

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

After the Shahada — A Guide for New and Returning Muslims

What the testimony changes and what it does not: your past, your first prayers, your name, your marriage, and your non-Muslim family, answered from the Quran and authentic Sunnah, with the scholars’s differences named where the site records them.

FIQH

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Each answered in two lines

How to use this book. Read Chapters 1 to 4 in your first week. Read the others when you reach the situation they describe. If you were born Muslim and are coming back, start at Chapter 10. Each chapter carries its own evidence, so a chapter can be handed to someone on its own.

CHAPTER 1

Entering Islam: the testimony, and nothing added to it

You became Muslim the moment you testified, sincerely, that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and that Muhammad ﷺ is His Messenger. Everything else in this book comes after that sentence, and nothing in it is a condition placed in front of it.

When the Prophet ﷺ sent Mu‘ādh to Yemen, he gave him an order of teaching. The testimony came first. The prayer came only after people had accepted it, and zakat after the prayer:

Invite the people to testify that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and I am Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), and if they obey you to do so, then teach them that Allah has enjoined on them five prayers in every day and night SAHIH

Ibn ‘Abbās – Sahih al-Bukhari 1395

In another version of the same instruction Mu‘ādh is told, “YOU are going to people of a (Divine) Book”, and the order is the same: first the worship of Allah alone, then the five prayers, then zakat (Sahih al-Bukhari 1458). Nothing is placed before the testimony: no course, no new name, no new nationality.

No imam, no witness, no mosque

Converts are sometimes told the shahada “does not count” until it is said before an imam. It does. Witnesses and a mosque “are not conditions of validity — they are simply useful so the community knows you as a Muslim and can help you with

documents, marriage, or a future janazah” (qa-585, deen2u.com/qa/shahada-witnesses-mosque-validity/). If you said the testimony alone and meant it, you are Muslim. Saying it again in public later is an announcement, not a second conversion.

The bath

Two reports describe the Prophet ﷺ telling a new Muslim to bathe:

I came to the Prophet (ﷺ) with the intention of embracing Islam. He commanded me to take a bath with water (boiled with) the leaves of the lote-tree SAHIH

Qays ibn ‘Āṣim – Sunan Abī Dāwūd 355

It was narrated from Qais bin ‘Asim that he accepted Islam, and the Prophet commanded him to perform Ghusl with water and lotus leaves SAHIH

Qays ibn ‘Āṣim – Sunan an-Nasā’ī 188

Nasā’ī’s wording puts the command after Qays had accepted Islam, so this book reads the bath as something that follows the testimony, not a gate in front of it. That reading is ours, drawn from the wording. The site does not say whether this bath is obligatory or recommended, and this book does not decide it either. How to perform a ghusl is set out at deen2u.com/ghusl/.

The certificate

A conversion certificate is an administrative document. The site's welcome page says its printable keepsake "isn't an official or legal document", and "if you need a witnessed conversion certificate for administrative purposes (e.g. some countries require one for marriage registration), your local mosque or Islamic center can issue one properly" (deen2u.com/new-muslim/). Your Islam does not depend on the paper.

Malaysia, the UAE and elsewhere. A certificate may be asked for when you register a nikah, apply for an umrah or Hajj visa, or arrange a burial. The rules differ by place and change over time, so this book does not state them. Ask the official religious authority where you live.

Your first day, in order

- ① **Testify, and mean it.** That is the whole of the entry (Sahih al-Bukhari 1395).
- ② **Bathe.** As Qays ibn 'Āṣim was told to (Sunan Abī Dāwūd 355, graded sahih).
- ③ **Begin the prayer,** even imperfectly. Chapter 4 shows how to start before you know Arabic.
- ④ **Keep your family close** (Chapter 6).

CHAPTER 2

Your past, both sides of it

The shahada settles your past in two directions. The wrongs are wiped away, and the good you did is kept.

‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ came to the Prophet ﷺ to pledge his Islam, and then pulled his hand back. He wanted a condition first: that he be pardoned. The Prophet ﷺ answered him with a question:

Are you not aware of the fact that Islam wipes out all the previous (misdeeds)? SAHIH

‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ, narrated by Ibn Shamāsa – Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim – site reader no. 228

The Qur’ān says the same to those who had not believed:

قُلْ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِنْ يَتُوبُوا يُغْفَرْ لَهُمْ مَا قَدْ سَلَفَ وَإِنْ يَعُودُوا
فَقَدْ مَضَتْ سُنَّتُ الْأَوَّلِينَ

Say to the Unbelievers, if (now) they desist (from Unbelief), their past would be forgiven them; but if they persist, the punishment of those before them is already (a matter of warning for them).

