



# Tayammum



## Introduction

Ritual washing is needed for Muslims before they perform certain actions such as the daily ritual devotions (Salah). When Muslims wash, it is an external action with the intention to also cleanse internally. This is a prerequisite, without which the daily ritual devotions (Salah) are not valid. However, at times, a person may not be able to use water for one valid reason or another. In such circumstances, Islam allows people to use an alternative, which will give the same spiritual ruling. This, in Arabic, is known as Tayammum.





# What is Tayammum?

Tayammum is the act of wiping clean earth on your face and hands with the intention of ritual purification. It is only used in the event where water is not accessible or cannot be used for a valid reason. God says, “You who believe, when you are about to pray, wash your faces and your hands up to the elbows, wipe your heads, wash your feet up to the ankles and, if required, wash your whole body. If any of you is sick or on a journey, or has just relieved himself, or had intimate contact with a woman, and can find no water, then take some clean sand and wipe your face and hands with it. God does not wish to place any burden on you: He only wishes to cleanse you and perfect His blessing on you, so that you may be thankful.” [5:6]

# When Can I Make Tayammum?

Tayammum is made when the following conditions are met:

1

You need to perform an action which ordinarily requires ritual washing, such as the daily ritual devotions.

2

There is no water present. This includes:

- a.** Someone having no access to water such as people who travel over desert land
- b.** The water you have is only enough to drink and cook with and not enough for washing
- c.** Being unable to use water due to an injury or illness or severe cold weather, making the use of water harmful or dangerous



# What Do I Use to Make Tayammum?

God states as in the above quoted passage, that in the event of being unable to use water, you can use clean soil. Therefore, there are two conditions that need to be met:

1

Anything natural on the face of the earth – this can be soil, sand, pebbles, stones etc.

2

It must be clean, so there can be no visible impurities on that part of the ground

# How to Make Tayammum

1

Make the intention in your heart to perform tayammum.

2

Begin by mentioning God's name.

3

Strike the ground once with both hands, palms down.

4

If there is excess dust on your hands, you can blow it off or shake it off.

5

Wipe over your face.

6

Wipe over both hands.

7

Ensure that you wiped over all of your face and hands, as you would do if washing.





# How Long Does My Tayammum Last?

Your tayammum is valid until one of the following takes place:

1

You break your tayammum as you would your ritual washing, e.g. passing wind, urinating, defecating, ejaculating etc.

2

Finding water that can be used for washing

3

Being able to use water if a person was ill or injured

## Modern Applications

Although water is easily accessible in the modern world, there are many parts of the world that still suffer from drought or find clean water difficult to access. Additionally, if you happen to be travelling or trekking in remote parts in the wilderness, you may not have access to water. Likewise, certain people due to illness or frailty may be unable to use water. Therefore, these rulings are still very pertinent and it is useful to know them.