

How to Pray Salah (Namaz)

SALAH MEANS TO WORSHIP OR TO PRAY

Salah is the Arabic term for the specific ritual prayer in Islam. It is also called Namaz. It is the most special act of Divine worship and our direct connection with the Almighty God - Allah ﷻ. The first requirement on every Muslim, after accepting Islam is to pray five times a day.

Prayer is a means of tuning out of everything else to talk to God, to thank Him for His blessings, to praise and glorify Him, to ask Him for help, and to beg Him for whatever we need in this world and the next. Worship includes extreme love, hope, awe, devotion, obedience, and submission.

There is a certain method to pray and there are specific times to pray Salah.

ﷻ - *Jalla Jalaaluhu* - means "**His glory is so high.**" It is said to show respect when the name of Allah (God) is uttered.

ﷺ - *Sallallahu alayhi wa sallam* - means "**May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.**" We say or write this supplication following the name of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to offer blessings of peace. To respect God's representatives is to respect God.

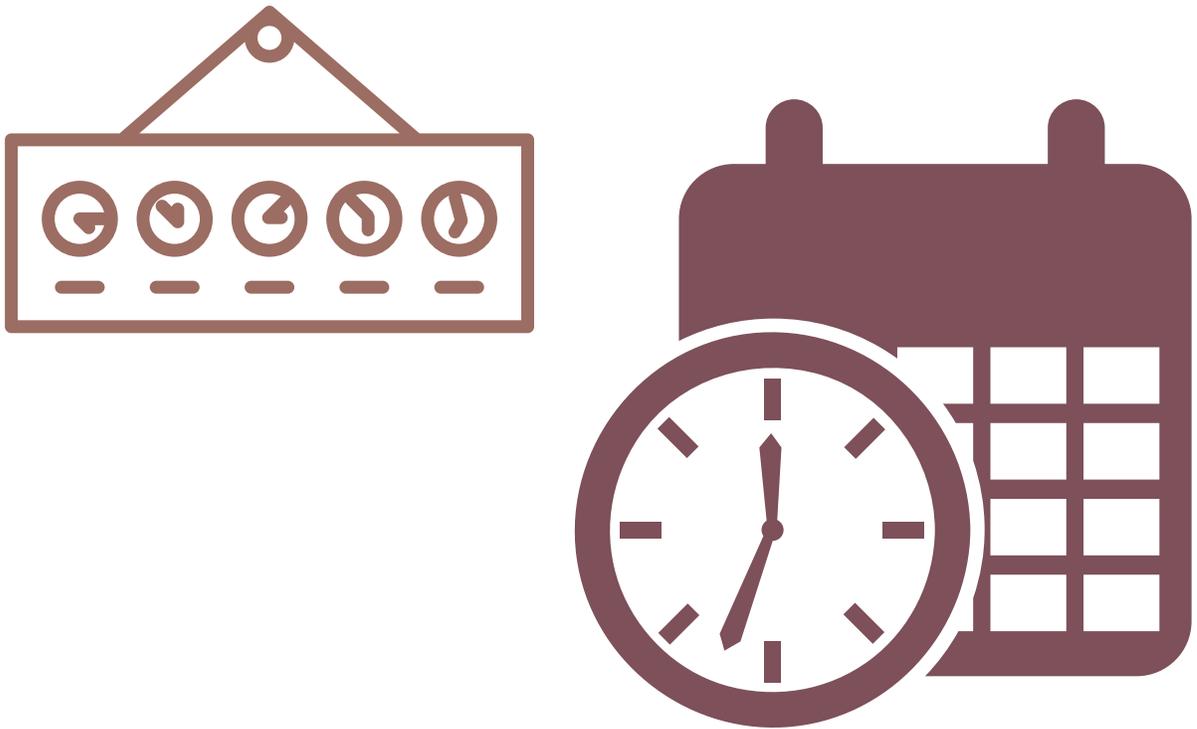
WHEN TO OFFER SALAH

The prayer is compulsory for someone who is Muslim, sane and mature. There are 5 prayers that we pray daily at prescribed intervals - Fajr, Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha. Each prayer has a time span within which it should be prayed. Once the time of a prayer starts, it is recommended to pray as soon as possible. Time for **Fajr** (early morning) begins at dawn and ends before sunrise. **Dhuhr** (midday) is from when the sun has passed the zenith up to the time of Asr. **Asr** (late afternoon) is from when the shadow cast by an object is twice its length, and it may be performed up to the time of Maghrib. Time for **Maghrib** (evening) begins at sunset and lasts till the end of dusk. **Isha** (night) time begins with the nightfall. It may be delayed up to dawn although it is disliked delaying it for that long.

Every salah is made up of sets of certain number of repetitive units. One unit is called a **rakat**. Sets of rakat form fard, sunnah, nafil or witr prayers. **Fard sets are compulsory and must be prayed.** Sunnah means an action that was practiced regularly by our beloved prophet ﷺ. Nafil are additional optional units that we pray if we want to spend some more time with our Rabb. Witr are other highly encouraged sets of prayer.

SALAH & Number of Rakats	Sunnah	Fard	Sunnah	Nafil	Witr Wajib	Nafil
FAJR (Early Morning)	2	2				