Qur'an 8:38

And it goes further for the one who repents, believes and acts well. The wrongs are not only forgiven, they are changed:

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ
سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

Unless he repents, believes, and works righteous deeds, for Allah will change the evil of such persons into good, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful,

Qur'an 25:70

Sincerity, and a new account

If a person embraces Islam sincerely, then Allah shall forgive all his past sins, and after that starts the settlement of accounts, the reward of his good deeds will be ten times to seven hundred times for each good deed and one evil deed will be recorded as it is unless Allah forgives it SAHIIH

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī – Sahih al-Bukhari 41

Two things in this narration matter to you. The first is the word “sincerely”. The second is the new account that opens afterwards, in which a good deed is multiplied and a bad deed is written as one.

The good you did is kept

Before embracing Islam I used to do good deeds like giving in charity, slave-manumitting, and the keeping of good relations with Kith and kin. Shall I be rewarded for those deeds? ... You became Muslim with all those good deeds (Without losing their reward) SAHIIH

Ḥakīm ibn Ḥizām – Sahih al-Bukhari 1436

The charity you gave and the parents you looked after are not thrown away (deen2u.com/new-muslim/).

If you were a Christian or a Jew, there is a further promise:

Three persons will have a double reward: 1. A Person from the people of the scriptures who believed in his prophet (Jesus or Moses) and then believed in the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) (i.e. has embraced Islam). **SAHIH**

Abū Burdah's father – Sahih al-Bukhari 97

A text you will meet: Bukhari 6921

You will meet this authentic narration sooner or later, so it is printed here:

Shall we be punished for what we did in the pre-Islamic Period of ignorance? ... Whoever does good in Islam will not be punished for what he did in the Pre-Islamic Period of ignorance and whoever does evil in Islam will be punished for his former and later (bad deeds)

SAHIH

Ibn Mas'ūd – Sahih al-Bukhari 6921

On its face it qualifies the promise. The one who “does good in Islam” is not punished for the time before, while the one who “does evil in Islam” is punished for his “former and later” deeds. How the scholars reconcile this with the narrations of complete erasure is not yet set out on any page of this site, so this book does not attribute a reading to anyone. Only this much can be said without leaning on any commentary. The forgiveness in Sahih al-Bukhari 41 is tied to embracing Islam sincerely. The

fresh start is a mercy, and it is not a licence. The door of repentance stays open after the shahada as well as before it (Chapter 10). If it troubles you, take it to a qualified teacher.

CHAPTER 3

What you do not owe, and what you must settle

There is no bill for the years before Islam. There are a few things to put right from today.

No make-up of old worship

You do not owe the prayers, fasts or zakat of the years before you were Muslim. The site's answer is plain: "you owe nothing for the years before you accepted Islam ... you are not required to repay a lifetime of missed salah, Ramadan, or zakat" (qa-587, deen2u.com/qa/make-up-worship-before-islam/). It rests on the two texts in Chapter 2: "Islam wipes out all the previous (misdeeds)" (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim — site reader no. 228) and Qur'an 8:38. Your worship begins on the day you enter Islam.

Interest you earned before

The verse that forbids riba speaks directly to the one who stops:

فَمَنْ جَاءَهُ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِ فَانْتَهَى فَلَهُ مَا سَلَفَ وَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ

Those who after receiving direction from their Lord, desist, shall be pardoned for the past; their case is for Allah (to judge)

Qur'an 2:275 (part of the verse)

On this basis the site tells converts that interest already in their savings from before Islam may be kept, and that what matters is leaving interest from now on: moving away from interest-bearing accounts and debts in reasonable, deliberate steps rather than in a panic (qa-277, deen2u.com/qa/interest-money-earned-before-converting/).

Tattoos and piercings

Tattoos from before Islam are not held against you and need not be removed. A new tattoo is different: the site records that the majority of scholars across the four schools hold it impermissible (qa-276, deen2u.com/qa/tattoos-and-piercings-from-before-converting/).

A job that involves alcohol or interest

The Prophet ﷺ cursed not only the drinking of wine but the whole chain of trade around it:

Wine is cursed from ten angles: The wine itself, the one who squeezes (the grapes etc), the one for whom it is squeezed, the one who sells it, the one who buys it, the one who carries it, the one to whom it is carried, the one who consumes its price, the one who drinks it and the one who pours it. SAHIH

Ibn 'Umar – Sunan Ibn Mājah 3380

The site's answer (qa-794, deen2u.com/qa/job-involving-alcohol-pork-or-interest-after-converting/) draws the line this way. Work that directly sells or serves alcohol or pork, or draws up interest contracts, has to be left, and you should begin looking for lawful work immediately rather than waiting for a

perfect replacement. Peripheral roles are a different case: a cashier in a general supermarket, or an IT or cleaning job in a bank. Scholars have differed on these, “with some permitting them out of need and others advising avoidance”, and the answer calls this a legitimate difference of opinion. Take your exact duties to a knowledgeable scholar.

