

Islam – Practices

Key Terms

Five Pillars



The Five Pillars are key acts which Sunni Muslims believe 'hold up' their faith. These are the Shahadah, Salah, Zakah, Sawm and Hajj.

Ten Obligatory Acts

10

In Shi'a Islam these are the 10 acts which keep the faith strong- they are Salah, Zakah, Sawm and Hajj along with encouraging people to do good, discouraging people to do bad, associating with friends of Allah, disassociating from enemies, and jihad.


Shahadah

There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger.





The first thing a Muslim baby should hear. It is said x3 to become a Muslim. The Shahadah is said during the call to prayer and at every prayer by all Muslims. It is the foundation of Muslim belief.

Salah

When?	5 times a day for Sunni, 3 times a day for Shia.
Where?	In a clean room at home or the mosque (Jummah/Friday prayers at mosque are compulsory for men)
Which direction?	Towards Makkah (the Mihrab in the Qiblah wall shows the right direction in the mosque.) 
Preparation?	Wudu – ritual washing before prayer (arms, feet, face, head)
Movements?	Rak'ah's are performed. Each prayer time has a certain number of movements. All begin standing and raising hands, bowing and then prostrating .
Words?	Recitations from the Qur'an are said at certain points during the rak'ah.
Extras?	Sunni Shia will use a prayer mat . Shia will use a prayer mat and a block of clay (from Karbala) to rest their head on.

Sawm

Zakah

When?	During the month of Ramadan. Focus on the Night of Power having happened this month.	 <p>Zakah</p>	The giving of alms (giving to the poor). It is compulsory to give 2.5% of savings if you have them. Zakah is to cleanse and purify the soul . Acknowledges everything comes from God and should be used to help others .
How?	No food or drink between dawn (sunrise) and sunset. Meals eaten after dark or before light.		
Who?	All Muslims except the elderly, very young or those that are ill.		
Why?	The Qur'an was revealed during Ramadan . Fasting improves self discipline and control. Fasting causes Muslims to focus on Allah and reset their intentions to be a good Muslim . 	<p>Khums</p>	<p>20% tax on income paid by Shia Muslims. Money is split between charitable work and the Mosque. Shia Muslims pay this on top of their 2.5% Zakah contributions.</p>

Hajj

Festivals

Pilgrimage to Makkah. Happens yearly during a certain month in the Islamic calendar. All Muslims should try to do this once in their life if they can. Focuses on connecting with Allah and the story of **Ibrahim**.



Arrive in **Makkah** and enter state of **Ihram (white cloth)**. Complete **Tawaf** by circling the **Ka'aba 7 times**. Run between Mount Safa and Marwa and visit the **Zam Zam well**. Pray on **Mount Arafat** (Mount of Mercy) Collect **stones** and **sleep** outside at **Muzdalifah** Stone the **pillars** (devil) at **Mina**. Celebrate **Eid al Adha** (shave head, slaughter goat) Return to Mecca and circle Ka'aba times 7.

Jihad

Greater: The personal **inward struggle** to live in line with the faith of Islam. This involves observing the 5 pillars and trying **to be the best Muslim** they can everyday.

Lesser: The **outward struggle to defend** Islam from threat, using force if necessary.



Eid al Fitr



The festival at the end of **Ramadan** A feast is enjoyed and families join together to celebrate the end of the month of fasting. Focus on giving thanks to Allah.

Fitr – Food – Fasting – Feast -Family

Eid al Adha



The festival at the end of **Hajj**. Celebrated by all Muslims whether on Hajj or not. A sheep is slaughtered (to remember Ibrahim's sacrifice) and meat or money are given to the less fortunate. Focus is on sacrifice and giving to others.

Adha – Animals – Aaaaaah!

Ashura



Festival to remember the death of Muhammad's grandson (for Shia) and to remember the day the Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt (for Sunni). Involves grief and public mourning for Shia. Some Shia will beat themselves.

Ashura – Shia – Sacrifice – Suffering

Mosque

Means 'Place of prostration' and is the Muslim place of worship.

