

ALI 357: Basic Fasting Rules

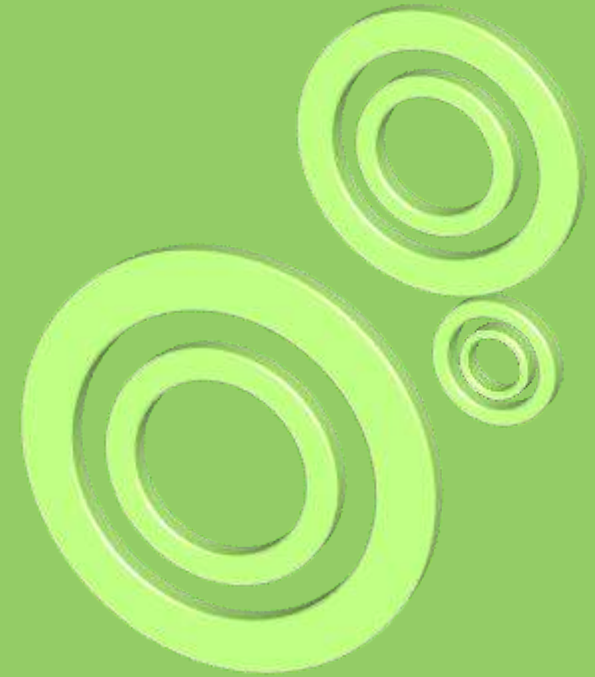
According to Fatawa of Ayatullah
Sistani and Ayatullah Khamenei
Blessed Month of Sha'abaaan 1437
June 2016

What We'll Cover insha'Allah

- Philosophy of Fasting in Brief
- Who has to fast? Who is exempted?
- What if I have qadhaa left over?
- Penalties (Fidyah and Kaffarah)
- Fasting and Travel
- Does X break my fast?
- When do I fast?
- How should I fast?



Philosophy of Fasting (in Brief)



Philosophy of Fasting from the Qur'an

- O you who have faith! Prescribed for you is fasting as it was prescribed for those who were before you, *so that you may be God wary.* (2:183)
- ...Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire hardship for you, and so that you may complete the number, *and magnify Allah for guiding you, and that you may give thanks.* (2:185)



Philosophy of Fasting from Hadith

- The Prophet (s) said, “Fasting is incumbent upon you, for verily it severs the roots [of desires] and removes wildness.” (Scale of Wisdom, #1158)
- The Prophet (s) said, “Fast and you will be healthy.” (Scale of Wisdom, #1158)

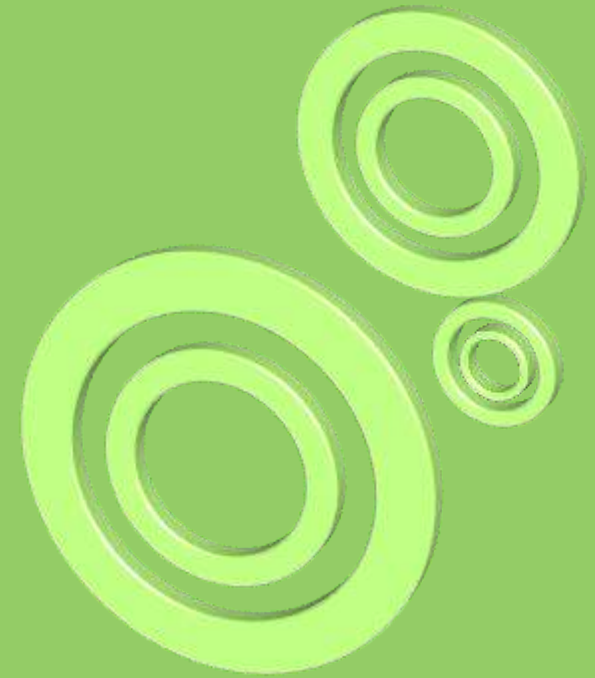


Philosophy of Fasting from Hadith

- Imam al-Askari (a) was once asked the reasoning behind the obligation of fasting, to which he replied, “That the rich may experience the pain of hunger and bestow his generosity thereby upon the poor.” (Scale of Wisdom, #1158)
- Imam ar-Rida (a), when asked about the wisdom behind fasting, said, “Allah tests them with an act of obedience so that they can attain ranks with Him, so He can make them aware of the bounties of tasty water and good bread. When they feel thirsty during the day they are fasting, they remember the Great Thirst of the hereafter, and that encourages them towards obedience.” (Bihar al-Anwar v. 6 p. 113)



Who has to fast? Who is
exempted?



Fasting during the month of Ramadhan is compulsory on every *mukallaf* who is:

- *Mukallaf* → Sane and Baligh
- Not traveling (more details later)
- Women only: Clean from *haydh* and *nifaas* (more details later)
- Not being ill (more details later)
- Able to keep the fast (more details later)



Fasting of a non-baaligh

- Imam as-Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: “And at the age of 7, we ask our children to fast to their capability, either half of the day or more or less, and we order them to break their fast when they become hungry or thirsty. This is so that they become used to fasting. Thus you should ask your [male] children to fast at the age of 9, and tell them to break their fast when they are thirsty or hungry.” (*Usul al-Kafi*)



Practical Suggestions

- Fasting **before physical maturity has developed:** should not be encouraged
- Fasting **after the physical maturity has developed, but before coming of age:** should be asked to break fast when they are thirsty or hungry
- Avoid asking young children, “Are you fasting today?” or hint it is better to fast for a child who has not come of age to fast the entire day. This includes giving prizes to non-baaligh children for fasting, and announcing to the community when a non-baaligh child has fasted for the whole day.



Is my nine year old daughter too young to fast?

- Fasting is an obligation on those who have come of age unless it entails significant harm or unbearable difficulty
- The human body is amazing at being able to adapt
- The social effect of having a community fast together is amazing



What if fasting will make me sick, prolong or intensify my sickness, or harm me?

