Umrah Guide

A guide to Umrah — the rites from ihram to completion, step by step, with every dua in Arabic, transliteration, and translation, and a source for every line.

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Umrah is often called the "lesser pilgrimage." Unlike Hajj, it can be performed at any time of year, and its rites are few. This booklet walks through them in order — with every dua fully vowelled and every line sourced.

> "And complete the Hajj and Umrah for Allah."
> — Quran 2:196

What Umrah is

Umrah consists of four rites, performed in order: entering **ihram** (the state of consecration), **tawaf** (circling the Ka'bah seven times), **sa'i** (walking seven times between the hills of as-Safa and al-Marwah), and finally **shaving or shortening** the hair to leave ihram.

Before you go

Ihram is entered at or before a fixed boundary called the **miqat**. Once in ihram, a pilgrim refrains from cutting hair or nails, using perfume, hunting game, and marital relations. Men wear two unstitched white cloths and leave the head bare; women wear ordinary modest clothing.

Pack before the miqat

- [ ] Ihram garments (two white cloths for men)
- [ ] Unscented soap and toiletries
- [ ] Comfortable sandals that leave the ankle bare
- [ ] A small bag for your shoes — you will carry them everywhere
- [ ] A small refillable bottle for Zamzam
- [ ] This booklet

> FROM MY OWN UMRAH — AHAMED, 2024–2026
>
> **Take the shoe bag seriously.** *You will carry your shoes almost everywhere you go. There are places to leave them at the mosque doors, but you often cannot come back out the way you went in — especially at the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah, where different areas are closed off after the fard prayers so that women can enter. A small bag that holds your sandals keeps them with you wherever you end up.*

> **Keep the bottle on you, too.** *In both Makkah and Madinah, take a small bottle whenever you go to the mosque. You can refill it with Zamzam inside, and keep drinking through the day — even once you are back outside.*

Entering ihram

1 **Make your intention at the miqat**

Perform ghusl or wudu, put on the ihram garments, and form the intention for Umrah as you reach the miqat.

2 **Begin the talbiyah**

From the moment you enter ihram, recite the talbiyah often — aloud for men, quietly for women — until you reach the Ka'bah to begin tawaf.

IHRAM

The Talbiyah

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ لَبَّيْكَ، لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ لَبَّيْكَ، إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ، لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ

Labbayka llāhumma labbayk, labbayka lā sharīka laka labbayk, inna l-ḥamda wa-n-niʿmata laka wa-l-mulk, lā sharīka lak

Here I am, O Allah, here I am. Here I am — You have no partner — here I am. Truly, all praise, favour, and sovereignty are Yours. You have no partner.

Sahih al-Bukhari 1549 · Sahih

ENTERING THE HARAM

Entering the mosque

اللَّهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِي أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ

Allāhumma-ftaḥ lī abwāba raḥmatik

O Allah, open for me the gates of Your mercy.

Step in with the right foot.

Sahih Muslim 713 · Sahih

Tawaf

Tawaf is seven circuits around the Ka'bah, beginning and ending at the Black Stone, keeping the Ka'bah on your left.

1

Start at the Black Stone

Face the Black Stone, and if you can reach it without crowding, touch or kiss it; otherwise point toward it from a distance and say the takbir.

EACH CIRCUIT

At the Black Stone

اللهُ أَكْبَرُ

Allāhu akbar

Allah is Most Great.

Said at the start of each of the seven circuits.

Sahih al-Bukhari 1613 · Sahih

2

Circle seven times

Walk seven circuits, keeping the Ka'bah on your left. There is no required dua — recite Qur'an, make dhikr, or supplicate in your own words.

BETWEEN THE CORNERS

Between the Yamani corner and the Black Stone

رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Rabbanā ātinā fi-d-dunyā ḥasanah wa fi-l-ākhirati ḥasanah wa qinā ʿadhāba-n-nār

Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect us from the punishment of the Fire.

Sunan Abi Dawud 1892 · Hasan

3

Pray two rak'ahs at the Station of Ibrahim

After the seventh circuit, pray two short rak'ahs behind the Maqam Ibrahim if you can, or anywhere in the mosque.

AFTER TAWAF

The Station of Ibrahim

وَاتَّخِذُوا مِن مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى

Wa-ttakhidhū mim-maqāmi Ibrāhīma muṣallā

And take the standing place of Abraham as a place of prayer.

