

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a small amount of water. The hand is positioned over a body of water, and a splash of water is visible on the right side. The background is a bright, clear blue sky with a large, glowing sun in the upper right corner, creating a lens flare effect. The overall scene conveys a sense of purity and freshness.

***Your Purification (Tahaarah)***



# 2

Allah ﷻ commands Muslims to purify themselves inwardly from the sin of *shirk* as well as from diseases, such as envy, pride and hatred, of the heart and outwardly from dirt and all kinds of impurities. Once they do so, they become worthy of His love, as the Qur'an states, "Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean ." (*Soorat Al-Baqarah*, 2:222)

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## > The Meaning of Purification

The Arabic word *tahaarah* (purification) denotes purity and cleanliness.

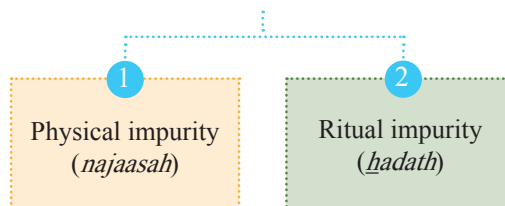
Allah ﷻ commands Muslims to purify themselves outwardly from forbidden appearances and all types of physical impurities, and inwardly from the unpardonable sin of *shirk* as well as diseases of the heart such as envy, pride and hatred. Once they do so, they become worthy of His love, as the Qur'an states, "Allah loves those who turn to Him constantly and He loves those who keep themselves pure and clean." (*Soorat Al-Baqarah*, 2:222)

Allah ﷻ also commands them to purify themselves prior to standing before Him in prayer. If man generally cleans himself and puts on his finest clothes before meeting a person who has a worldly position of authority, such as being a king or a president, then, surely he has to do so before standing before the King of kings.

### What is the Required Purification for Performing the Prayer?

Allah ﷻ commands Muslims to purify themselves and perform the partial ablution (*wudoo'*) before engaging in such ritual acts as performing the prayer, touching the Qur'an and circumambulating the Ka'bah in Makkah. He also recommends them to perform *wudoo'* before doing a number of things, such as reciting the Qur'an from memory, supplicating and sleeping.

Therefore, before a Muslim offers a prayer, he must remove two things:



> Allah ﷻ commands Muslims to purify themselves inwardly from the unpardonable sin of *shirk* as well as diseases of the heart such as envy, pride and hatred, and outwardly from forbidden appearances and all types of physical impurities.



## > Purification from Physical Impurity

- The Arabic word *najaasah* denotes all physical substances which Islam considers impure and commands us to remove them before engaging in an act of worship.
- The general rule in Islamic law (*Sharee'ah*) is that all things are considered pure, and physical impurity (*najaasah*) is only an intervening factor. Thus, if a person has doubts as to whether or not his trousers, for instance, are clean or not but there is no proof for any type of physical impurity on them, then they should be assumed to be clean, following the general rule.
- If we want to pray, we must first remove all physical impurities from the body, clothing and the place where we intend to offer the prayer.

Things that are considered impure include the following:

1	Human urine and faeces
2	Blood (except if it constitutes an insignificant amount)
3	Urine and dung of animals that are considered unlawful for human consumption (See page 189)
4	Dogs and pigs
5	Dead animals (except for those ones that are considered fit and lawful for human consumption and have been slaughtered according to Islamic rules (See page 190)). Human corpses, fish and insects are considered pure.



> Physical impurity can be removed with water or any other cleanser.

### Removing Physical Impurity

Physical impurity on the body, clothes, place where the prayer is intended to be performed, or anything or anywhere for that matter, can be removed with anything, be it water or otherwise, for Islam commands removing it. It is not stipulated as to how many times it must be washed off, except in the case of the physical impurity of a dog (i.e. its saliva, urine and faeces), where it must be washed seven times, one of which must be done with earth. For the rest of physical impurities, they must be washed off, and if some smell or stubborn stains remain after washing, they may be ignored. Once a woman asked the Prophet ﷺ about washing off menstrual blood, and he said, "It would suffice to wash it off, and you do not have to worry about any stains that are left."

