

# ISLAM 101

## WITHOUT INFORMATION OVERLOAD

The Essentials of Faith, Worship, and Muslim Life—  
Explained Simply and in the Right Order



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# Islam 101 Without Information Overload

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*The essentials of faith, worship, and Muslim life—explained simply and in the right order*

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This guide provides general Islamic education. Questions involving individual health, safety, marriage, finance, legal rights, or unusual circumstances should be referred to qualified scholars and appropriate professionals.

WELCOME

# You Are Not Supposed to Learn Everything Today

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*Clarity • Priority • Practice • Steady growth*

**ALLAH SAYS** “Allah intends ease for you and does not intend hardship for you.” — Sūrat al-Baqarah, 2:185

Islam is deep enough for a lifetime, but its entrance is clear. A new Muslim does not need to carry an entire library before taking the next faithful step. You need a sound map: what must be believed, what must be practiced, whom to ask, and what can safely wait.

This expanded edition is designed for instruction rather than quick browsing. Every essential has two parts. The first page explains the belief or practice in connected language. The second page converts it into priorities, steps, cautions, questions, and a realistic action.

**THE PROMISE OF THIS BOOK** You will finish with a usable foundation—not a pile of disconnected facts.

Move slowly enough to understand and consistently enough to grow. Read one essential over two days, bring unresolved questions to a trustworthy teacher, and protect worship while knowledge develops.

## THE METHOD

# The Three-Lane Learning System

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**LEARN NOW** The belief or ruling you need immediately because it shapes faith, prayer, or a clear duty.

**PRACTICE NOW** One realistic action that turns today's knowledge into worship and stable habit.

**SAVE FOR LATER** A legitimate subject that should not distract you from the present foundation.

Use one essential per week if you need a gentle pace, or one page per day for a structured month and a half. Keep a question notebook. Mark each question as urgent, relevant soon, or advanced. This prevents a fascinating side issue from displacing prayer, purification, or the meaning of Tawḥīd.

- Ask: Does this affect what I believe about Allah or the Shahādah?
- Ask: Does this affect today's purification, prayer, or clear obligation?
- Ask: Is this a personal case requiring qualified guidance?
- Ask: Can this safely wait until my foundation is stronger?

## PRIORITY MAP

# What Comes First?

**1 FAITH** Allah, the Shahādah, the Messenger ﷺ, the Qur'an, and the Six Articles of Faith.

**2 DAILY WORSHIP** Purification, five prayers, du'ā', remembrance, and repentance.

**3 PERSONAL OBLIGATIONS** Clear ḥalāl and ḥarām matters that affect your actual life now.

**4 CHARACTER AND BELONGING** Family, identity, safety, manners, and healthy community.

**5 STRUCTURED GROWTH** One coherent course, a trustworthy teacher, review, and steady practice.

**NOT FIRST** Sectarian arguments, online controversies, advanced legal disagreements, speculative questions, and collecting dozens of teachers. These may be studied later in their proper place.

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صلى الله  
عليه وسلم

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## ESSENTIAL 1

# Understanding: Begin with the Big Picture

Islam is willing submission to Allah. It gives life one center: know the Creator, worship Him alone, follow His Messenger ﷺ, live responsibly, and prepare to return to Him.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

“I did not create jinn and humankind except to worship Me.”

Sūrat al-Dhāriyāt, 51:56

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** Purpose, worship, return.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Trying to master every branch of Islamic knowledge before taking the first obedient step.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand begin with the big picture, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 2

# Understanding: The Shahādah in Plain Language

The testimony of faith declares that none deserves worship except Allah and that Muhammad ﷺ is Allah's Messenger. It joins sincerity with correct guidance.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** قَاعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ

“Know that none has the right to be worshipped except Allah.”

