

What is Schar Shabbos?

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Question: What is *Schar Shabbos* and why is it forbidden?

Answer: A Jew is not allowed to work in a capacity in which he earns money for work done on Shabbos. Consequently, earning *Schar Shabbos* for doing a job like babysitting on Shabbos is a problem.

Furthermore, a Jew is also not allowed to make passive income on Shabbos, even if it does not include any work. For example, if a Jew owns a parking lot that is used on Shabbos. When non-Jews pay to use the lot, he is making passive income on Shabbos, even though he is doing no work, and this is forbidden as *Schar Shabbos*. Rashi says that the reason *Schar Shabbos* is forbidden is that it is akin to doing business on Shabbos, which is forbidden because it may lead someone to record a transaction in writing.

An important point is that it is only forbidden to earn money for work on Shabbos. It is not forbidden to pay money to a non-Jew who did permissible work for you on Shabbos. Therefore, if a non-Jewish cleaning lady did work for you on Shabbos that does not involve forbidden *melachah* – for example, she swept your floors and washed your dishes – it is not a problem to pay her. She is allowed to take the money because she is not Jewish and you are allowed to pay her because paying *Schar Shabbos* is not forbidden.