- If I fear (based on rational grounds) that I will be harmed by fasting, fasting is not obligatory. Consequence: Qadhaa.
- Note: If I am sick but fasting does not negatively effect my sickness, fasting is still obligatory
- Note: “Harm” does not include acceptable levels of hunger, thirst, and weariness



Examples of one's responsibility when sick or when fasting entails harm

- By fasting, I won't be able to take some heart medicine at the right time which could in turn result in heart issues. (fasting is not necessary and invalid*)
- I just recovered from an infection and today is my day to recuperate. If I fast, I fear that I won't recuperate properly and the infection will come back. (fasting is invalid, qadhaa is necessary)
- I am sick and I need to constantly drink fluids to get better (fasting is invalid, qadhaa is necessary)
- I have a mild cough and fasting might keep my throat feeling uncomfortable (fasting is valid and necessary)



Weight of Doctor's Opinion

- Doctor's opinion can be the source of the fear of harm
 - Example: I go for a checkup and the doctor tells me that fasting is not good for my diabetes situation. His/her word causes me to fear that fasting will cause me harm.
- But, if I'm certain fasting won't cause me any harm despite what the doctor says, I must fast



Will my fast be valid if it is harmful?

- Making an intention to fast when sickness is affected or there is fear of (Ayat Sistani: extreme) harm is not correct. The fast will be invalid.
- Ayat Sistani: If I fear that fasting will be harmful, but the harm is not extreme, I can fast with the intention of *raja* and if it is not harmful, my fast will be correct.
- If I didn't fear that fasting would be harmful, but it turns out to be harmful, the fast is invalid



What if I'm fasting and things get difficult?

Will continuing involve **unbearable weakness** or **extreme difficulty**?

Yes

No

Will continuing make you incapable of performing work which is *essential* to your livelihood?

No

Bear the difficulty with patience!

Yes

Eat / drink the amount necessary, refrain from eating / drinking any more, do *qadha*



The Elderly

- Exempted if difficult to fast because of old age



If a woman is expecting

If she fears (based on rational grounds) that fasting will harm her or the child's health, fasting is not obligatory and prohibited (Ayat Sistani: if the harm is extreme).

Example: After the ultrasound she is told by the doctor to eat frequent meals to ensure proper growth of the child.



If a woman is breastfeeding and her milk supply is low,

If she fears (based on rational grounds) that fasting will harm her or the child's health, fasting is not obligatory.

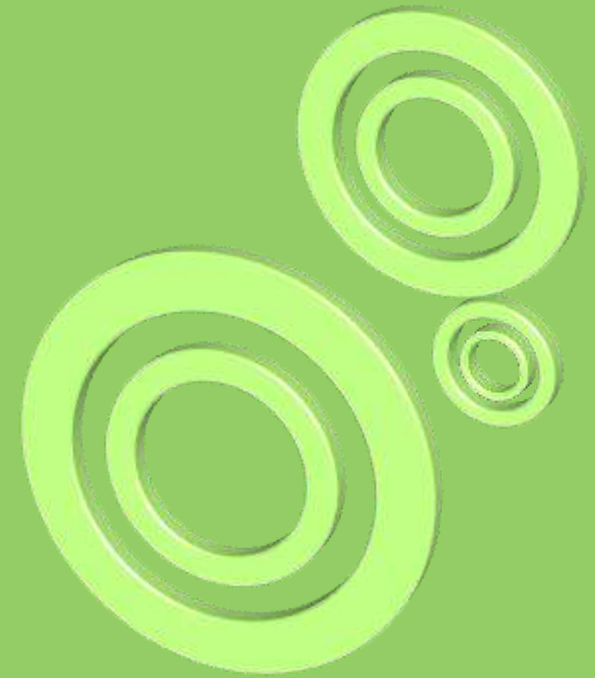
Ayat. Sistani: *Ihtiyaat waajib* for her to use an alternative if available.

To discuss: Is using formula a valid alternative?

Consequence: qadhaa + fidyah.



What if I have *qadhaa* fasts
to make up?



What if I don't know how many to make up?

- If I'm unsure whether I have to make up, for example, 10 or 15 fasts, 10 is wajib
 - Ayat Khamenei: Except when you know when you stopped fasting (for example 10th of Ramadhan) but unsure about the end date of your travel (for example 15th or 16th)



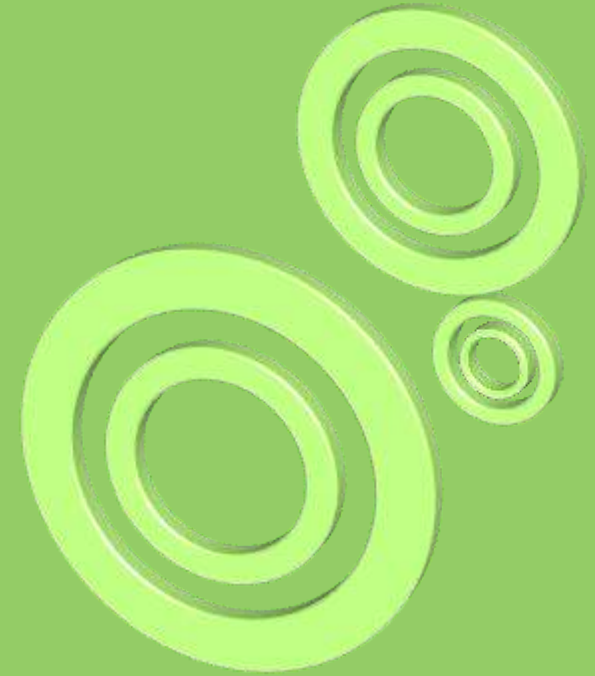
Do I have to make up a qadhaa fast before the next month of Ramadhan?

Ayat. Sistani: *ihitiyaat mustahab*

Ayat Khamenei: *ihitiyaat waajib*



Penalties (Fidyah and Kaffarah)



About fidyah

- Fidyah is one mudd = $3/4$ kg of food (better to give wheat) to a poor Muslim (Sistani: ihtiyat wajib that it be a shi`ah)
 - This is different than just feeding someone a meal
- Fidyah for multiple days can be given to one person
- Must be delivered as food (not as money to buy food)



Consequences for not fasting due to valid excuse

NURSING MOTHER
(fears low milk supply)

EXPECTING MOTHER FEARING HARM
(Near to delivery)

ILL PERSON

EXPECTING MOTHER FEARING HARM
(Not near delivery)

