



Frequently Asked Questions About The Salah

What do I do about all the prayers I missed in my life?

You must repent to Allaah sincerely, but you do not have to make up the prayer you missed, because deliberately missing an obligatory prayer is major kufr [disbelief], as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said:

“The covenant that stands between us and them is prayer; whoever gives up prayer is a disbeliever”

And he (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said:

“Between a man and kufr and shirk there stands his giving up prayer.” Narrated by Muslim in his Saheeh.

There is no expiation for that but sincere repentance.

How do I make up for the occasional prayer I missed?

Negligence in performing prayers is a great sin, and a sign of extreme negligence, because prayer is the most important pillar of Islam after the Shahaadatayn (twin testimony of faith). Allaah warns those who take the matter of prayer lightly and do not pray on time, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have given up As-Salaat (the prayers) [i.e. made their Salaat (prayers) to be lost, either by not offering them or by not offering them perfectly or by not offering them in their proper fixed times] and have followed lusts. So they will be thrown in Hell.

Except those who repent and believe (in the Oneness of Allaah and His Messenger Muhammad), and work righteousness. Such will enter Paradise and they will not be wronged in aught” [Maryam 19:59, 60]

A number of scholars were of the view that the one who misses a single prayer and delays it until its time is over, with no excuse, is a kaafir. So what you have to do is to repent to Allaah from this great sin, and pray regularly on time, as well as doing a lot of naafil prayers, in the hope that Allaah will forgive you and accept your good deeds.

What should I do if I miss Salah now?:

It is not permissible for a Muslim to delay the prayer until its time is over with no excuse. Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Verily, As-Salaah (the prayer) is enjoined on the believers at fixed hours”

[al-Nisa’ 4:103]

i.e., at specific times.



Reasons why prayers may be delayed until their time is over include sleeping and forgetting. It was narrated that Anas ibn Maalik said: The Prophet of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever forgets a prayer or sleeps and misses it, its expiation is to make it up as soon as he remembers it." Narrated by Muslim, 684.

However, if you miss a prayer you have to make it up as soon as you wake up or remember. Prayers must be made up in chronological order. For example, if you missed Asr prayer, and it is now Maghrib time, then you must pray Asr first, then Maghrib.

What Invalidates Salah?:

1. Wilful negligence of any essential posture of Salah like Rukoo', Sujood, etc.
2. Talking.
3. Laughing.
4. Eating or drinking.
5. Uncovering parts of the body that should be covered.
6. Diverging from the direction of the Qiblah.
7. Excessive movement, which is not part of Salah.
8. Anything that nullifies Wudu.

What is permissible to do during Salah?:

- To carry a baby during prayer, if the need arises
- To pray with shoes on, if the shoes are free from any impurities
- To take a few steps while keeping shoulders facing the Qiblah, if needed
- To move your palm slightly to return a greeting
- To say SubhanAllah for males, and to clap for females, to indicate to the Imam that a mistake occurred and needs to be corrected
- To correct and help the Imam if he has made a mistake in his recitation
- To make necessary movements when needed such as: wiping the nose, scratching, etc.

If any emergency arises during prayer and you must leave prayer you should make one Tasleem to the right side only, take care of the matter quickly, and complete the prayer from where you ended. If the matter takes a long time, then redo the prayer from the start.

How do I pray when praying in a congregation?:

When you pray in a congregation you will get rewarded more than if you pray alone. If you are praying with another person, you should stand next to that person on the right, but never ahead. If there are two or more people praying with the Imam, then they should line up behind him.

We should also line up behind the Imam in straight rows. Men should pray in front, with men only. Women should pray behind the men, with women only. If a man and a woman are praying together, the woman should stand directly behind the man, not to his right.

We should follow the Imam's actions and statements, and make sure never to get ahead of him. All gaps should be filled by connecting shoulders to shoulders and feet to feet. Your legs should be spread the same width as your shoulders. We should not cross in front of a person who is praying.



Pray closer to a wall if possible. If not, place a barrier (chair, books, etc.) in front of you. If you are praying behind the Imam, then he must place a barrier in front of him, which would suffice for everyone praying behind him. If you have come late to prayer and you catch the Imam before he has risen from the position of Rukoo', then you may count that Rak'ah as if you have prayed it.

However, if you have caught the Imam after he has risen from Rukoo', then you must follow the Imam until Tasleem. Do not make Tasleem; instead, get up and make-up the Rak'ah(s) that you missed.

If you are in doubt about how many Rak'ahs you prayed, then just take the lower number. For example, if you are in doubt about whether you prayed two or three Rak'ahs, then just count that you prayed only two Rak'ahs and make Sujood As-Sahu in the end of the prayer.

What is Sujood As-Sahu (The prostration of forgetfulness)?:

These are two extra Sujoods that are made at the end of prayer when you have forgotten an essential act. Sujood As-Sahu is done by making two extra Sujoods just before or after Tasleem. If you do it after Tasleem, then make the Sujoods and then make Tasleem again.

These Sujoods are just like the ones done in any prayer. Performing these Sujoods will make up for your mistake. You make these extra Sujoods if you have done one or more of the following:

- If you forgot to do the first Tashahhud
- If you added an extra Rak'ah
- If you doubted how many Rak'ahs you prayed
- If you made Tasleem before completing your prayer,

complete your prayer and then make Sujood As-Sahu in the end, and then make Tasleem again.

THESE ARE JUST SOME OF THE MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS WE HAVE RECEIVED AND THUS DEALT WITH. IF YOU HAVE FURTHER QUESTIONS, AND MORE SPECIFIC QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERING, PLEASE VISIT WWW.ISLAMQA.COM WHERE YOU WILL FIND A WEALTH OF Q&A AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE ANY OTHER QUESTION YOU MAY HAVE.