(*Sunan Abu Daawood*: 365)

## Toilet Etiquette

- **A Muslim is recommended** to enter the toilet with the left foot first after saying, *Bismillaah. Allaahumma innhee'a'oodhu bika min-al-khubthi wal-khabaa'ith* (I seek refuge with You, O Allah, from the male and female jinn).
- **He is also recommended** to leave the toilet with the right foot first and then say, "*Ghufraanaka*" (I seek Your forgiveness, O Allah).
- **He must cover his** private parts while answering the call of nature.
- **He must not answer** the call of nature in a place where he may be seen or where he may offend people. Doing so is strictly forbidden.
- **If he is out in an open space**, such as the desert, he must not relieve himself in a hole, as he may either harm creatures that live in holes in the ground or be harmed by them. Doing so is strictly forbidden.
- **He must not face the *qiblah***, the direction of the Ka'bah in Makkah towards which Muslims pray, or turn his back towards it, for the Prophet ﷺ said, "When you are answering the call of nature, you should not face the *qiblah* or turn your back towards it." (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 386; *Saheeh Muslim*: 264). This mainly applies if one is out in an open space. There is no harm, however, to do so in buildings, such as in present-day toilets.
- **He must try to be careful** not to have any impurities splashed onto his body or clothes. If this happens accidentally, then he must wash the impurity off the affected place thoroughly.
- **Once he has relieved himself, he must:**

either clean his private parts thoroughly with water. This act is called *istinjaa'* in Arabic.

or

clean them three or times or more with anything that would serve the purpose, such as toilet tissue or stones. This act is called *istijmaar* in Arabic.

It is recommended to use the left hand for cleaning the private parts.

## > Ritual Impurity (*Hadath*)

- **Ritual impurity (*Hadath*)** refers to the state of intangible uncleanness that prevents a Muslim from offering the prayer until he removes it. It is not physical like *najaasah*.
- This ritual impurity can be removed by performing the partial ablution (*wudoo'*) or a full ablution (*ghusl*/bath) using pure water. Pure water is water that has not been in contact with any physical impurities that might otherwise change its colour, taste or smell. If he performs *wudoo'*, then he can perform as many prayers as he wishes as long as he does not break it.

**Ritual impurity is of two types:**



Minor ritual impurity: This can be removed by performing *wudoo'* (partial ablution).

Major ritual impurity: This can be removed by performing (*ghusl*/ritual bath).

### The Minor Ritual Impurity and *Wudoo'*:

The partial ablution (*wudoo'*), becomes invalid with any of the following:

- 1 Natural discharges from the private parts (both the external genital and excretory organs), such as urine, excrement and wind. Detailing things which invalidate ablution, the Qur'an states, "...or have just satisfied a want of nature." (*Soorat An-Nisaa'*, 4:43)

When the Prophet ﷺ was informed about a man who had doubts as to whether he has passed wind or not (i.e. whether he had broken his *wudoo'* or not) during the prayer, he advised, "He should not turn away or leave the prayer unless he hears a noise or smells something." (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 175; *Saheeh Muslim*: 361)

- 2 Lustfully touching the private parts with bare hands, for the Prophet ﷺ said, "Whoever touches his private parts must perform *wudoo'* again." (*Sunan Abu Daawood*, 181)

- 3 Eating camel meat: The Prophet ﷺ was once asked, "Should we perform *wudoo'* after eating camel meat?" he replied, "Yes." (*Saheeh Muslim*: 360)

- 4 Loss of consciousness because of sleep, insanity or drunkenness.



> Loss of consciousness as a result of sleep, insanity or drunkenness is one of the things which render *wudoo'* invalid.

## > Manner of Performing the partial Ablution (*Wudoo'*)

Performing *wudoo'*, and purification for that matter, is one of the best and most exalted deeds because of which Allah ﷻ forgives one's sins. As the Prophet ﷺ said, "When a Muslim servant [of Allah] washes his face [in the course of performing *wudoo'*], every sin he has committed with his eyes is washed away from his face along with the water; when he washes his hands, every sin his hands have committed is washed away from his hands with the water; when he washes his feet, every sin towards which his feet have walked is washed away with water, with the result that he comes out cleansed of all sins." (*Saheeh Muslim*: 244)

### *How to Perform Wudoo' and Remove the Minor Ritual Impurity*

If a Muslim wants to perform *wudoo'*, he intends to do so for the purpose of offering the prayer but without making a verbal declaration, for the intention is a condition for all acts in Islam. The Prophet ﷺ said, "Actions are but by intentions." (*Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree*: 1; *Saheeh Muslim*: 1907) Then he starts the ablution, washing each part in a continuous manner, without long intervals and in the following sequence:



1

He says *bismillaah*  
(In the name of Allah).



2

He washes his hands up to the wrists three times. It is recommended to do so three times.



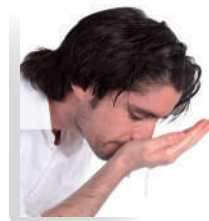
3

He rinses out his mouth thoroughly by moving water around in the mouth and then spitting it out. He uses his right hand to take in water. It is obligatory to rinse out the mouth once, but it is recommended to do so three times.



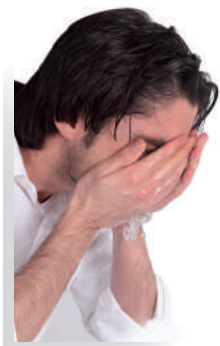
4

He cleans his nose by sniffing water into the nostrils and ejecting it out. It is recommended to snuff up water deeply without causing any harm to himself. It is obligatory to clean the nose once, but it is recommended to do so three times.



