

# Leisure, Fun and Entertainment

**Description:** The lesson discusses leisure, fun, and entertainment for a Muslim within the confines of Islamic religion and morality.

By Imam Mufti (© 2015 NewMuslims.com)

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## Objectives

- To understand that modern entertainment is an industry.
- To understand that having fun is not unrestricted.
- To learn about 7 types of halal entertainment and 2 types of “mixed” entertainment.

## Arabic Terms

- *Shirk* - a word that implies ascribing partners to Allah, or ascribing divine attributes to other than Allah, or believing that the source of power, harm and blessings comes from another besides Allah.
- *Dhikr* - (plural: *adhkar*) remembrance of Allah.
- *Awrah* - the parts of the body that should be kept covered.
- *Hijab* - The word *hijab* holds several different meanings, including conceal, hide and screen. It commonly refers to a woman’s headscarf and in broader terms to modest clothing and behaviour.
- *Haram* - Forbidden or prohibited.
- *Halal* - permissible.

For most of us, entertainment is amusement. Its purpose is to create a relaxing, enjoyable environment in which to temporarily escape the stresses of daily life, a pastime and a way to relax during our precious free time. It has taken countless forms over the centuries, ranging from recreational amusement such as jogging or painting to passive entertainment like watching television or listening to music.



Entertainment can also take the form of everyday activities, for example, gardening or cooking. In fact, the list of activities that could be considered entertainment is virtually endless and differs from person to person.

However, modern entertainment is a business and an industry that has been greatly impacted by technology. With colorful personalities, glitz and glamour often associated with the various types of entertainment, today's mass entertainment from Hollywood to Bollywood, X-boxes and tablets are all businesses designed to make a profit.

For a Muslim, spare time does not include the idea that there are times when a person is absolutely free to waste time in ways that are of no benefit. The Prophet said,

“The feet of the Children of Adam, on the Day of Judgement, will not move from their Lord until after being asked five things: his life and how it occupied him, his youth and what he did while it lasted, his wealth, how he acquired it and how he spent it, his knowledge and what he did with it.”

[\[1\]](#)

A Muslim is faced with challenges of how and where to spend their time for leisure, because many forms of modern, mass entertainment have limited place in Islam.

## Totally *Halal* Entertainment/Fun

The default is that in worldly matters everything is permissible except what is specifically prohibited. Many Muslims have a misconception that having fun is forbidden. Nothing could be further from the truth as having fun is part of human nature, however, as everything else, over-indulgence/excesses should be avoided, especially at the expense of obligatory duties. We will list several *halal* forms of fun below.

### 1. Eating Out

Eat in moderation without being wasteful and eat *halal* food. Better yet, enjoy it with friends and family. It is all *halal* and fun!

### 2. Reading, Writing, Poetry, Listening to Audiobooks & Podcasts

You can read for fun and relaxation. Non-fiction is preferable to fiction. Pick books and magazines on different topics. The best place to find books and get suggestions is your local public library. If you struggle to read, talk to your librarian for help in selecting books at your reading level.

### 3. Swimming, Archery, Martial Arts, & Gardening

The recommendation for swimming and archery comes from Prophet Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of Allah be upon him. For swimming make sure there is segregation between the sexes and your clothing conforms to Islamic guidelines.

Martial arts can be very beneficial however it should not involve forbidden actions such as bowing or *shirk*.

## 5. Sight-Seeing & Nature Hikes

The natural environment; ocean, forests, state parks, waterfalls, animals, farmland, desert land, and trees are simply beautiful and in addition they bring you closer to Allah and make you feel at peace inside. Few activities can match the feeling of praying under a tree or doing *dhikr* on a hike.

## 6. Nasheeds or Islamic Songs

There are good, bad, and in-between nasheeds out there. Some nasheeds can be a good substitute to popular music with sexual and violent content. Carefully chosen nasheeds are a good way to make your children love Islam, Prophet Muhammad, and things Islamic. Unfortunately, some nasheed-artists are similar to rock-stars, so beware of that.

## 7. Hanging out

Your friends either make you or break you. The Prophet said, “Every person follows the religion of his best friend so be careful whom you befriend.”

Since we are all social beings, hanging out and socializing will be high on our list of ways of having fun, yet it is so important to have the right friends. Your friends are the ones who encourage you to pray or to skip the prayer and catch a movie. They are the ones who tell you your *hijab* looks beautiful or that it makes you look odd. In the end, whom you choose to hang out with will make the biggest difference in who you become.

# “Mixed-Bag” Forms of Entertainment

## 1. Video Games

The content of video games can be violent, sexual, and addictive, yet, it is hard to say that all video games are *haram*. The content and the habit of the player greatly varies, thus it's placement in this category.

## 2. TV and Internet

The same goes for these two. The Internet is a great tool for learning and teaching Islam, obtaining an online degree, learning new skills, and research. It can also be used to watch pornography, online gambling, and can be a massive waste of time.

Likewise, the TV can be used as a useful tool, but rarely is. The marketing and programs are geared to send certain messages and products across to children and other audiences. These days news has also turned into entertainment!

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Endnotes:

[1] *Tirmidhi*

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