Sūrat Muḥammad, 47:19

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** Worship allah alone and follow the messenger ﷺ.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Treating the Shahādah as a sentence to repeat without learning what it requires.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand the shahādah in plain language, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 3

# Understanding: Who Is Allah?

Allah is One, eternal, perfect, self-sufficient, all-knowing, all-powerful, and unlike His creation. He alone creates, controls, provides, answers prayer, and deserves every act of worship.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ

“Say: He is Allah, the One; Allah, the Self-Sufficient Master.”

Sūrat al-Ikhlāṣ, 112:1–2

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** Tawḥīd and allah’s perfect names and attributes.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Imagining Allah through created forms or directing prayer and reliance to others.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand who is allah?, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 4

# Understanding: The Six Articles of Faith

Īmān rests upon belief in Allah, His angels, His revealed books, His messengers, the Last Day, and divine decree. Together they explain guidance, responsibility, unseen help, accountability, and destiny.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** آمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ

“The Messenger believes in what was revealed to him from his Lord, as do the believers.”

Sūrat al-Baqarah, 2:285

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** The six Articles of Faith and their practical meaning.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Turning beginner faith into speculative puzzles about matters Allah did not require you to solve.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand the six articles of faith, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 5

# Understanding: Meet the Messenger

ﷺ

Muhammad ﷺ is Allah’s final prophet: a servant and messenger who must be loved, believed, obeyed, and followed without being worshipped. His Sunnah demonstrates the Qur’an in lived form.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ

“In the Messenger of Allah you have an excellent example.”

Sūrat al-Aḥzāb, 33:21

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** His message, character, biography, and authentic sunnah.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Learning religion from viral quotations without checking whether they are authentic.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand meet the messenger

ﷺ, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 6

# Understanding: The Qur'an: Guidance Before Quantity

The Qur'an is Allah's final revealed speech and the believer's primary book of guidance. Begin with regular reading, a reliable translation, careful recitation, and one practical lesson at a time.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ

“Indeed, this Qur'an guides to what is most upright.”

Sūrat al-Isrā', 17:9

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** Al-fātiḥah, short sūrahs, meaning, reflection.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Measuring progress only by pages finished while understanding and practice remain absent.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand the qur'an: guidance before quantity, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 7

# Understanding: The Five Pillars: Your Practice Map

The Shahādah, five daily prayers, zakāh, Ramadan fasting, and ḥajj are the great public pillars of Muslim practice. They do not all become due in the same way, but prayer begins shaping the day immediately.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

## REVEALED FOUNDATION بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ

“Islam is built upon five.”

Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** The five pillars and when each applies.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Feeling overwhelmed by zakāh or ḥajj details before they are personally due.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand the five pillars: your practice map, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 8

# Understanding: Wuḍū' Without Confusion

Wuḍū' is a simple act of purification before prayer. Learn the required washing carefully, use a trustworthy demonstration, and distinguish certainty from obsessive doubt.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** قَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوْهَكُمْ وَأَيْدِيَكُمْ إِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ

“Wash your faces and your arms to the elbows.”

Sūrat al-Mā'idah, 5:6

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** Intention, sequence, complete washing, nullifiers.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Repeating wuḍū' because of mere uncertainty or wasting water in search of perfection.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand wuḍū' without confusion, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 9

# Understanding: Ṣalāh: Learn by Layers

The five daily prayers are the center of Muslim daily life. Learn their times, units, movements, and essential recitations first; improve pronunciation, concentration, and recommended details steadily.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذِكْرِي

“Establish prayer for My remembrance.”

Sūrat Ṭā Hā, 20:14

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** Times, conditions, movements, al-fātiḥah.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Waiting until every word is perfect before beginning to pray.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand ṣalāh: learn by layers, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 10

# Understanding: Du‘ā’ and Dhikr

Du‘ā’ is calling upon Allah; dhikr is remembering and praising Him. A new Muslim may speak to Allah in any language outside the prescribed recitations and gradually learn concise authentic supplications.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** اِدْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

“Call upon Me; I will respond to you.”