TRAVELLER

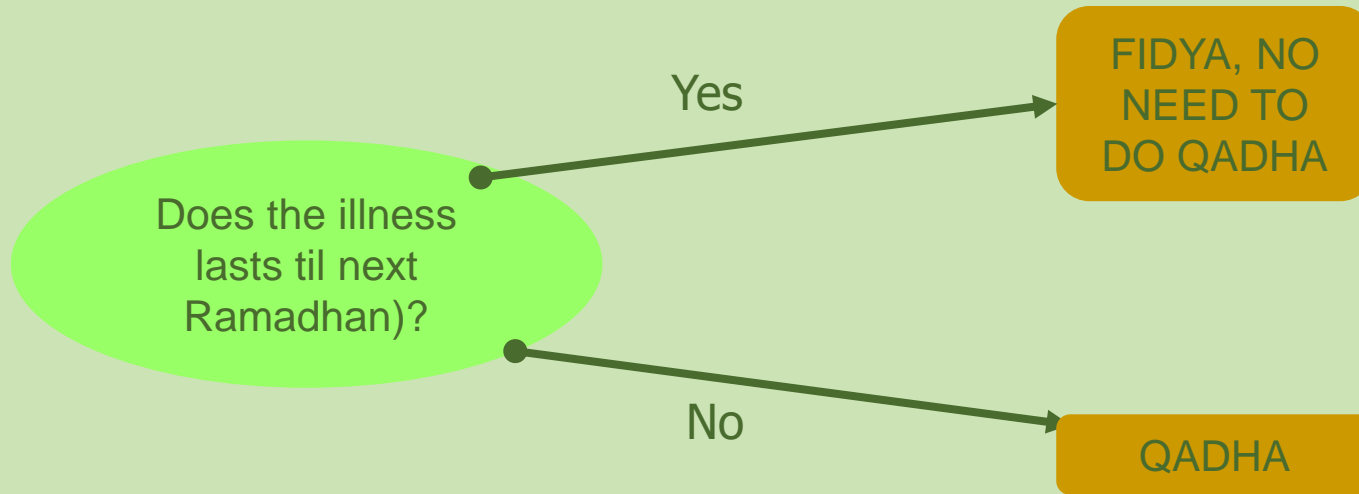
HAYDH /
NIFAS

Qadha +
Fidyah

Qadha after
condition
passes



Prolonged sickness



Consequences for not fasting for the elderly

Exempted if difficult to fast

FIDYA

Exempted if impossible to fast

NO FIDYA

Note: According to Ayat. Khomeinii, if an elderly person regains ability to fast, it is ihtiyaat waajib to make up the fasts that are missed.

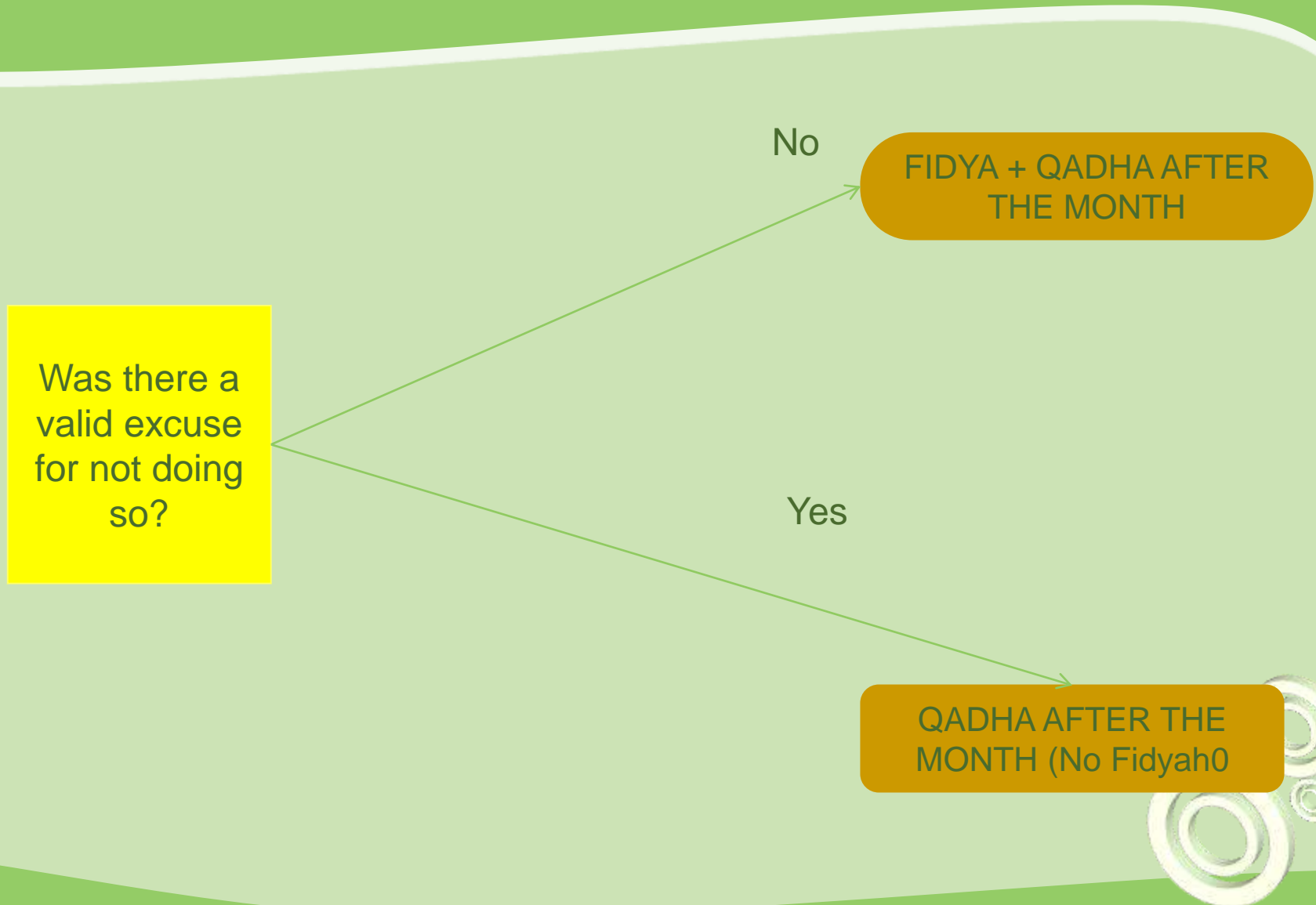


Consequences for delaying making up Qadha before next month of Ramadhan (Ayat Sistani)

