

# Ritual Cleansing



NEW MUSLIM  
ACADEMY



God loves purity and cleanliness. God says, “God loves those that frequently repent from their sins and are extra mindful of cleanliness” [2:222] The Messenger Muhammad said, “God is pure and only accepts what is pure.” Therefore, Muslims should constantly be trying to purify themselves, both spiritually and physically.

Spiritual purification requires us to worship God alone, without a partner. It means to keep away from sin to the best of our abilities, and when we do fall into sin, to turn to God in repentance and seek forgiveness. It is also to have good character and manners in the way we behave and deal with others. The Messenger Muhammad called to all of this and it is a fundamental part of the religion.

This is extremely important, as our internal cleanliness is more important than our external one. Some people work hard on their outer appearance and looks, they dress well and look well-groomed, but their character and manners are bad. The way they treat others is poor and offensive, and they engage in sins without seeking repentance for them. Islam is a religion of inner and outer beauty. It balances inner and outer cleanliness and purification.



When it comes to physical purity, God and the Messenger Muhammad stipulated how this is achieved. God says, “O you who believe in God, follow His Messenger and practise His laws, when you intend to stand up to offer the prayer and you are in the state of minor ritual impurity, then perform cleansing by washing your faces and then your hands and arms all the way and including the elbows, then wiping your heads and finally washing your feet all the way and including the ankles.” [5:6] A Muslim must be in a state of ritual purity to be able to perform certain acts of devotion. These acts of worship are:

**01**

**All obligatory and voluntary daily ritual devotions, Salah.**

**02**

**Touching the Quran when it is in its Arabic Scripture form.**

**03**

**Circling of the Kabah in Mecca.**



It is recommended to always be in a state of ritual purity and cleanliness when a person is able to do so. The Messenger Muhammad would always be in such a state. Ritual cleansing is performed with normal water.

The most common and regular form of cleanliness is ritual cleansing and washing [Ar. Wudu].

The method of performing ritual cleansing can be taken from the following steps:

**01**

**Intention – to make the intention in the heart of removing the physical state of impurity by making ritual cleansing.**

**02**

**You then say, ‘I begin with the name of God’.**

**03**

**Wash your hands three times – this should be done carefully and methodically. Ensure water reaches every part of the hands including between the fingers and the nails.**

**04**

**You then wash the inside of your mouth and nose three times. Take one handful of water in the right hand, placing half in the mouth and sniff the other half in the nose. The half in the mouth should be moved around in the mouth and gargled, and then spat out. The half in the nose is gently inhaled in and then pushed out to cleanse the nose.**



**05**

You then wash your face three times. The face starts from the top of the forehead all the way to the bottom of the chin. From either side, it is from ear to ear. For men who have beards, the beard is also included in the washing. If the beard is thick, one must ensure water is passed over the whole beard.

**06**

You then wash your hands and your arms all the way and including the elbows three times. You must ensure that the elbow is entirely washed and not missed out and left dry.

**07**


After getting your hands wet, you then wipe over your head. You start from the front of the head with both hands, moving to the back of the head with your hands, and then returning them back to the front of the head. This, unlike the washing, is only done once.

**08**

You then enter your forefingers into the inner part of your ears and use your thumbs to wipe the outer ears.

**09**

You then wash your feet all the way and include the ankles three times. This should be done carefully and methodically, ensuring that water reaches between the toes and all the way to and including the ankles.



This is the complete ritual cleansing performed by the Messenger Muhammad. You must ensure that the above order is maintained.

Once performed, the ritual cleansing can be used for all acts of worship and devotion for which it is needed. It does not need to be repeated until and unless it is nullified. It is nullified when one of the following happens:

**01**

**Anything comes out of the genital/private area (ex urine, faeces, pre seminal fluid).**

**02**

**Loss of consciousness from deep sleep or fainting, etc.**

**03**

**Open wound to the body with loss of a good amount of blood.**

**04**

**Intimate touch (skin to skin contact) of one's spouse which causes arousal.**

**05**

**Touching the private parts with skin to skin contact.**

**06**

**Eating camel meat.**

It is allowed to refresh your ritual cleansing when you like, even if the previous ritual cleansing has not been nullified.