Sūrat Ghāfir, 40:60

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** Direct supplication, gratitude, remembrance.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Depending on unsourced formulas, objects, intermediaries, or superstitious counting systems.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand du‘ā’ and dhikr, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 11

# Understanding: Repentance, Not Perfection

Tawbah is the believer's road back after sin: stop the wrong, regret it, resolve not to return, and restore people's rights when involved. Repeated failure must produce renewed repentance, not despair.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ

“Do not despair of Allah's mercy.”

Sūrat al-Zumar, 39:53

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** Honest repentance, hope, repair.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Allowing shame to make you abandon prayer, community, or hope in Allah.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand repentance, not perfection, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 12

# Understanding: Ḥalāl and Ḥarām: Start with the Clear

Begin with clear obligations and prohibitions that affect your present life: prayer, honesty, modesty, lawful food and earnings, avoiding intoxicants, and protecting rights. Ask qualified people about complex cases.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

“Ask the people of knowledge if you do not know.”

Sūrat al-Nahl, 16:43

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** Clear rulings relevant today.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Treating personal culture, internet outrage, or one isolated opinion as unquestionable law.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand ḥalāl and ḥarām: start with the clear, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 13

# Understanding: Family, Friends, and Identity

Islam commands kindness to parents and relatives while setting limits on obedience in what is sinful. Lawful culture, language, personality, work, and family bonds do not need to be erased.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** وَصَاحِبُهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا

“Keep their company in this world with kindness.”

Sūrat Luqmān, 31:15

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** Kindness, boundaries, lawful identity.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Turning every family visit into a debate or cutting ties because relatives need time to understand.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand family, friends, and identity, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 14

# Understanding: Belonging Without Losing Judgment

A healthy masjid helps you worship, learn, serve, and form safe relationships. Community members remain imperfect, so evaluate advice through knowledge, transparency, boundaries, and accountability.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** **إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ**

“The believers are brothers and sisters.”

Sūrat al-Ḥujurāt, 49:10

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** Healthy belonging and trustworthy guidance.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Surrendering personal decisions to someone who demands secrecy, money, isolation, or rushed marriage.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand belonging without losing judgment, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 15

# Understanding: Character Is Not an Extra

Truthfulness, mercy, patience, cleanliness, justice, keeping promises, honoring neighbors, and controlling anger are fruits of faith. Worship should refine how a Muslim treats people.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ

“Indeed, Allah commands justice and excellence.”

Sūrat al-Nāhl, 16:90

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** One deliberate character improvement.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Judging religiosity only by clothing, vocabulary, or argument while neglecting conduct.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand character is not an extra, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 16

# Understanding: Tests, Doubts, and Emotional Health

Hardship does not mean Allah has abandoned you, and sincere questions do not expel you from faith. Separate intellectual questions, emotional pain, obsessive whispers, and mental-health needs.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** فَإِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

“Indeed, with hardship comes ease.”

Sūrat al-Sharḥ, 94:5

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** The right help for the right problem.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Treating every emotional struggle as weak faith or every doubt as a debate to consume online.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand tests, doubts, and emotional health, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 17

# Understanding: A Sustainable Learning Plan

The useful beginner sequence is creed, purification, prayer, Qur'an, character, and rulings that affect your real life. One coherent course and regular review are better than scattered consumption.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا

“My Lord, increase me in knowledge.”

Sūrat Ṭā Hā, 20:114

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** One teacher, one course, one notebook, one study time.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Jumping among advanced books and contradictory clips until certainty becomes confusion.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand a sustainable learning plan, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## ESSENTIAL 18

# Understanding: Keep Walking Toward Allah

Islam is a lifelong journey of worship, learning, repentance, service, and increasing nearness to Allah. Protect the foundation and take the next clear step instead of comparing beginnings.

This subject belongs near the beginning because it gives order to everything that follows. Learn its clear meaning before collecting exceptions. When a foundation is understood, later details have somewhere to rest; without that foundation, even correct information can become scattered and exhausting.

**REVEALED FOUNDATION** وَالَّذِينَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى

“Those who accept guidance—He increases them in guidance.”