How much is asked, and at what pace

So, if I forbid you to do something, then keep away from it. And if I order you to do something, then do of it as much as you can SAHIH

Abū Hurayrah – Sahih al-Bukhari 7288

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

On no soul doth Allah Place a burden greater than it can bear.

Qur'an 2:286 (part of the verse)

The two sides are not the same. A prohibition is left completely: stop what is forbidden. A command is done as far as you are able: build up what is obligatory as fast as you truly can.

CHAPTER 4

The first prayers before you know Arabic

Start praying now, before you can do it well. The prayer is the first thing taught after the testimony, and nothing in the texts tells you to wait until you are fluent.

In the instruction to Mu‘ādh the order was the testimony, then the five prayers (Sahih al-Bukhari 1395). Nobody was told to learn a language first.

If you cannot memorise anything yet

I cannot memorise anything from the Qur'an: so teach me something which is sufficient for me. He said: Say Glory be to Allah, and praise be to Allah, and there is no god but Allah, and Allah is most great, and there is no might and no strength but in Allah.

HASAN

‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Awfā – Sunan Abī Dāwūd 832

Abū Dāwūd records it in his Book of Prayer. Said in Arabic, these are *subḥāna Allāh, al-ḥamdu lillāh, lā ilāha illā Allāh, Allāhu akbar, lā ḥawla wa lā quwwata illā billāh*. The site does not set out the scholars’ detailed rules on how these words stand in for recitation in the prayer. Learn those from a teacher while you memorise al-Fātiḥah line by line, and pray from a transliteration rather than wait (qa-268, deen2u.com/qa/praying-without-knowing-arabic-yet/).

Ease is the rule, not the exception

Religion is very easy and whoever overburdens himself in his religion will not be able to continue in that way. SAHIH

Abū Hurayrah – Sahih al-Bukhari 39

Facilitate things to people (concerning religious matters), and do not make it hard for them and give them good tidings and do not make them run away (from Islam) SAHIH

Anas ibn Mālik – Sahih al-Bukhari 69

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ

So fear Allah as much as ye can

Qur'an 64:16 (part of the verse)

Why the rules came gradually

the first thing that was revealed thereof was a Sura from Al-Mufasssal, and in it was mentioned Paradise and the Fire. When the people embraced Islam, the Verses regarding legal and illegal things were revealed. If the first thing to be revealed was: 'Do not drink alcoholic drinks,' people would have said, 'We will never leave alcoholic drinks,'

SAHIH

‘Ā’ishah, narrated by Yūsuf ibn Māhak – Sahih al-Bukhari 4993

‘Ā’ishah was describing the order of revelation, not a syllabus for converts. Our application of it: faith first, then the rules a settled heart can carry. The rules are all in force for you today; what is gradual is your learning of them.

Your first week of prayer

- 1 **Learn the five times** for your city (deen2u.com/prayer-times/).
- 2 **Learn wuḍū'** (deen2u.com/wudu/).
- 3 **Learn the positions** from the site's New Muslim Guide (deen2u.com/new-muslim/), and pray alongside someone if you can.
- 4 **Memorise al-Fātiḥah a line at a time.** Until you have it, use the words the Prophet ﷺ gave a man in exactly your position (Sunan Abī Dāwūd 832, graded hasan).

CHAPTER 5

Your name, your lineage, your identity

Becoming Muslim changes your heart and your worship. It does not change your ethnicity, and it does not have to change your name.

Your first name

The Prophet ﷺ changed names only when the meaning itself was the problem:

Zainab's original name was "Barrah," but it was said "By that she is giving herself the prestige of piety." So the Prophet (ﷺ) changed her name to Zainab SAHIH

Abū Hurayrah – Sahih al-Bukhari 6192

the Prophet (ﷺ) asked (him), "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Hazn." The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "You are Sahl." Hazn said, "I will not change the name with which my father has named me." ... Ibn Al-Musaiyab added: We have had roughness (in character) ever since.

