

# How to Pray for a Recent Convert (part 2 of 2)

**Description:** A brief description of the formal prayers, the first obligatory act of worship to be performed after accepting Islam. Part 2 discusses how a new Muslim can perform the prayers.

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## Objectives

- To learn how to prepare oneself in order to perform the prayer.
- To learn a simpler way to pray and adopt it temporarily, until one is able to pray the actual prayer.

## Arabic Terms

- *Wudoo* - ablution.
- *Salah* - the Arabic word to denote a direct connection between the believer and Allah. More specifically, in Islam it refers to the formal five daily prayers and is the most important form of worship.
- *Ghusl* - ritual bath.
- *Fajr, Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib, Isha* - the names of five daily prayers in Islam.

## What is Prayer (*Salah*)?

- Prayer (*Salah*) is the formal establishment of prayer required of a Muslim five times daily. Prayer (*Salah*) consists of specific statements and actions.

## Getting Ready for Prayer (*Salah*)

**The timings:** The five daily prayers have to be offered within a certain time range. They are *Fajr, Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib* and *Isha*, and you can find the prayer timings for your city from this link:

<http://www.islamicfinder.org/>

The timings of the prayers vary from place to place. And this is why you need to find the prayer timings for your specific city.

The prayers do not need to be prayed exactly when the time starts; rather, they can be prayed at any time before the next prayer time starts, with the exception of *Fajr* and *Isha*.

The *Fajr* prayer should be prayed before sunrise. For this reason, you will find the time for sunrise listed on Prayer schedules, and this does not mean that there is a special prayer for Sunrise. And the *Isha* prayer should be prayed till the middle of the night. However, due to necessity, the *Isha* prayer can be prayed up to the beginning of *Fajr* time.

**The direction:** You can use the same website to find the direction of prayers. The website will display the bearing on a compass after you have entered your city.

**The dress:** A Muslim man should wear something that at least covers him from the navel to the knees. A Muslim woman must wear loose clothing that covers her entire body and hair leaving her face and palms open.

**State of Purity:** One should be in a state of purity, by performing ablution (*wudoo'*) or ritual bath (*ghusl*) [this was covered in Part 1]. Also one should make sure that there is no impurity (such as urine or faeces) on one's clothes or body. The prayers can be done on any clean surface such as the floor, carpet or a rug. Dust, mud or grease are considered ok and do not affect the prayers.

## The Prayer (*Salah*)

The Prayer (*salah*) is to be said in Arabic and requires some memorization, so, it usually takes a little time to learn correctly and fully and get used to it. Not knowing Arabic should not discourage you; just pray the prayer (*salah*) to the best of your ability.

A new Muslim has to realize that the orders of Allah are to be followed within the limit of his or her ability and endurance. If you find it difficult to memorize all of what is necessary for the prayers, it may be a good idea in the meantime to write it on a piece of paper and read them in prayer. If you are unable to do even this, it is sufficient that you say any or all of the following instead:

- [Subhanallah](#) 'How Perfect is Allah!'
- [Al-hamdu lil-lah](#) 'All praise and thanks are for Allah'
- [La ilaha il-lal-lah](#) 'There is no god except Allah'
- [Allahu Akbar](#) 'Allah is the Greatest'

Here is an example of a 2 unit prayer (like the **Fajr** prayer), based on the last method of prayers explained above.

1. Stand straight facing the direction of prayer.

2. Raise your hands up to the shoulders and say [Allahu Akbar](#). See Figure 1.



Figure 1

3. Then place your right arm over your left arm and place both of them on the chest. In the standing position, say [Subhanallah](#). See Figure 2.



Figure 2

4. Then say **Allahu Akbar** and go to the bowing position. See Figure 3. In the bowing position say **Subhanallah**.



Figure 3

5. Then get up from the bowing position to stand straight again. Say **Allahu Akbar** while getting up. See Figure 4. Here say **Subhanallah**.



Figure 4

6. Then go to the position of prostration. See Figure 5. Say **Allahu Akbar** while going down. In the position of prostration say **Subhanallah**.



Figure 5

7. Then come to the sitting position as in Figure 6. While sitting up, say **Allahu Akbar**. In the sitting position say **Subhanallah**.



Figure 6

8. Then again go to the position of prostration (see figure 5). Say **Allahu Akbar** while going down. In the position of prostration say **Subhanallah**.

9. Stand up again while saying **Allahu Akbar** and repeat Step 3 to 8.

10. Then come to the sitting position as in Figure 6. While sitting up, say **Allahu Akbar**. In the sitting position say **Subhanallah**.

11. Then conclude the prayer by turning your head to the right then left, each time saying **As-salaamu alaikum**. See Figures 7 and 8.



Figure 7



Figure 8

Here is an example of a 3 unit prayer (like the **Magrib** prayer):

Do steps 1 to 10, and then stand up again while saying **Allahu Akbar** and repeat Steps 3 to 8 and then steps 10 and 11.

Here is an example of a 4 unit prayer (like the **Dhuhr, Asr and Isha** prayer):

Do steps 1 to 10, and then stand up again while saying **Allahu Akbar** and repeat Steps 3 to 11.

This way of performing prayers is permissible for you until you can pray the actual prayer (found in Level 2, "Prayer for Beginners" lesson) which can be done with the help of reading the prayers from a piece of paper.

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