Sūrat Muḥammad, 47:17

**Practical meaning.** What this changes today:

- It gives you a clear sentence you can explain in your own words.
- It identifies the next act of worship or learning that deserves protection.
- It helps you recognize which secondary discussions may safely wait.

**LEARN NOW** Direction, consistency, sincere return.

## Instruction and Practice

Use the following sequence. Do not rush to complete the boxes; the purpose is to make the lesson usable in worship, decisions, and conversation.

1. Read the explanation and proof slowly. Circle unfamiliar words rather than opening many unrelated searches.
2. Explain the central idea aloud in two sentences. If you cannot explain it simply, reread before adding more detail.
3. Connect the lesson to one prayer, choice, relationship, or habit in your present life.
4. Ask one focused question of a trustworthy teacher and record the answer with its source.
5. Review the lesson after seven days and identify what has actually changed.

**COMMON CONFUSION TO AVOID** Comparing your first month to another person’s tenth year and mistaking speed for sincerity.

**PRACTICE NOW** Write one sentence beginning: “Because I understand keep walking toward allah, I will...”

My explanation: \_\_\_\_\_

My next action: \_\_\_\_\_

## QUICK REFERENCE

# The Five Pillars of Islam and Six Articles of Faith

**FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM** Shahādah • Five daily prayers • Zakāh on qualifying wealth • Fasting Ramadan • Ḥajj for those able

- Shahādah establishes faith and direction.
- Prayer organizes every day around Allah.
- Zakāh purifies qualifying wealth and serves eligible recipients.
- Ramadan trains faith, restraint, gratitude, and obedience.
- Ḥajj is required once for the Muslim who is physically and financially able.

**SIX ARTICLES OF FAITH** Allah • Angels • Revealed books • Messengers • Last Day • Divine decree

Memory key: the five pillars organize major acts of Islam; the six articles summarize the foundations of īmān. Learn both lists, then attach a one-sentence meaning to every item.

## QUICK REFERENCE

# Wuḍū' at a Glance

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- 1. Intend purification in the heart and say Bismillāh.
- 2. Wash both hands.
- 3. Rinse the mouth and nose.
- 4. Wash the entire face.
- 5. Wash both arms, including the elbows.
- 6. Wipe the head and ears.
- 7. Wash both feet, including the ankles.
- 8. Follow the order, complete each area, and avoid wasting water.

**BEFORE PRAYER** Confirm the prayer time, ritual purity, cleanliness from relevant impurity, covering of the 'awrah, qiblah direction, and intention for the specific prayer.

**AVOID OBSESSIVE REPETITION** Certainty is not removed by mere doubt. Learn normal nullifiers from a qualified teacher and do not rebuild wuḍū' around imagined possibilities.

## QUICK REFERENCE

# The Five Daily Prayers

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**FAJR** Dawn • 2 obligatory units

**ZUHR** After midday • 4 obligatory units

**AŞR** Afternoon • 4 obligatory units

**MAGHRIB** After sunset • 3 obligatory units

**ISHĀ** Night • 4 obligatory units

Exact times vary by location and date. Use a reliable local timetable. Learn the prayer by demonstration, protect the obligatory units first, and improve pronunciation and recommended acts steadily.

- Before each prayer: check time, purification, clothing, place, covering, qiblah, and intention.
- During prayer: move calmly, recite what you have learned, and do not wait for perfect confidence.

## QUICK REFERENCE

# Sūrat al-Fātiḥah: Meaning Map

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all worlds.  
 الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ The Universally Merciful, the Especially Merciful.  
 مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ Master of the Day of Judgment.  
 إِيَّاكَ تَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ تَسْتَعِينُ You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help.  
 اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ Guide us to the straight path.  
 صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ The path of those You have blessed.  
 غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ Not those who earned anger, nor those who went astray.

