

In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful

“Establish Regular Prayers, for such Prayers are enjoined on believers at stated times.”
(Qur'an: Chapter 4, Verse 103)

Daily Obligatory Prayers

It is obligatory to perform **five prayers** every day during the prescribed times. Each prayer is divided into cycles called *Rak'ah*:

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| 1. Salaat al-Fajr | (Dawn prayer) | consists of two cycles |
| 2. Salaat al-Zuhr | (Midday prayer) | consists of four cycles |
| 3. Salaat al-`Asr | (Afternoon prayer) | consists of four cycles |
| 4. Salaat al-Maghrib | (Dusk prayer) | consists of three cycles |
| 5. Salaat al-`Isha | (Night prayer) | consists of four cycles. |

• Preparation

- ❖ Ritual washing of hands, face etc is required before starting the prayers
- ❖ Stand upright facing the direction of Mecca and recite the Adhan (call to prayer). All the recitations during the prayer must be in Arabic.
- ❖ Intention: Make the intention of offering the prayer seeking nearness to God.

• Obligatory Recitation (Only translation provided here)

	Lift both hands up to the ears and say: <i>Allaahu Akbar (God is the Greatest).</i>
	Recite the Opening Chapter of the Holy Qur'an, <i>Surah al-Fatihah</i> <i>In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate Praise belongs to God, Lord of the World, the Merciful, the Compassionate, Master of the Day of Judgment; We worship only You, and we seek help from You alone. Lead us on the straight path, the path of those whom You have blessed, Not of those on whom is [Your] Wrath, Nor of those who have gone astray.</i>

	<p>Next, recite another complete (small) chapter of the Holy Qur'an , like the Chapter 112 (purity)</p> <p><i>In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate</i> <i>Say: 'He is God, the One,</i> <i>God the Eternal and Besought of all,</i> <i>Neither begetting nor begotten,</i> <i>nor is there anything comparable to Him</i></p>
	<p>Bow down and place your hands on your knees. Say:</p> <p><i>Glory be to my Lord, the Great, and praise belongs to Him alone.</i></p>
	<p>Then resume the standing position and say:</p> <p><i>God hears the one who praises Him</i></p> <p>Next, say <i>Allaahu 'Akbar (God is the Greatest)</i>, and then go into prostration</p>
	<p>Prostration: Place the forehead on earth with the intention of absolute humility before God Almighty. Say:</p> <p><i>Glory be to my Exalted Lord, and praise belongs to Him alone.</i></p>
	<p>Sit up and say:</p> <p><i>I ask forgiveness of God, my Lord, and I turn to him in repentance</i></p>
	<p>Go back into prostration, and say:</p> <p><i>Glory be to my Exalted Lord, and praise belongs to Him alone.</i></p>
	<p>While standing up, say:</p> <p><i>It is with God's help and through His power that I stand and sit</i></p>

Second Cycle

The second cycle is similar to the first cycle with the following exceptions:

	<p>After reading the two small chapters of the Holy Quran as described above, raise your hands in supplication. Recite a short prayer from the Holy Qur'an. An example is the following:</p> <p><i>Our Lord, bestow upon us good in this world and good in the Hereafter, and protect us from the torment of the fire.</i></p> <p>Repeat the rest of the steps as in the first cycle, until you come to the second prostration.</p>
	<p>After the second prostration resume the sitting position, and recite the following affirmation of faith:</p> <p><i>I bear witness that there is no god except God, He is unique and without partners.</i></p> <p><i>I also bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger.</i></p> <p><i>God bless Muhammad and the progeny of Muhammad.</i></p>
	<p>If you are performing a two-cycle prayer, then end the prayer with the following salutation:</p> <p><i>Peace be upon you, O Prophet, and God's Mercy and Blessings (be upon you).</i></p> <p><i>Peace be upon us, and upon the righteous servants of God.</i></p> <p><i>Peace be upon you (all), and God's Mercy and Blessing.</i></p> <p><i>Allaahu Akbar (God is the Greatest).</i></p> <p><i>Allaahu Akbar (God is the Greatest).</i></p> <p><i>Allaahu Akbar (God is the Greatest).</i></p> <p>This will conclude the prayer.</p>

- In the three-cycle and four-cycle prayers repeat the recitations as per the first cycle and end the prayer with the affirmation and salutation as shown above.

Benefits of offering ritual prayers:

- Obedience to God's command
- Seeking nearness to God
- "God speaking to you" through recitation of the verses from the Qur'an
- Increase in piety
- Forgiveness of sins
- Acceptance of requests
- Blessings and bounties of the Hereafter.

To find out further details about the ritual and spiritual aspects of the Daily Prayers, visit <http://al-islam.org/faq/>