- For each fast that was missed, fidyah is obligatory
- Fast needs to be made up as Qadha after the month of Ramadhan
- This fidyah is a one-time penalty for delay, and does not get repeated if the qadha is delayed til the next year or beyond



Consequences for delaying making up Qadha before next month of Ramadhan (Ayat Khamenei)



About fidyah

- Can appoint a wakeel (like a trusted charity) who will take money and distribute
- Does not need to be given right away but shouldn't be delayed negligently



Kaffarah

- Penalty for deliberately breaking one's fast: Qadha, plus, for each day, either:
 - Feeding 60 individual poor people to their fill or giving each one *mudd* of food (can't be individual who are *wajib al-nafaqah*) (Sistani: ihtiyaat waajib that it be a mu'min)
- OR
- Fasting for two months
- When the fast is broken with something *haram*, it is ihtiyaat mustahab to give both kaffarahs
- See sources for laws regarding when one is unable to do either of these



When does Kaffarah apply?

According to Ayat. Sistani:

- When one of the following is done *intentionally*:
 - Eating / drinking
 - Sexual intercourse
 - *Istimnaa'*
 - Remaining in state of *janabah* til Fajr
- If one was ignorant about one of these acts breaking one's fast, Kaffarah does not apply, unless his ignorance was not excusable and he wasn't sure about it being okay to do.



When does Kaffarah apply?

According to Ayat. Khamenei:

- When any of the acts mentioned is done *intentionally*, including:
 - Eating / drinking
 - Sexual intercourse
 - *Istimnaa'*
 - Remaining in state of *janabah* til Fajr, etc.
- If one was ignorant about one of these acts breaking one's fast, Kaffarah does not apply



Scenario

I had 7 fasts to make up from the last month of Ramadhan due to travel and illness, but I only got around to making up 3 of them before the new month of Ramadhan has arrived. What is my responsibility with regards to the remaining 4 fasts?



Resolution

I would need to make up the remaining 4 fasts after this month of Ramadhan, and give 4 fidyahs (unless I wasn't able to make up the fasts due to a valid excuse, like travel, and I was following Ayat. Khamenei's opinion).



Scenario

I had 3 fasts to make up from the last month of Ramadhan due to inexcusable negligence, but I did not do so before the following month of Ramadhan. What is my responsibility?



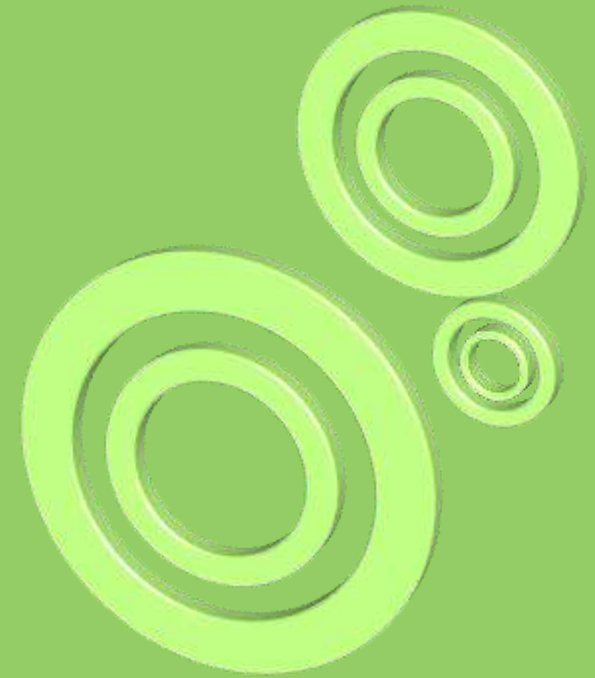
Resolution

I would need to

- a) do istighfaar for not observing the command of Allah
- b) make up these 3 fasts after this month of Ramadhan
- c) give 3 fidyahs for the delay (3 mudds), and
- d) 3 kaffarahs for deliberately not fasting



What effect does traveling
have on my fasting?



Am I allowed to travel during the month of Ramadhan?

- Yes, although doing so can be *makrooh* (throughout the month, or at least until the 23rd day) unless for something necessary / important
- It is *ihtiyaat mustahab* for a traveler to stay away from food, drink, etc. during the daytime of the month of Ramadhan



If I travel, I am exempted from fasting and my fasting is invalid unless...

- I am planning to stay in a place for ten days or more
- I am considered to be a 'frequent traveler'
- I am traveling to my '*watan*'
- The travel is sinful



I must keep my fast if I travel and

- I cross the city boundary while departing from my hometown after *dhuhr*

OR

- I cross into the city boundary in my hometown or place of temporary residency before *dhuhr* and I haven't committing any act that would break a fast



Who is a frequent traveler?

A frequent traveler is one who prays full and can fast despite traveling.



Who is a frequent traveler?

Ayat Khamenei: If my work is commonly considered to be in a different city than my hometown, then if I ever travel to work 3 times without there being a ten day gap in between travels, upon starting the third trip I become a frequent traveler.

A student who travels for the purposes of studying should act according to ihtiyaat.



Who is a frequent traveler?

Ayat Khamenei: If I ever stay in a place for 10 days in a row and don't go to work, then the next time I start up traveling for work again, for the first trip I will be considered a traveler but for the second and onwards I will pray full.



Who is a frequent traveler?

- Ayat Sistani: I become a frequent traveler when I intend to be in a state of travel (for work or other purposes) for either:
 - 6 months of the upcoming year, and in those 6 months I will be traveling for approximately 10 days a month

OR

- 3 months of the upcoming year and 3 months in the next year, and within those months I will be traveling for a total of approximately ten days a month



What about other travels?

- Ayat Khamenei: If I'm a frequent traveler due to work, I would still pray shortened and not being able to fast on other non-work travels.
- Ayat Sistani: If I'm a frequent traveler, I pray full and am able to fast on all travels.



I must keep my fast if I travel and

- I cross the city boundary while departing from my hometown after *dhuhr*

OR

- I cross into the city boundary in my hometown or place of temporary residency before *dhuhr* and I haven't committing any act that would break a fast



I am allowed to break my fast when traveling

- As soon as I intend to travel the required distance (approx. 22 km) away from the city border and I have crossed the *hadd al-tarakkhus* (where a traveler has gone far enough to be hidden from the sight of city-dwellers)
 - Note: The ruling is slightly different if I am traveling away from a place of temporary residency.