DHUHR (Midday)	4	4	2	2		
ASR (Late Afternoon)	4	4				
MAGHRIB (Right after sunset)		3	2	2		
ISHA (At nightfall)	4	4	2	2	3	2

WHEN TO PRAY



Timings of the five prayers can vary from region to region and time of the year. **Please refer to your local masjid or an established mobile application for prayer timings in your area.**

Jumu'ah (Friday prayer) is a congregational prayer that replaces the dhuhr prayer on Fridays. Men must join a congregation to pray Jum'uah. If a man is unable to attend Jumu'ah for a legitimate reason (like sickness) then he should pray Dhuhr instead. Women have the option to perform Jumu'ah in a congregation or to pray Dhuhr by themselves.

Apart from the 5 obligatory prayers, a Muslim prays special salah for occasions like **Eid** (congregational prayer at Muslim religious festivals) or **Taraweeh** (congregational prayers during Ramadan).

There are two times of the day when it is not allowed to pray: the time of sunrise and when sun is at its zenith (peak).



Tahaarah (purity)

To pray, we begin with clean clothes and body (physical and ritual cleanliness). We perform **wudhu** (minor ablution) or **ghusl** (major ablution) as and when needed.

We need to be in a state of **wudu** to offer our prayers. Wudu includes washing our hands, face and feet in a specific manner (see page 7). It can be done anywhere that we have access to clean water, for example, in a basin, a bathroom or a specially designated area in a mosque. The state of wudu breaks if we use the washroom, pass wind or sleep.

Ladies do not pray during their periods, or postpartum bleeding after childbirth. If a person has engaged in physical intimacy or if a lady has been on her periods or postpartum bleeding, then they will need to perform **ghusl** once before they can start praying again.

Ghusl consists of first cleaning up the part that is unclean, doing wudu and then pouring water over our body, making sure that water reaches every part of our body, including the hair. The water should reach roots of hair and scalp.

If there is no water available, or a person is so sick that using water is not advisable, then they can do **tayammum** instead of wudu or ghusl. To do tayammum, make your intention, say **Bismillah** (in the name of Allah). Strike the clean ground (free from impurities like blood, urine, feces, pus) once with the palm of the hands. Wipe the back of the right hand with the palm of the left, and the back of the left hand with the palm of the right. Wipe the face with both hands. Then recite the same prayers that are recited after wudu (See Page 9).