Quran 2:125

ZAMZAM

Drinking Zamzam

مَاءُ زَمْزَمَ لِمَا شُرِبَ لَهُ

Mā'u zamzama limā shuriba lah

The water of Zamzam is for whatever it is drunk for.

Drink your fill, and ask Allah for what you need.

Sunan Ibn Majah 3062 · Hasan

Getting onto the mataf

The **mataf** is the open marble floor immediately around the Ka'bah. During busy periods it is reserved for pilgrims in ihram, so that those actually performing Umrah

can circle without the crowd thickening around them.

An Umrah permit through the **Nusuk** app, with its electronic entry code, is required. Book it before you travel.

> FROM MY OWN UMRAH — AHAMED, 2024–2026
>
> *In 2024, 2025 and 2026 nobody actually checked my permit at the gate. I would not count on that. The rules tightened for the 2026 season, and being turned away in ihram, with your group already inside, is not a risk worth taking to save ten minutes on an app.*
>
> *The gates I have used to reach the mataf are* **King Abdulaziz**, **King Fahd**, *and* **Bab Umrah** *— but gates are renumbered as the expansion works continue, and which ones are open to the mataf changes with the crowd. Treat the names as landmarks, not instructions: follow the signage and the staff on the day, and take the entrance they point you to.*

> FROM MY OWN UMRAH — AHAMED, 2024–2026
>
> **Before a fard prayer, the way down may close.** *If you reach the Haram for tawaf about half an hour before an obligatory prayer, the guards will not let women go down to the mataf. Men can still go through — but walk separately from the women in your group, because the guards will not let you pass if you are together as a family. If you split up, agree first where you will meet.*
>
> *The reason is the rows: for the fard prayer, the places in front — nearest the Ka'bah — are for men only, and those rows start forming around thirty minutes beforehand.*
>
> *If you are held back, don't be disappointed. Have patience: once the fard prayer and the funeral prayer after it are over, the guards open the way to the mataf again.*

Which level to walk

Tawaf is valid on the upper floors as well as at ground level. What matters is that your circuits stay inside the mosque; being higher than the Ka'bah is not itself an objection.

> FROM MY OWN UMRAH — AHAMED, 2024–2026
>
> *Choose the level for your legs, not your pride. A circuit on the mataf is roughly 145 metres; on the first floor it is nearer 280–300, and on the roof around 400. Seven circuits upstairs is close to three times the walk — a real consideration in the heat, or with children, or at the end of a long travel day.*
>
> *The trade is space. The upper levels are far calmer, and if crowds unsettle you they are worth the extra distance. There are wheelchair-accessible routes on the upper floors, free wheelchairs available from the General Presidency near some gates, and motorised carts on a designated level — book those through the official app rather than from anyone offering in the street.*

Sa'i

Sa'i is walking seven times between the hills of **as-Safa** and **al-Marwah**, beginning at as-Safa.

1 **Begin at as-Safa**

Climb toward as-Safa, face the Ka'bah, and recite the verse of the two hills before you begin.

APPROACHING AS-SAFA

The symbols of Allah

إِنَّ الصَّفَا وَالْمَرْوَةَ مِن شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ — أَبْدَأُ بِمَا بَدَأَ اللَّهُ بِهِ

Inna-ṣ-ṣafā wa-l-marwata min sha'ā'iri-llāh — abda'u bimā bada'a-llāhu bih

Indeed, as-Safa and al-Marwah are among the symbols of Allah. — I begin with what Allah began with.

Sahih Muslim 1218 · Sahih

2 **Walk seven lengths**

Walk to al-Marwah, then back — each length counts as one. Men jog lightly between the green markers; there is no fixed dua, so make your own between the dhikr.

ON AS-SAFA & AL-MARWAH

The dhikr of the mounts

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَهُ الْمُلْكُ وَلَهُ الْحَمْدُ وَهُوَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

Lā ilāha illa-llāhu waḥdahu lā sharīka lah, lahu-l-mulku wa lahu-l-ḥamdu wa huwa ʿalā kulli shayʾin qadīr

There is no god but Allah alone, without partner. His is the dominion and His is the praise, and He is able to do all things.