Scenario – What’s wrong here?

I travel to work from Toronto to Ottawa three times a week and I couldn’t take off during the month of Ramadhan. “No worries,” I tell myself, as I pop a date in my mouth once my bus leaves the terminal. “I’ll just make it up after the month of Ramadhan.”



Resolution

As someone who travels out of town that frequently for work, I'm able to fast when I'm traveling, so if I eat something deliberately, I have to give qadhaa and fidyah. Also, when traveling at least 44 km round trip, I'm allowed to break my fast only if I leave before dhuhr and after passing the *hadd al-tarakkhus*.



What is my *watan*?

A *watan* is a hometown. When I am in my *watan*, I can fast and I pray full, even if I'm there for less than 10 days.



How does a place become my *watan*?

- Ayat Khamenei: Having an intention to settle down in a place for example 7-8 years so that you are considered a resident of that place
- Ayat Sistani: Having an intention to stay in a place long enough so that I am no longer considered a traveler there (for example, 1.5 years or more)



How long do I have to stay in a new *watan* before it takes on the rules of a *watan*?

- Ayat Sistani: One month
- Ayat Khamenei: A few nights



How does I place stop becoming my *watan*?

If I move from my *watan* and I'm confident that I won't come back to live there again that place is no longer a *watan* – even if it was my birthplace.



Scenario – What’s wrong here?

It’s the month of Ramadhan, after 5 years, I get to go “back home” and spend the last portion of the month with my family there. However, my schedule is tight, and I only have a week to spend there – but I’m thankful for whatever I have!

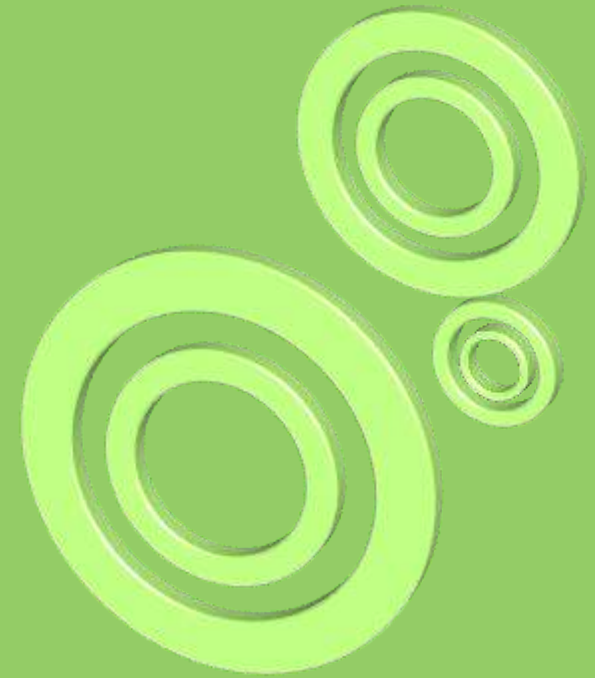


Resolution

If I left “back home” five years ago with the intention of not coming back to live there again, I won’t be able to fast when I stay there for only a week. This is because I will be considered a ‘traveler’ who stays in another city for less than 10 days and therefore I can’t fast and my prayers will be shortened.



What breaks my fast?



Step 2: Refrain from 9 Things from Fajr til Maghrib

- Food and drink
- Liquid enema
- Vomiting
- Swallowing thick dust and smoke
- Immersing head under water

- Spousal relations
- Istimnaa
- Remaining in Janabah after fajr
- Lying about Allah and His Prophet (s)



No food and drink

- I can't eat and drink from fajr to maghrib
 - What if I have food in my mouth at fajr time?