## REFERENCE

# Twelve Essential Terms

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- ISLĀM — Willing submission to Allah.
- MUSLIM — One who submits to Allah.
- ĪMĀN — Faith expressed through belief, speech, and action.
- TAWHĪD — Directing Allah’s exclusive rights to Him alone.
- SHIRK — Associating a partner with Allah in what belongs to Him alone.
- SUNNAH — The authentic guidance of the Prophet ﷺ.
- ṢALĀH — The prescribed prayer.
- DU‘Ā’ — Calling upon Allah.
- TAWBAH — Sincere repentance and return.
- ḤALĀL — Permitted.
- ḤARĀM — Prohibited.
- TAQWĀ — Protective awareness of Allah that produces obedience.

DECISION TOOL

# Do I Need to Learn This Now?

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**DOES IT AFFECT BELIEF IN ALLAH OR THE SHAHĀDAH?** Learn it now.

**DOES IT AFFECT TODAY’S PRAYER OR PURIFICATION?** Learn it now.

**DOES IT CONCERN A CLEAR DUTY IN MY PRESENT LIFE?** Ask a qualified teacher soon.

**IS IT AN ADVANCED DISAGREEMENT WITH NO IMMEDIATE ACTION?** Save it for later.

**IS IT MAINLY AN ONLINE CONTROVERSY?** Leave it until the foundation is strong.

**DOES IT INVOLVE HEALTH, SAFETY, MARRIAGE, FINANCE, OR LAW?** Seek personal scholarly and professional guidance.

Write the question in your parking lot. Name the right person to ask and a realistic time to ask. Then return to the present priority instead of allowing one unresolved issue to consume the whole learning journey.

## CONTINUATION PLAN

# A Thirty-Day Foundation

**WEEK 1** Review the Shahādah, Tawḥīd, Allah’s names, and the six articles of faith.

**WEEK 2** Practice wuḍū’, stabilize prayer times, and review the basic movements and recitations.

**WEEK 3** Study al-Fātiḥah, begin a small Qur’an routine, and learn meaningful daily dhikr.

**WEEK 4** Strengthen character, family kindness, community support, and a sustainable study plan.

- Daily: five prayers, ten to fifteen minutes of learning, a few Qur’anic verses, and brief dhikr.
- Weekly: one class or mentor conversation, one community connection, and one review session.
- At day thirty: choose the next belief, worship skill, and character habit to strengthen.

**DU‘Ā** Yā Muqallib al-qulūb, thabbit qalbī ‘alā dīnik. “O Turner of hearts, keep my heart firm upon Your religion.” — Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī

## SOURCES

## Selected References

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- The Qur'an. Translations in this guide are concise meaning-based renderings.
- Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī.
- Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjāj.
- Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī, Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā al-Tirmidhī.
- Al-Nawawī, Al-Arba'ūn al-Nawawiyyah and Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn.
- Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī, Jāmi' al-'Ulūm wa al-Ḥikam.
- Ibn Kathīr, Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Aẓīm.
- Al-Sa'dī, Taysīr al-Karīm al-Raḥmān.

**EDITORIAL PRINCIPLE** This guide intentionally gives the beginner a reliable map. It does not replace detailed fiqh instruction or personal rulings from qualified scholars.

Qur'anic Arabic, translations, and references should be reviewed in the context of the complete verse and reliable tafsīr. Ḥadīth citations are included at the level appropriate to an introductory guide.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Dr. Sheikh Saad Slaoui Andaloussi is an imam, teacher, author, and student of Islamic knowledge with decades of experience serving Muslims in the United States. His work focuses on Tawḥīd, Qur’anic studies, Tajwīd, Prophetic biography, family education, and making reliable Islamic learning accessible to English-speaking audiences.

He serves the community of Masjid Ebad Al Rahman at the Islamic Society of Pinellas County in Florida. His teaching emphasizes sound evidence, mercy, clarity, gradual learning, and the practical connection between worship and character.

**SERIES** Part of a growing collection of clear, evidence-based Islamic learning guides for new Muslims, families, young people, and community educators.

**CLOSING COUNSEL** Know Allah. Protect the prayer. Read the Qur’an. Ask trustworthy people. Repent when you fall. Treat people beautifully. Then continue.