Said three times facing the qiblah on each hill, with your own dua in between.

Sahih Muslim 1218 · Sahih

FROM MY OWN UMRAH — AHAMED, 2024–2026

The Mas'aa — the corridor between the two hills — runs over several levels, with a rooftop deck opened when it gets busy. The upper levels are quieter and cooler, and there are lanes set aside for wheelchairs.

Sa'i takes most people longer than they expect: seven lengths is a little over three kilometres. If you are going straight from tawaf, drink first.

Completion

1

Shave or shorten

After the seventh length, men shave the head or shorten the hair all over; women trim a fingertip's length. With this, Umrah is complete and ihram is lifted.

COMPLETION

For those who shave

اللَّهُمَّ ارْحَمِ الْمُحَلِّقِينَ

Allāhumma-rḥami-l-muḥalliqīn

O Allah, have mercy on those who shave their heads.

The Prophet ﷺ prayed this three times for those who shaved, and once for those who shortened.

Sahih al-Bukhari 1727 · Sahih

FROM MY OWN UMRAH — AHAMED, 2024–2026

For the haircut, in 2025 there were official stalls just outside the Marwa-side exit — newly built, and not there the year before — but I did not see them in 2026. There are also barbers in Makkah Tower and through the surrounding shopping complexes, which are usually quieter than the ones nearest the Haram.

Wherever you go, **ask for a fresh disposable blade to be opened in front of you.** *A reused blade is how blood-borne infection spreads, and no barber will object to being asked.*

In the two Holy Mosques

Umrah itself takes a few hours, but most pilgrims stay on for days — in Makkah, and often in Madinah too. Three things come up again and again in both al-Masjid al-Haram and the Prophet's Mosque, and are worth knowing before you arrive.

The funeral prayer after the fard

The funeral prayer (*salat al-janazah*) is a **communal obligation**: when enough of the community pray it, the duty is fulfilled for everyone. Joining it carries a reward the Prophet ﷺ measured in mountains:

> "Whoever attends the funeral procession till he offers the funeral prayer for it, will get a reward equal to one Qirat, and whoever accompanies it till burial, will get a reward equal to two Qirats." It was asked, "What are two Qirats?" He replied, "Like two huge mountains."
>
> — Sahih al-Bukhari 1325

It is short and prayed standing throughout — four takbirs, with no bowing and no prostration. Learn it before you travel: the full guide, with every supplication, is at journeyintoislam.com/guides/how-to-pray-janazah.

> FROM MY OWN UMRAH — AHAMED, 2024–2026
>
> *In both mosques there was a funeral prayer after almost every fard prayer. It follows straight after the salam, so stay in your row and don't get up to leave until it is done. If you prayed on the mataf near the Ka'bah, praying your sunnah there afterwards is difficult — people will be rushing around you — so move somewhere calmer first.*

The night adhan and tahajjud

In the Prophet's own mosque, Bilal called an adhan in the last part of the night, before the adhan for Fajr. The Prophet ﷺ explained what it was for:

> "The Adhan pronounced by Bilal should not stop you from taking Suhur, for he pronounces the Adhan at night, so that the one offering the late night prayer (Tahajjud) from among you might hurry up and the sleeping from among you might wake up. It does not mean that dawn or morning has started."
>
> — Sahih al-Bukhari 621, Sahih Muslim 1093a

So this first adhan is not the call for Fajr: it does not mean Fajr has begun, and it does not end suhur if you are fasting. It is a call to the night prayer — which the

Prophet ﷺ called "the most excellent prayer after what is prescribed." How to pray it is at journeyintoislam.com/practices/night-prayer.

> FROM MY OWN UMRAH — AHAMED, 2024–2026
>
> *Both the Haram in Makkah and the Prophet's Mosque in Madinah call this night adhan for tahajjud. Treat it as your alarm. If you possibly can, make it to the mosque: pray tahajjud there, and stay on for Fajr. You are only there for a few nights — they are worth getting up for.*

Jumu'ah

The reward for Jumu'ah is greatest for whoever comes earliest: the Prophet ﷺ likened going in the first hour to sacrificing a camel, then a cow, a ram, a hen, and finally an egg. The full guide to the Friday prayer is at journeyintoislam.com/practices/jumuah.