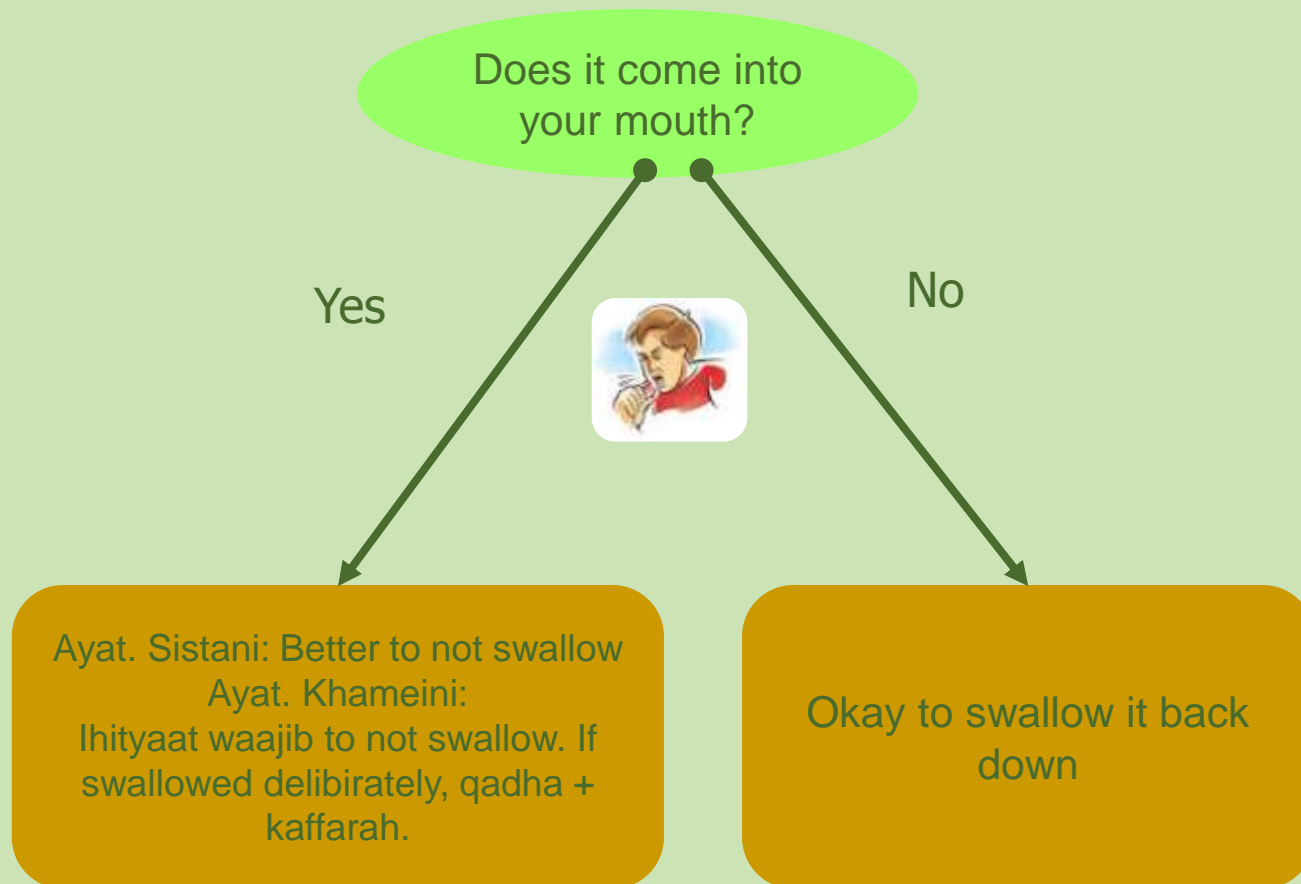


In order for my fast to be broken,
eating/drinking has to be...

- Deliberate
- Swallowed
- From the “outside”
 - Saliva is okay
 - Coughing up or spitting up – see next slide
- Through the mouth



Coughing up phlegm, congestion, mucous



Can I rinse my mouth with water when fasting?

- Yes, as long as you don't swallow
- Makrooh to do so to without a valid purpose
- Better to spit out 3 times after rinsing
- In some cases if it is swallowed then qadhaa is necessary

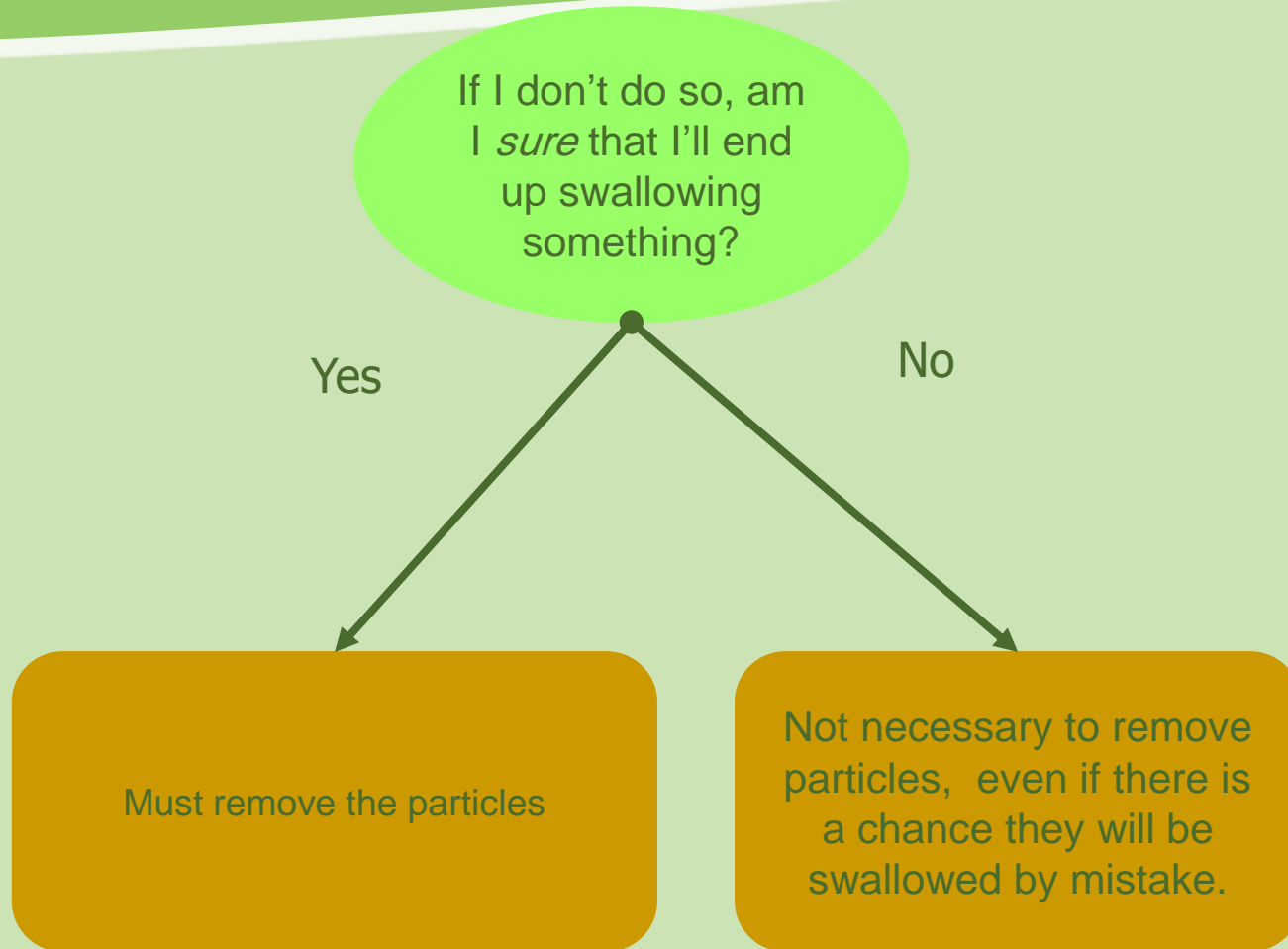


Can I clean my teeth?

- Yes, brushing - even with toothpaste - and flossing - even with flavored floss - is ok as long as nothing is swallowed deliberately
- Using a wet toothbrush / stick is makrooh
- According to some, using a dry brush is mustahab
- Troubling others with bad breath can be haraam



Do I have to floss or use a toothpick to remove any food particles before fasting?



Can I take medicine?

- Medicine that enters through the mouth (orally) like pills and syrups: Not ok (unless necessary, in which case qadha is necessary)
- Inhaler: Ok, as long as it enters the respiratory tract and medicine is not swallowed



Can I take medicine?