HOW TO DO WUDU

1. Begin with saying -

Bismillah

in the name of Allah

2. Wash your hands from fingertips to wrists (3 times), cleaning in between the fingers as well



3. Take water with your hands and rinse your mouth (3 times)



4. Sniff a little bit of water in your nose and clean it with your left hand (3 times)



HOW TO DO WUDU

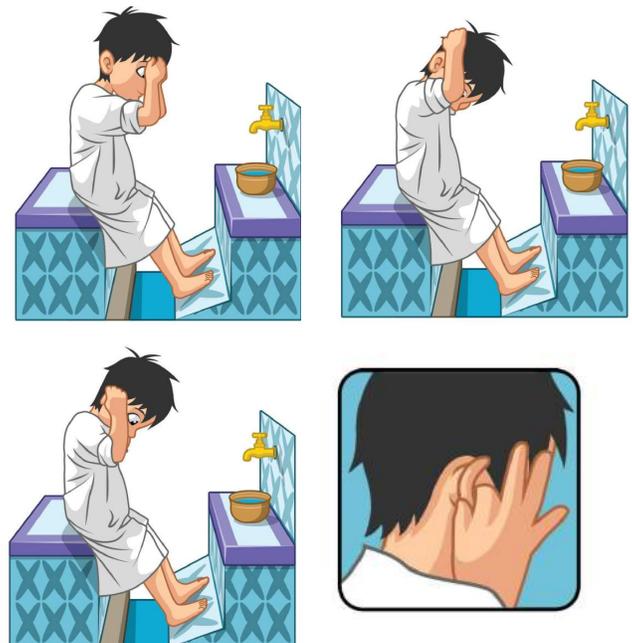
5. Wash your whole face area between forehead and chin, ear to ear (3 times)



6. Wash your arms from fingertips to elbows, starting with the right hand (3 times) and then washing the left hand (3 times)



7. Wet your hands and wipe your head from front to back. Then, use the pointing fingers to rub the inside of both ears and the thumbs to rub the outside of both ears at the same time in a bottom to top motion. The right hand rubs the right ear while the left hand rubs the left ear.



HOW TO DO WUDU

8. Wash your feet from tip of toes up to the ankles; right first, and then left. When washing your foot, you should also wash in between your toes from little toes to big toes on each side.



9. Lastly, after the washing, say the following prayers.

Ash Hadu An La ilaha illa Allahu, wahdahu la shareeka lahu, Wa Ash Hadu Anna Muhammadan Abduhu wa Rasooluhu

I testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone. Who has no partner. And I testify that Muhammad ﷺ is His servant and Messenger.

Allahummaj'alneen minat-tawwaabeena waj'alneen minal-mutatahhireen

O Allah, make me among those who turn to You in repentance, and make me among those who are purified.

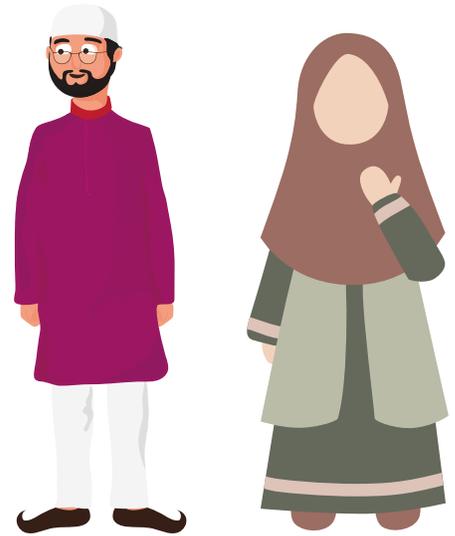


Niyat (Intention)

We make a mindful intention in our hearts to complete the Salah to worship Allah ﷻ according to the actions and rules prescribed by Him.

Covering Up

Our body must be covered properly and decently. Both men and women should wear loose clothes that do not shape the private parts, nor are see-through. Men's clothes must cover at least from their navel to their knees, and women's clothes must cover their entire bodies except their face, hands, and feet.



Where to pray

Prophet ﷺ encouraged Muslims to build **masjids**, known and characterized as the houses of Allah ﷻ. There are lots of blessings associated with praying in a masjid. Men are encouraged to pray in a masjid as much as possible, making a special effort for the Friday afternoon. That said, we can pray anywhere as long as it is a pure and clean place i.e., absence of any large amount of blood and what comes from it (like pus), urine or feces. We should look for a serene and quiet place, if we can, so that we can focus on our salah.

