



First Steps as a Muslim

A short booklet for your first days as a Muslim — what the shahada changed, how to purify and pray, what Muslims believe and do, and the early questions everyone asks. Warm, practical, and sourced.

JOURNEY INTO ISLAM

journeyintoislam.com

What's inside

You said the shahada — what just happened

Purify: ghusl, then wudu

The five daily prayers — start now

What Muslims believe and do

Early questions: food, names, family

Your first Ramadan

Where to go next

Welcome. Whether you said the shahada moments ago or are still turning it over in your heart, these pages are for your first days — a few things to do, in the order you need them. Take them gently. Nobody learns their faith in a week, and you are not expected to.

You said the shahada — what just happened

With that testimony you entered Islam, and with it your slate was wiped clean. The Prophet ﷺ reassured a new Muslim that *"Islam demolishes whatever came before it"* — every past mistake forgiven, the account reopened at zero. You do not carry the old weight in.

You have also joined a family that spans the world. *"The believers are but brothers,"* the Qur'an says — a billion people who pray toward the same point on the earth and would recognise you as one of their own. You are not doing this alone.

Purify: ghusl, then wudu

A good first act is *ghusl* — a full bath with the intention of a fresh, clean start. It is not a barrier to cross so much as a gift to yourself: a clean beginning for a clean slate.

After that, the small ablution — *wudu* — is what you make before each prayer. The Qur'an sets it out: wash the face, the arms to the elbows, wipe the head, and wash the feet to the ankles. The **Wudu Poster** in this pack walks you through all eight steps with a picture for each; keep it by the sink while it becomes second nature.

The five daily prayers — start now

Prayer — *salah* — is the heart of the day. Five times, at set hours, *"prayer has been decreed upon the believers a decree of specified times."* Dawn, midday, afternoon, sunset, and night: small returns to God threaded through everything else you do.

Do not wait until you have learned it perfectly. Begin now, even clumsily. Each unit opens by raising the hands and saying *Allāhu akbar* — "God is greatest" — and from there you will learn the words and movements a little at a time. The Prophet ﷺ taught that *"the religion is ease,"* and that no one who tries to overburden themselves will keep it up. A full **Salah Guide** is on the way to this pack; until then, the prayer article on the site will start you off.

What Muslims believe and do

Islam rests on a short, clear foundation — worth reading once and returning to often.

What we believe. When the angel Jibrīl asked the Prophet ﷺ about faith, he answered that it is *"to believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day, and to believe in divine decree, both its good and its harm."* Six articles, one God at the centre of them.

What we do. *"Islam is built upon five,"* the Prophet ﷺ said: the testimony of faith, the five prayers, *zakat* (giving to those in need), fasting the month of Ramadan, and the pilgrimage to Mecca for those who are able. You have already done the first. The rest you grow into.

Early questions: food, names, family

These are the questions almost every new Muslim asks in the first weeks.

What can I eat? *"Eat from whatever is on earth that is lawful and good,"* the Qur'an says. Most food is permitted; the main things to leave are pork and alcohol. Meat should be slaughtered in God's name (*halal*), but you will not go hungry learning the ropes — plenty is plainly fine.

Do I need an Arabic name? No. You keep the name you have. Some converts adopt an Arabic name they love, but nothing in Islam requires it.

How do I tell my family? Gently, and in your own time. Kindness to parents is a heavy duty in Islam even when they do not share your faith. Lead with your character — patience, honesty, warmth — far more than with argument. Give them time, as you were given time.

Your first Ramadan

Once a year, Muslims fast the month of Ramadan from dawn to sunset. *"Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you,"* the Qur'an says — a shared act of restraint and gratitude stretching back through the prophets.

If your first Ramadan is near, do not be daunted. The same passage promises that *"Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship."* The sick, the travelling, and those unable are excused and make up the days later. Ease in; ask for help; you are not meant to do it heroically the first time.

Where to go next

You now have a foundation. From here:

- **The Shahada** cards in this pack — the testimony to carry and understand.
- **Wudu, Step by Step** — keep it by you until wudu is easy.
- The **Salah Guide** — coming soon; it will teach the prayer in full.
- On the site: *The Five Pillars*, *The Six Articles of Faith*, and the prayer guide.

Go slowly, and be kind to yourself. The door is open, and it stays open.



Every dua and every claim in this guide is cited to the Qur'an or authentic, graded hadith.

Full sources: journeyintoislam.com/pocket-guides/first-steps

Free to print and share