- Eyedrops, nosedrops, eardrops:
 - Ok, even if you taste something in your mouth
 - Should not be used as a way to eat or drink
- Insulin: ok



Injections

- Medicinal injections while fasting: Okay
- Anesthetic injections while fasting (Ayat. Khameini: ok, Ayat. Sistani: better to avoid)
- Food- base injections (Ayat. Sistani: better to avoid, Ayat. Khameini: ihtiyaat waajib to avoid)
- Vaccination (Ayat. Khameini: as long as the vein is not injected)



Going to the dentist

- Is okay as long as one does not intentionally swallow blood, medicine, or water.



Scenario

I brush furiously after *suhoor*, but after waking up from my post-Fajr nap, I fear the onset of bad breath. Can I brush again? What about mouthwash?



Resolution

Yes, I can brush and use mouthwash while I'm fasting, as long as I take care not to swallow anything.



Better to avoid...



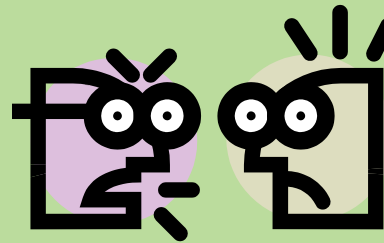
Rinsing with water excessively



Smelling fragrance from herbs and flowers (perfume is ok)



Tooth extraction or any other action which will cause bleeding in the mouth



Pointless argumentation and dispute



A wet tooth brush for brushing

Step 2: Refrain from 9 Things from Fajr til Maghrib

- Food and drink
- Liquid enema
- Vomiting
- Swallowing thick dust and smoke
- Immersing head under water

- Spousal relations
- Istimnaa
- Remaining in Janabah after fajr
- Lying about Allah and His Prophet (s)



Vomiting

- Vomiting breaks my fast - if it is deliberate!
 - Deliberate vomiting → qadha is wajib
 - Otherwise my fast is still intact



Questions about Vomiting

- I feel like vomiting. Do I have to stop myself from vomiting?
 - Yes, if doing so will not cause harm or difficulty (Ayat. Khomeini)
 - Not necessary (Ayat. Sistani)



Questions about Vomiting

- Can I eat at night if I know it will make me vomit?
 - Yes, but after vomiting, qadha is
 - Wajib (Ayat. Khameini)
 - Mustahab (Ayat. Sistani)



Is deliberate belching allowed?

- to belch: To expel gas noisily from the stomach through the mouth; burp.



Inhaling dust and smoke breaks my fast when...

- Inhaling is deliberate
- Dust/smoke is thick and reaches throat
- Examples:
 - Smoke from cigarettes or tobacco
 - Dusty air from sweeping a dusty ground
 - Steam -- but only if it condenses in my mouth and I swallow it!



Can I deliberately put my head under water while fasting?

- Ayatullah Khamenei
Ihtiyaat waajib to avoid and
invalidates fast



- Ayatullah Sistani

Severely makruh but does not invalidate fast

- Showering is okay
- Taking a bath is okay as long as I don't dip my head under water
 - It is makruh for a woman to sit in water when fasting



Step 2: Refrain from 9 Things from Fajr til Maghrib

- Food and drink
- Liquid enema
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Some other things that will break my fast

- Sexual intercourse
 - Kissing and other acts that will lead to something that would cause the fast to break is not allowed
 - Istimnaa = Any deliberate act that causes the discharge of semen
- Intentionally remaining in the state of janabah / haydh / nifas til fajr (details to come)



What if I enter the state of janabah at night?

- Deliberately staying in this state until fajr time invalidates my fast
- If there is not enough time left for a ghusl before fajr, tayammum in place of ghusl
 - Should then do ghusl before doing the fajr prayer
 - If there wasn't enough time left because of a valid reason, qadhaa is mustahab
- If I don't do ghusl [or tayammum], my fast is batil. Consequence: making up fast + kaffarah



For a woman who becomes clean from haydh/ nifaas at night

- Needs to perform ghusl before fajr, or tayammum if there is not enough time for or unable to perform ghusl



Can I go to sleep at night after entering the state of janabah?

- Yes, if I am intending to wake up before fajr to do ghusl and I'm confident of about waking up
 - If I oversleep past fajr without waking up: no qadha
 - If I wake up once before fajr and then oversleep: qadha
- Otherwise, if I sleep without intending to wake up before fajr to perform ghusl, and I sleep past fajr, I have to do qadha and pay kaffarah



What if I enter the state of janabah while asleep?

- If it happens at night:

- If I wake up

- Before fajr, I have to do ghusl

- Can only go back to sleep if I intend to wake up before fajr to do the ghusl and I am confident I will do so.

- Ayat. Sistani: If I oversleep, have to give qadhaa.

- Ayat Khomeini: If I wake up again and go back to sleep and oversleep, have to give qadhaa.

- After fajr, my fast is intact

- If it happens while asleep after fajr: my fast is intact

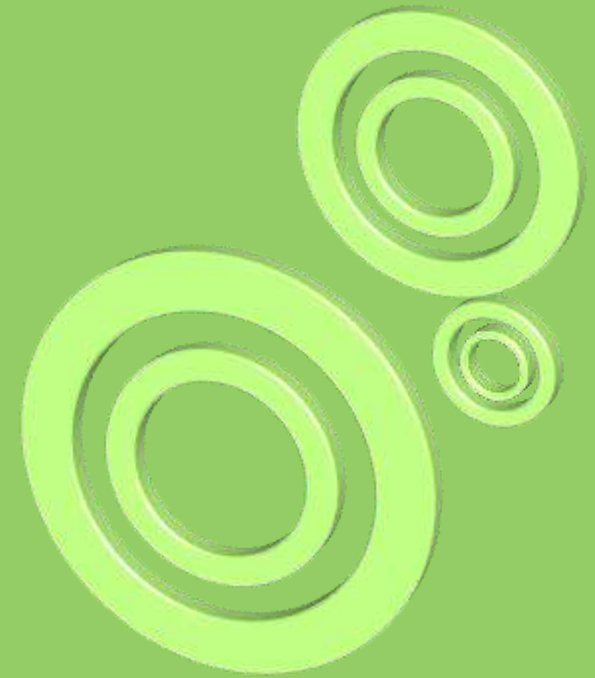


A common scenario where tayammum would become wajib

- In a night in the month of Ramadhan, I enter the state of janabah (or I become clean from haydh) but I don't have time to do ghusl before fajr



When do I fast?