Adhaan - The Call to Prayer

Adhaan is a special call to prayer which reminds us that it is time for prayer, so we should go and pray. We can hear the adhaan in a masjid or on our adhaan clocks or mobile applications. In several countries around the world, we are also fortunate to hear the adhaan publicly.



Allaahu Akbar, Allaahu Akbar. x2

Ash-hadu al-laa ilaaha illa-Allah. x2

Ash-hadu ann-na Muhammadar rasoolu-llaah. x2

Hayya a'alas-salaah. x2

Hayya a'alal-falaah. x2

Allahu Akbar. x2

Laa ilaaha illa Allah x1

Allah is most great. Allah is most great. x2

I bear witness there is no god but Allah. x2

I bear witness Muhammad is the messenger of Allah. x2

Come to prayer. x2

Come to success. x 2

Allah is most great. x2

There is no god but Allah. X1

GETTING READY TO PRAY

When we hear the adhaan, we repeat the words except for when it is said, Hayya 'alas-salaah and Hayya 'alal-falaah. Here we should say,

Laa Hawla wa laa quwwata illa billah

There is no might and no power, except by Allah.

As the adhaan finishes, we say,

wa anaa ash-hadu an laa ilaaha illa Allahu wahdahu la shareeka lahu wa anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasooluhu. Radheetu billahi Rabban, wa bi-Muhammadin ﷺ Rasoolan wa bil-Islaami deenan

And I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, Who has no partner, and that Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger. I am pleased with Allah as my Lord, with Muhammad ﷺ as my Messenger and with Islam as my religion.

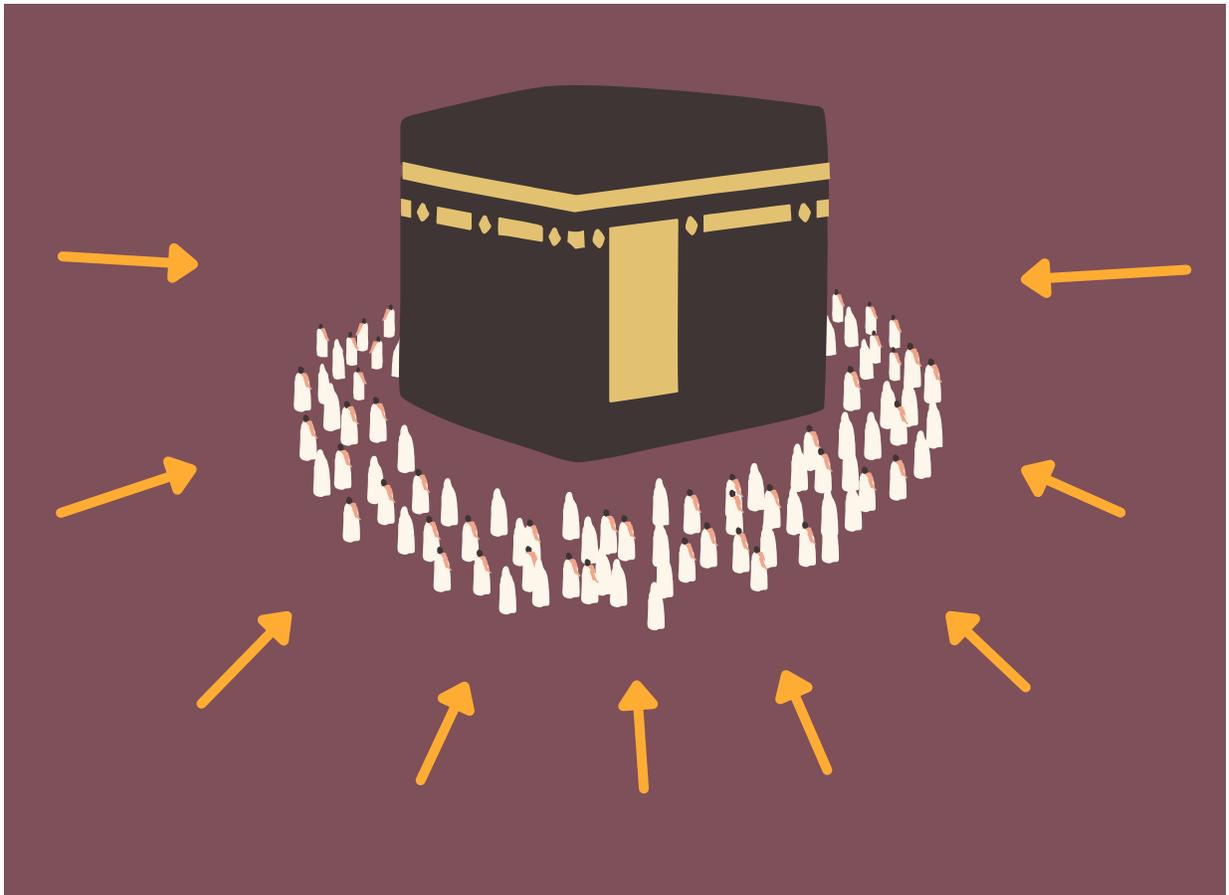
After replying to the adhaan, we recite prayer for Allah's blessings on the Prophet ﷺ

