

Creative Shabbat: Putting Down Our Burdens

Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 349:1

וּאִם אַמְתּוֹ, כָּל אָדָם יֵשׁ לוֹ אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת בְּרִשּׁוֹת הַרְבִּימִים שִׁיכוֹל לְטַלְטֵל בֵּהֶם וּמוֹדְדִין לוֹ בְּאִמָּה שֶׁלוֹ
שֶׁכֶּל אַחַת מֵהֶן שֵׁשָׁה טַפְחִים, נוֹתְנִים לוֹ אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת בִּינוֹנוֹיּוֹת שֶׁל כָּל אָדָם, קִטְנָה

Kol adam yesh lo arba amot b'reshut harabim she'yachol letaltel bahem
u'modedin lo b'amah shelo, v'im amato k'tana, not'nim lo arba amot beyoniyot
shel kol adam, shekol achat mehen shisha tefachim.

Every person has four cubits (amot) in public space in which one may carry [on Shabbat]. We measure these cubits by one's own forearm. If one's forearm is small, we allow for four average cubits, which are each six tefachim (the length of one's fist).