

## Format of *Shtar*

Ref: *Sefer Mishpatim, Hilchot Malveh Veloveh, Chapter 27*

### Reminder

Pack on Weights and Measures



The way a *shtar* is drawn up is to prevent forgery and tampering.

Also, document must be scrutinised to see if any small letters like *vav* and *zayin* have been squeezed in to change meanings, or if there have been erasures.

Types of legal document:

- *Shtar Mikach Umimkar* (Deeds of sale)
- *Shtar Chov* (Promissory notes)
- *Shtar Hodaah* (Acknowledging an obligation)
- *Shtar Matanot* (Gifts)
- *Shtar Pesharah* (Compromises)
- *Shtar Mechilah* (Waiver of obligations)

	Acceptable	Explanation
Witnesses are Jews who can read the document	✓	
Deeds of sale or promissory notes signed by Gentiles	✓ Provided they are done by their courts	They are only a legal record
All other documents signed by Gentiles	×	Other documents cause a change of status which can only be done by Jews e.g. a bill of Divorce
Last line of document repeats content of <i>shtar</i>	✓	Prevents adding false information in an empty line before signature
Witnesses signed two lines or more from the conclusion of the writing	×	The size of each line is measured by a <i>lamed</i> or final <i>chaf</i> of the witnesses handwriting
Document written on one line and signatures on another line	×	Maybe rest of document was cut away
Court validation of signatures positioned next to witness's signatures in margin to right or left	✓	If not, a new document could be forged with new signatures next to the validation
Erasures, but scribe has confirmed these erasures in writing at end of document	✓	
Erasures in place where ' <i>sharir vekayam</i> ' written i.e. at the conclusion of the document	×	Someone may have erased this and then added a new line before rewriting

Legal document and signatures written on top of erasures	✓	Because court can recognise if there have been one or two erasures. If erasure had been repeated, document would be invalid.
Document written in paper that had no erasures, but area of signatures had been erased.	×	Someone could erase text and put new text which the witnesses would not have read
Document written on erased area and signatures on clean area	×	Could erase text a second time
Number 3 ( <i>shalosh</i> ) 10 ( <i>esser</i> ) written at end of line	×	Could be changed to plural
Doubt between upper and lower parts of <i>shtar</i> , or in the text	✓	But the one trying to collect the money is given the 'lower hand' because he would have to bring proof for his claim