah** says that everyone should cover their head by birkas hamazon, even those people who are just present by the bentching should cover their heads.

The **Shulchan Aruch** says you should not go 4 amos without a head covering. The **Magen Avraham** says that middas chassidus is even less than 4 amot.

The **Vilna Gaon** says that there is no issur of having a bare head, even for Shemonei Esreh. But one should be machmir when he comes to Shemonei Esreh to cover his head, one could do that by putting a tallis over his head. But for everything else, we don't even require a head covering.

The **Taz** says even though mi'ikkur hadin, it's not a chiyuv to wear a kippa, this is "bechokoseyhem lo teilecho" since the goyim take off their headcovering, we should not do the same. To be bareheaded is an issue of "bechukoseyhem lo teilecho".

Rav Moshe Feinstein has a couple teshuvos on the issue of kippot, in the first he says that he doesn't think a kippa should be covering "rov rosh". But the question is, are you allowed to go bareheaded for parnasa? Rav Moshe says that its mutar to take off your kippa for work. Most opinions say its middas chassidus, it is a minhag. Minhag is important, but you don't have to lose your job over a minhag. The halacha is that you don't have to spend more than a fifth of your money to do a mitzvah. So we see that for a mitzvat asei, you can't lose your money, so losing your job is equivalent to losing a fifth of your income. He says that what the Taz says bi'zman hazeh is not pshat because the goyim are not wearing a head covering for any specific reason, they are just doing it because they want to be comfortable. Ashkenazic Jewry accepted the minhag of kippa, but Syrians, for example, never accepted it. But Rav Moshe does admit that there is one case that the Taz does apply, and that is by davening. This is because when Christians are in Church they have to take off their headcovering. So if one davens without a headcovering, one did not fulfill his chiyuv. If your tallis falls in the middle of shemonei esreh, maybe you don't have to go get it, but if your kippa falls off you have to.

In regards to a hat, so according to the Ramah and the Gra, you shouldn't wear a hat. According to the Beis Yosef, maybe we do. But since everyone goes by the Beis Yosef shita and wears a kippa nowadays, then the Ramah became like the Beis Yosef. And even the Ramah held there is something

special for tefila. But maybe according to the Beis Yosef, it was because people would wear it when they would see great people, but b'zman hazeh where it's not something special to wear in front of a king, then maybe he would said that we shouldn't wear it. For us, the ikkur thing for davening is a tie; because that's something you will wear in front of a great person. You don't have to wear a hat for davening. You should put on something more important or extra, like a jacket or a tie, it doesn't necessarily have to be a hat.

The **Terumas Hadeshen** says, in regards to covering one's head with their hand, that its not enough for a bracha to cover your head with your hand, it has to be a begged. Rabbeinu Tam, when he was bathing himself, and he wanted a drink, he would cover his ervah with a begged. "Ein guf mechaseh guf (atzmo)". But if the shem Hashem, is written on your hand, then you cover cover your hand.

The **Taz** quotes the **Marshal** and says that the Marshal holds that you could do it with your hand also derabannan. Your hand fulfills the reason of "bechukoseyhem" (a chashash de'oraisa). But the Terumas Hadeshen says even de'rabbanan it does not fulfill.