Allahumma Rabba haadhidda'watit-taammati wassalaatil-qaa'imati, aati Muhammadanil waseelata walfadheelata, wab'ath-hu maqaamam-mahmoodanil ladhee wa'adtahu (innaka laa tukhliful mee'aad)

O Allah, Lord of this perfect call and established prayer, grant Muhammad ﷺ the intercession and favor, and raise him to the honored station You have promised him (verily You do not neglect promises).

Facing the Qibla

When praying all Muslims in the world face the Qibla (the direction of prayer), which is the Kaaba in the city of Makkah in Saudi Arabia. This unites all Muslims around the world.



We should try our best to find the right direction, with the help of a local Muslim, a compass or a mobile application. If no means are available and we are not able to find the right direction, then we can make an intention to face the Qibla in our heart and pray in any direction.

MOVEMENTS IN THE SALAH

A Muslim carrying out the prayer will perform a series of sets of movements. Each movement is accompanied by words of prayer to be recited in Arabic. We will describe the movements and the words of prayer in the following pages.



Where possible, always try to learn Salah practically with a teacher or visit the masjid and pray in a jamaat (congregation). Please note that:

- If someone is unable to perform the standing, bowing or prostrating actions for any valid reason, like sickness, then there are ways to pray while sitting or even lying down.
- Some minor differences are reported by different schools for actions in different positions (e.g. whether to raise the hands to shoulder or ears). These are all valid if they are coming from an established practice of our Prophet ﷺ. Don't worry if you hear or see these slight differences.
- There are several options for words of prayers to be recited in different positions. We have reported one of the options in this booklet to keep it simple to learn and practice. You can learn the other options later if you like, but it is not essential to do so.

MOVEMENTS IN THE SALAH

For a new Muslim who does not speak Arabic, it can take time to learn the Arabic words of the prayers. In the meantime, for each position, you can say:

SubhanAllah (3 times)

Glory be to Allah

As you learn, keep adding simple phrases such as:

Allahu Akbar

Allah is the Greatest

Lastly at the end of the Salah, when finishing the last sitting position say the shahadah:

La ilaha illa Allahu

Muhammadur Rasool Allah

There is no god but Allah and Muhammad ﷺ is His Messenger.



THE SALAH

FIRST POSITION - QIYAM (STANDING)



Stand facing the Kaaba, with feet evenly spaced, looking at the spot where your head will touch the ground later in the salah, during the sajdah (prostration).

Raise your hands, palms facing forward, fingers extended - not spaced out, nor together, parallel to your shoulders or ears and say -

Allahu Akbar

Allah is the Greatest

This begins the state of ritual prayer. Until we are in the state of prayer, we do not talk to anyone, eat, drink, or do anything that has nothing to do with prayer.



THE PRAYER

FIRST POSITION - QIYAM (STANDING)



Now fold your hands across your chest. Put the right hand on your left hand such that they overlap till the wrists, or you can grasp the left hand with the right hand near wrist and place the hands on the middle of your chest. Your eyes focus downward at the position on the ground where you will later be prostrating.

