

Bathing Rules in Islam

Bathing is promoted as a means of cleanliness and hygiene

How to take a bath

- Washing and clearing of the mouth with water.
- Clearing of the nose with water
- Followed by pouring water over the entire body until no part of the body remains dry. In ladies, if the hair is thick and pleated, it is not necessary to undo them and wet them entirely. It is sufficient to just pour water over the head three times, and run your hands over the head (i.e. doing Massah).

There are 3 essential components to taking a bath

According to the sunna, clean and clear water should be used for bathing.

Before commencing a bath, it is necessary to wash the private parts first, and then perform ablution (wudhu) after reciting Bismillah.

This should be done in the normal fashion up to stage of washing the arms to the elbows and doing Massah.

After this, one should pour water three times over the right side followed by the left side and then all over. (When taking a shower, shower the right side of the body first followed by the left side, before going fully under the shower).

Bathing is recommended therefore with flowing water, so that after contact with the body, it leaves and flows away. Thus, for those visiting swimming baths, it is important to know that it does not replace the way Islam teaches us to bathe. It is therefore recommended that you take a normal shower after having a dip in a swimming

Bathing should be done in private, as it is not permissible to expose one's private parts, or indeed the body below the shins. The upper part of the body should also not be exposed in public as prescribed within the rules of purdah. Therefore, it is prohibited to join a communal bath, such as may happen with the 'lads' after a game of rugby (or a game of hockey or netball in case of girls).

When does taking a bath become necessary in Islam?

1. Whenever husband and wife meet intimately, (even if ejaculation doesn't happen)
2. After a wet dream, or whenever ejaculation occurs in men.
3. At the end of each menstrual cycle bleeding in women.
4. After the cessation of bleeding following child birth (nifaas) in women. This may be from a few days to up to 40 days after birth.
5. Following the birth of a child, the child should be given a bath.
6. Giving a bath to a dead body is also mandatory before janaza prayers and burial.
7. Bath should be taken by those who have given a bath to a dead body.
8. Bathing is highly recommended to the point of almost being compulsory before Friday prayers, Eid prayers, and during the rites of Hajj.
9. When non Muslims convert to Islam, they should take a bath, and then perform ablution, before offering their first prayers.
10. It is recommended to take a bath after recovering from an illness.