> FROM MY OWN UMRAH — AHAMED, 2024–2026
>
> *At both Holy Mosques, arrive* ***at least two hours before the adhan for Jumu'ah.*** *Any later and you may not find a place inside the mosque at all. Bring your bottle; there is no need to bring a Qur'an, as copies are everywhere in the mosque to read while you wait.*

Common mistakes

- **Inventing a dua for each circuit.** No specific dua is required for tawaf or sa'i beyond what is reported; supplicate freely.
- **Crowding the Black Stone.** Touching it is a sunnah, not a duty — pointing from afar is enough, and harming others to reach it is not permitted.
- **Starting sa'i at al-Marwah.** Sa'i begins at as-Safa: "I begin with what Allah began with."
- **Breaking ihram rules unknowingly.** Avoid perfume, cutting hair or nails, and covering the head (for men) until you have shortened or shaved.
- **Waiting to enter ihram until landing.** If you fly in, your flight path crosses a designated miqat boundary in the air — enter ihram before or as you pass it, not after you land.

Common questions

What if my period starts?

Menstruation does not stop your Umrah — it changes only one thing. Enter ihram at the miqat as planned and perform every rite as normal, but do not circle the Ka'bah

until your period ends and you have done ghusl. Once pure, complete tawaf and sa'i as usual.

Can I perform Umrah more than once?

Yes — there is no limit on how many times it may be performed, and each is a fresh chance to seek forgiveness.

> "Umrah is an expiation for the sins committed between it and the previous one, and Hajj Mabrur has no reward but Paradise."
>
> — Sahih al-Bukhari 1773, Sahih Muslim 1349a, Riyad as-Salihin 1275

Can I do Umrah on behalf of someone who has died, or who can't travel?

Yes. Umrah may be performed for a deceased relative, or for someone alive but permanently unable to travel through old age or chronic illness: complete your own Umrah first, then travel to a nearby boundary such as at-Tan'im to enter ihram again on their behalf. It rests on the same principle behind performing Hajj for a parent who has passed away:

> "Perform Hajj on her behalf. Had there been a debt on your mother, would you have paid it or not? So pay Allah's debt, as He has more right to be paid."
>
> — Sahih al-Bukhari 1852

What if I can't walk the full distance?

Illness, age, or a disability are not a barrier. Tawaf and sa'i may both be performed while being carried or in a wheelchair, keeping to the outer lanes so as not to obstruct pilgrims on foot.

> "Perform the tawaf while riding, behind the people."
>
> — instruction given to Umm Salamah, who was unwell (Sahih al-Bukhari 1619, Sahih Muslim 1276)

Is there anything special about Umrah in Ramadan?

Yes. The Prophet once told a woman who had missed Hajj that an Umrah performed during Ramadan carries the same reward as Hajj. Scholars differ on whether that applies to everyone or was specific to her circumstances, but most extend the virtue to all who perform Umrah in that month — reason enough that Ramadan is the busiest time of year for Umrah.

> "When Ramadan comes, go for Umrah, for Umrah in that month is equivalent to Hajj."
>
> — Sahih al-Bukhari 1782, Sahih al-Bukhari 1863

Why do pilgrims try to touch the Black Stone?

Not because the stone itself has any power — only because the Prophet did it. Umar ibn al-Khattab said as much aloud while kissing it, so that no one would mistake the act for reverence of the stone itself. That is why it is a sunnah to imitate, not a duty to force your way toward.

> "I know that you are a stone and can neither benefit anyone nor harm anyone. Had I not seen Allah's Messenger kissing you, I would not have kissed you."
>
> — Umar ibn al-Khattab, Sahih al-Bukhari 1597, Sahih Muslim 1270a

How do I know how busy it will be?

The General Presidency publishes live crowd levels for the tawaf and sa'i areas, and Nusuk carries the current permit rules. Check those rather than anything printed here — arrangements at the Haram change season to season, and the signage and staff on the day always override this booklet.

Can I change my ihram garments partway through?

Yes. You may change into a fresh set at any point — after a wet dream, to wash, or simply for comfort — and it does not affect your ihram at all, as long as the replacement is itself permissible ihram clothing rather than ordinary stitched garments.



Every dua and every claim in this guide is cited to the Qur'an or authentic, graded hadith.

Full sources: journeyintoislam.com/pocket-guides/umrah-guide

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