Now we recite a few things,

Opening Supplications: Thana and Isteaadha

**Subhanaka Allahumma wa bi hamdika wa tabaarak
asmuka wa ta'aalaa jadduka wa laa ilaaha ghairuk**

How perfect You are O Allah! praise be to You. Blessed is Your name and exalted is Your Majesty and none is worthy of worship except You.

Audhu billahi minash shaytaanir rajeem

I seek refuge in Allah from Satan, the outcast

THE PRAYER

FIRST POSITION - QIYAM (STANDING)

Then we recite the opening chapter of the Quran - the Fatiha

Bismillahir Rahmaanir Raheem

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Alhamdulillahil Rabbi Alaameen

All praise and thanks is (due) to Allah, Lord of the worlds -

Arrahmanir Raheem

The Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful

Maaliki Yawmiddeen

Sovereign of the Day of Recompense

Iyyaka na'budu wa-iyyaka nasta'een

It is You we worship, and You we ask for help.

Ihdinas siratal mustaqeem

Guide us to the straight path -

**Siratal Ildheena an'amta 'alayhim
ghayril maghdoobi 'alayhim wa lad-ddalleen**

**The path of those upon whom You have bestowed favor,
not of those who have evoked Your anger or of those who are astray.**

THE PRAYER

FIRST POSITION - QIYAM (STANDING)

We follow this with some other portion from the Quran, like Surah Ikhlaas:

Bismillahir Rahmaanir Raheem

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Qul huwa Allahu ahad

Say, "He is Allah, [who is] One and Indivisible

Allahu Samad

Allah — the Sustainer, needed by all

Lam yalid wa lam yoolad

He has never had offspring, nor was He born.

walam yakullahu qufuwan ahad

And there is none comparable to Him."

THE PRAYER

SECOND POSITION - RUKU (BOWING)

Now as we complete our recitation, we begin to lower our head and bow. As we are bowing, we simultaneously call out:

Allahu Akbar
Allah is Greatest

We rest our hands on our knees with elbows away from our sides, and our back and head are held at 90 degrees to the legs for a few seconds enough to recite the supplication glorifying Allah for at least three times:



Subhaana Rabbiyal Adheem

Far removed from every imperfection is my Lord, the Great

Now as we are getting up from the ruku position back to our standing position, we recite -

SamiAllahu liman hamidah
Allah hears whoever praises Him

Once standing, we say,

Rabbana wa lakal hamd

Our Lord, and to You belongs praise and thanks



THE PRAYER

THIRD POSITION - SAJDHAH (PROSTRATION)

Now we are going to lower ourselves down on our knees, resting our hands and forehead on the ground in Sajdah (prostration). As we lower ourselves, we remind ourselves that Allah is the Greatest and we repeat:

Allahu Akbar

Allah is Greatest

Sajdah is the most cherished position of all in Salah. It is a clear and powerful expression of obedience and submission.



We bend down, rest on our palms, let our head make a gentle contact with the ground till the forehead and nose is firm upon the ground. Knees and feet are on the floor with our belly away from our thighs. Toes should be erected and turned towards the Qibla. Arms should be away from the ground. Keep the elbows elevated off the ground. The Sujood is done on 7 body parts: The forehead (including the nose), the two palms, the two knees, and the two feet (toes). When in prostration, say 3 times or more:

Subhaana Rabbiyal A-'ala

How perfect is my Lord, the Most High

THE PRAYER

THIRD POSITION - SAJDHAH (PROSTRATION)

Sajdah is done twice. So we, raise our heads saying:

Allahu Akbar

Allah is Greatest

Then we sit on our left leg while keeping our right foot upright with its toes turned to the Qiblah or we can sit on both feet with their toes turned towards the Qibla. Put the palms of your hands on your knees. When sitting between two prostrations, we say twice, three, four or more times:



Rabbi ighfirlee

My Lord forgive me

We then go back to sajdah while reciting,

Allahu Akbar

Allah is Greatest

Once in sajdah, we say again 3 or more times,



Subhaana Rabbiyal A-'ala

How perfect is my Lord, the Most High

The prophet ﷺ used to lengthen his prostrations, savouring in these precious moments with Allah.