5

He washes the entire face with both hands from the top of the forehead to the bottom of the chin and from ear to ear. The ears are not included in washing the face. It is obligatory to wash the face once, but it is recommended to wash it three times.



6

He washes the right hand up the far end of the elbow, and then he does the same thing with the left hand and forearm. It is obligatory to wash the hands up to the elbows once, but it is recommended to do so three times.



7

With wet hands, and starting with his hands flat on the top of the head near the hairline, he wipes it to the back of the neck. It is *Sunnah* to wipe it back to the front. This should be done only once, unlike the case with other parts.



8

With wet fingers, he wipes the inner sides of the ears with the forefingers and their outer sides with the thumbs. This is also done once.



9

He washes his feet up to the ankles, beginning with the right foot. It is obligatory to wash the feet only once, but it is recommended to wash them three times. If he is wearing a pair of socks, he can wipe over them with wet hands but only under certain conditions. (See page 99)





## The Major Ritual Impurity and the Full Ablution (*Ghusl*/Ritual Bath):

### Things which Require a Person to Perform Full Ablution:

There are certain things which require an adult Muslim to perform full ablu-tion (*ghusl*) before engaging in the prayer or circumambulating the Ka'bah. Before he performs such ablu-tion, he is said to be in a state of a major ritual impurity.

#### These things are as follows

- 1 **Ejaculation with** pleasure and by any means, while asleep or awake.

Ejaculation involves the expulsion of seminal fluid, a thick whitish fluid, from the urethra of the penis during orgasm, which is generally followed by a feeling of lethargy and inertia.

- 2 **Sexual intercourse:** This involves penetration even if it does not lead to ejaculation. In fact, mere penetration of the glans into the vagina provides sufficient grounds for performing *ghusl*, i.e. taking a ritual bath. The Qur'an says, "If you are in a state of major impurity, then purify yourselves." (*Soorat Al-Maa'idah*, 5:6)

- 3 **Menstrual blood and post-natal bleeding**

- Menstrual blood is a natural type of blood, which flows from the uterus of women and occurs at roughly monthly intervals during a woman's reproductive years. It usually lasts more or less seven days with some variation from one woman to another.
- Post-natal bleeding: This bleeding takes place following a delivery in the post-natal period and lasts for a number of days.



> To perform the full ablu-tion, the entire body must be washed with water.

Menstruating women and women experiencing their post-natal bleeding are exempt from fasting as well as from performing the prayers. They must, however, make up for their missed fasts but not for the missed prayers. During this period, a husband and wife can satisfy their sexual desire but without having an intercourse. At the end of menstruation and post-natal bleeding, women must take a ritual bath (*ghusl*).

As the Qur'an states, "They will ask you about menstruation. Say, 'It is an impurity, so keep apart from women during menstruation and do not approach them until they have purified themselves. But once they have purified themselves, then go to them in the way that Allah has enjoined on you.'" (*Soorat Al-Baqarah*, 2:222)

## How to Remove the Major Ritual Impurity (*Janaabah*)

To perform the full ablution, It would be sufficient for a Muslim to wash the entire body with water with the intention that it is for the purpose of purity and worship.

- However, the best method of taking a ritual bath is to wash oneself in the same way one cleans oneself after answering nature's call, perform *wudoo'* and then wash the entire body with water. Doing so increases one's rewards, as it is in accordance with the guidance of the Prophet ﷺ.
- After taking a ritual bath that way, there is no need to perform *wudoo'* along with it. However, the best method of removing the major ritual impurity is to perform the full ablution which includes *wudoo'*, for this was the very practice of the Prophet ﷺ.

## Wiping over the Socks

Islam is so practical that it allows a Muslim to wipe over the top of his socks or shoes with wet hands (but not over the soles) instead of washing his feet when renewing his *wudoo'* on condition that he has put them on after having performed *wudoo'*. He can continue doing so for a period not exceeding 24 hours for a resident and 72 hours for a traveller.

The feet must, however, be washed when performing a ritual bath to remove *janaabah*.



## What to Do in Case One Is Unable to Use Water

If a Muslim is unable to use water to perform *wudoo'* or take a ritual bath (*ghusl*) due to illness, when water is not readily available or when using the available water for *wudoo'* or *ghusl* would leave insufficient water for drinking, he can resort to pure earth as a substitute for ablution. This is called *tayammum*, and he can continue to do so until he finds sufficient water or becomes able to use it.

Manner of Performing *Tayammum*:

(1) Strike both hands slightly on pure earth once, (2) wipe the face with them, (3) wipe the back of the right hand with the palm of the left, and then the back of the left hand with the palm of the right hand.