The month of Ramadhan begins when one of the following occurs...

- I see the new crescent with my own eyes
 - By the naked eye only (Ayat. Sistani)
 - Optical device can also be used (Ayat. Khomeini)
- Two local aadil witnesses report having seen it
- So many people report seeing it locally that I derive conviction
- 30 days of the previous month have passed
- I derive conviction through some other means

Note: Trying to sight the moon (*istihlaal*) is *mustahab*.



Does an out-of-town sighting count?

- Yes, if that sighting necessitates sighting in my area (were it not for circumstances like cloudy weather).

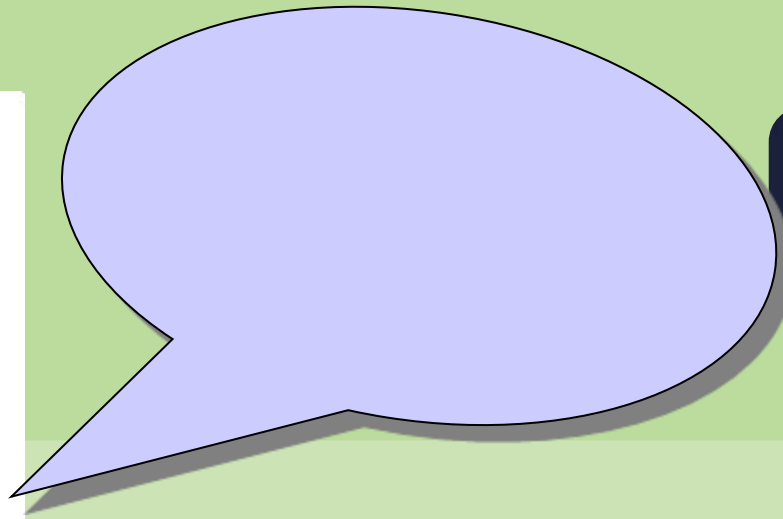
Factors to consider:

- Altitude
- Magnitude
- Time crescent will remain in horizon after sunset
- Azimuth
- Elongation
- Percent illumination



It's the 30th of Sha'aban and I'm not sure if the moon was seen yet!

- Fasting is not wajib, but if I fast, I should not intend that this is a fast for the month of Ramadhan!



If I find out today actually is the 1st of Ramadhan when previously it wasn't clear...

- If I am fasting, I will convert my niyyah to the month of Ramadhan
- If I am not fasting,
 - If I haven't done anything to violate a fast, I must start fasting (if it's before dhuhr time!)
 - Otherwise I have to do imsaak (refrain from doing anything that would break a fast) and qadhaa



Scenario

A friend sends me a WhatsApp message on the night after the 29th day of the month of Sha'aaan wishing me a blessed Ramadhan. I excitedly tell my family, "The month of Ramadhan is here!" and begin to send all my contacts messages of congratulation.

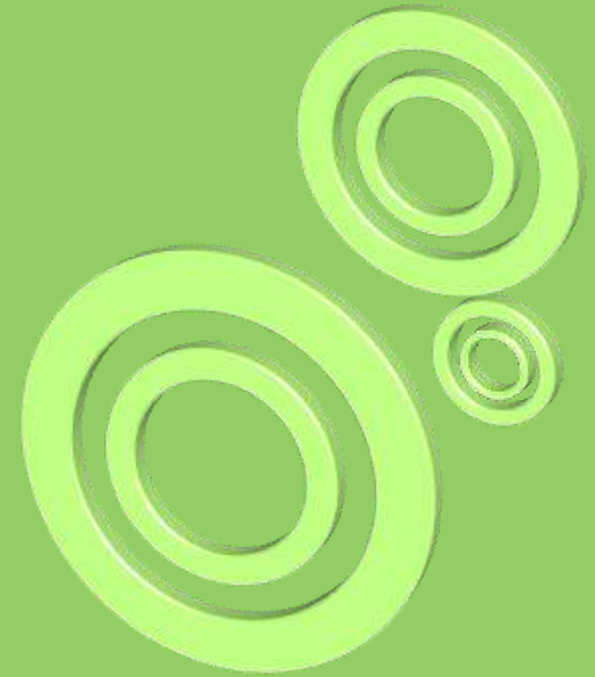


Resolution

By default, I assume that the current month will stretch until 30 days. I need to see the new moon or investigate and arrive at conviction regarding the start of the new month.



How should I fast?



Step 1: Having a Niyyah (Intention, Purpose)

- A niyyah is something that you have while performing an act of worship.



Step 1: Having a Niyyah (Intention, Purpose)

- If someone asks me why I'm fasting, I should know that I am fasting in the month of Ramadhan out of obedience to Allah (swt)



When do I need to intend to fast?

Three Options:

- Option 1: By fajr time each day
 - If I forget, and I remember before the time of dhuhr, and I haven't don't anything to break my fast, I can still make the intention to fast.
 - If I remember after dhuhr and I haven't done anything to break my fast, it is *ihitiyaat wajib* to make the intention to fast and do qadhaa as well.



When do I need to intend to fast?

Option 2: Before the month begins

- For the entire month at one go before the month begins. This intention should be present throughout the month.



When do I need to intend to fast?

- Option 3: Before the month begins and before each fast



Fasting is from **Fajr** til **Maghrib**

- **Fajr:** The true dawn. **Maghrib:** When the redness in the Eastern sky has faded out into darkness
- Fasting needs to take place *from when one is certain that fajr has set in until one is certain that the time for maghrib has arrived*
 - Taking precaution is recommended
- Timings need to be ascertained with conviction – timetables & software can help to attain conviction but should be used with care
- Unintentionally eating/drinking/etc. past fajr time and being careless about its arrival → invalid fast + qadhaa



In places where there is no night or no complete darkening takes place

- If the redness in the eastern sky never disappears but there is a time of darkening and a time of lighting up, the start of the relative lighting up is taken as fajr
- If there is no night at all, it's waajib to move to another place during shahr Ramadhan (Ayatullah Sistani)
- Rules of weakness, harm and excessive difficulty may apply



According to some scholars, *mustahab* to perform maghribayn prayers before iftaar

- Unless:
 - Someone is waiting
 - Doing so will cause one to not be able to recite the prayer with proper attention