THE PRAYER

CONNECTING RAKAT & COMPLETING PRAYER

This way one Rakat of Salah is completed. We say again:

Allahu Akbar

Allah is Greatest

We now stand up and perform another Rakat (depending on the number of rakat that we are praying) - Do it in the same manner as the first one but without reciting the opening supplications. We will start right from Surah Fatiha.

After completing every two rakat, or after the sajdah in the salah that has only two rakat, we remain seated, place our hands upon our knees or just above the lower thighs and recite Tashahhud:



**Atta-hiyyatu lillahi was-salawatu wat-tayyibatu
As-Salamu alaika ayyuh-an-Nabiyyu Wa rehmat-ullahi
wa barakatuhu As-Salamu alaina Wa alaa
ibaadillah-is-saliheen.**

**All greetings of humility are for Allah, and all prayers and goodness.
Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and the mercy of Allah and His
blessings. Peace be upon us and upon the righteous slaves of Allah.**

THE PRAYER

CONNECTING RAKAT & COMPLETING PRAYER

We then raise our index finger of the right hand, look towards the index finger and say the testimony of faith.



**Ash hadu al-la-ilaha illa Allahu. Wa ash hadu anna
Muhammadan Abduhu wa Rasuluhu**

**I bear witness that there is no god but Allah. And I bear witness that
Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.**

THE PRAYER

CONNECTING RAKAT & COMPLETING PRAYER

If we are going to pray more than two rakat, we will now get up again and perform the remaining rakat. **If we had just prayed our final rakat**, we will now keep sitting and engage in prayers just before exiting the prayer. We send blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ whom Allah send as a mercy to the whole mankind and through whom Allah taught us the blessing of prayer. This is called **Durood-e-Ibraahimi**.

Allahumma Salli alaa Muhammad Wa alaa aali Muhammad. Kama sallaita alaa Ibraheem Wa alaa aali Ibraheem, Innaka Hameedum Majeed. Allahumma Baarik alaa Muhammad Wa alaa aali Muhammad. Kama baarakta alaa Ibraheem Wa alaa aali Ibraheem, Innaka Hameedum Majeed

O Allah bestow Your favor on Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and on the family of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as you have bestowed Your favor on Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and on the family of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) Indeed, you are Praiseworthy, Most Glorious. O Allah, bless the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and the family of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as you blessed Prophet Ibrahim (AS) and the family of Prophet Ibrahim (AS) Indeed, you are Praiseworthy, Most Glorious.

THE PRAYER

CONCLUSION: TASLEEM(SAYING SALAAM)

We now turn our head to the right and say:



Assalamalaykum wa Rahmatullah

May Allah's peace and mercy be upon you.

We then turn our head to the left and repeat:

Assalamalaykum wa Rahmatullah

May Allah's peace and mercy be upon you.

With this a set of prayer is complete and a believer returns to the life of this world, but with a different soul than the one he had left with!

ARE YOU CONSIDERING BEING A MUSLIM?

There is no ceremonial or ritualistic acceptance required for someone to become a Muslim. The actual acceptance of Islam is between us and the One who created us. It is recommended to have two witnesses, if possible. Additionally, if we want to publicize it in a mosque or a gathering, then it is very good, but that is not a necessary condition. People do this because when they join a certain faith, then some of them want to join that community and announce their Islam in that community. But the actual act of accepting Islam is simply the utterance of the testimony of faith, the shahadah. All you need to do to begin your journey as a Muslim is to believe in and say the shahadah.

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
وَ أَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَ رَسُولُهُ

Ashhadu an laa ilaha illa Allah,
wa ashhadu anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasooluhu

**I BEAR WITNESS THAT THERE IS NO GOD (WORTHY OF WORSHIP) BUT ALLAH,
& I BEAR WITNESS THAT MUHAMMAD ﷺ IS HIS SERVANT AND MESSENGER.**



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