SAHIH

al-Musayyab ibn Hazn – Sahih al-Bukhari 6190

Barrah was changed because the name claimed piety for its bearer. The second report shows a change the Prophet ﷺ offered to a man whose name he disliked, and the grandson's remark tells you what that name carried. Neither report touches a name with an ordinary, decent meaning. The site's answer: "Changing one's name is not required unless the name carries a meaning contrary to Islam" (qa-083, deen2u.com/qa/do-you-

have-to-change-your-name-after-converting/). Its welcome page adds that there is “no requirement to take an ‘Arabic’ name — a good meaning in any language is enough” (deen2u.com/new-muslim/).

Your father’s name

ج
أَدْعُوهُمْ لِأَبَائِهِمْ هُوَ أَقْسَطُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا
ءِآبَاءَهُمْ فَأِخْوَانَكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَمَوَالِيكُمْ وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ
جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا أَخْطَأْتُمْ بِهِ وَلَكِنْ مَا تَعَمَّدَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

Call them by (the names of) their fathers: that is juster in the sight of Allah. But if ye know not their father's (names, call them) your Brothers in faith, or your maulas. But there is no blame on you if ye make a mistake therein: (what counts is) the intention of your hearts: and Allah is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful.

Qur'an 33:5

On this site the verse is applied to adoption (qa-235, qa-960) and to a wife keeping her own father’s name after marriage (qa-981). Some converts are registered with “bin Abdullah” or “binti Abdullah” in place of their father’s name. Whether this verse bears on that practice is a question the site has not answered, and this book does not answer it: take it to a qualified scholar, and the registration rules to the authority where you live.

Islam is not an ethnicity

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا
وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other)). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).

Qur'an 49:13

A Chinese convert remains Chinese, an Indian convert Indian. You do not have to become Malay or Arab to be Muslim; the verse ranks taqwā, not origin.

Circumcision

The site describes circumcision as part of the fiṭrah, strongly encouraged by most scholars for male converts, but “not treated as an absolute condition for your Islam to be valid”. Your prayers and fasting are not invalidated while you plan for it, and timing is something to discuss with a doctor and a knowledgeable imam (qa-275, deen2u.com/qa/circumcision-for-men-after-converting/).

CHAPTER 6

Parents and relatives who are not Muslim

Becoming Muslim does not cut you off from your family. It asks you to be good to them. The Qur'ān covers even the hardest case, parents who push you to leave tawhīd: refuse the sin, and keep the kindness.

وَأِنْ جَاهِدَاكَ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا وَصَاحِبَهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا وَاتَّبِعْ سَبِيلَ مَنْ أَنَابَ إِلَيَّ ثُمَّ إِلَيَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُمْ بِمَا كُنْتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ

"But if they strive to make thee join in worship with Me things of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not; yet bear them company in this life with justice (and consideration), and follow the way of those who turn to me (in love): in the end the return of you all is to Me, and I will tell you the truth (and meaning) of all that ye did."

Qur'an 31:15

وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَلَدَيْهِ حُسْنًا ۚ وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِي مَا
لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَا ۚ إِلَىٰ مَرْجِعِكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ
تَعْمَلُونَ

We have enjoined on man kindness to parents: but if they (either of them) strive (to force) thee to join with Me (in worship) anything of which thou hast no knowledge, obey them not. Ye have (all) to return to me, and I will tell you (the truth) of all that ye did.

Qur'an 29:8

And for non-Muslims in general who do not fight the believers over their religion:

لَا يَنْهَىٰكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُم مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

Allah forbids you not, with regard to those who fight you not for (your) Faith nor drive you out of your homes, from dealing kindly and justly with them: for Allah loveth those who are just.

Qur'an 60:8

إِنَّمَا يَنْهَكُمُ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُواكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَأَخْرَجُوكُم مِّن دِيرِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا عَلَىٰ إِخْرَاجِكُمْ أَن تَوَلَّوهُمْ وَمَن يَتَوَلَّهُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ

Allah only forbids you, with regard to those who fight you for (your) Faith, and drive you out of your homes, and support (others) in driving you out, from turning to them (for friendship and protection). It is such as turn to them (in these circumstances), that do wrong.

Qur'an 60:9

What the Companions did

My mother came to me during the lifetime of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) and she was a pagan. I said to Allah's Apostle (seeking his verdict), "My mother has come to me and she desires to receive a reward from me, shall I keep good relations with her?" The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "Yes, keep good relation with her" **SAHIH**

Asmā' bint Abī Bakr – Sahih al-Bukhari 2620

So, `Umar sent it to his brother at Mecca before he embraced Islam

SAHIH

Ibn `Umar – Sahih al-Bukhari 2619

The cloak was a silk one the Prophet (ﷺ) had given `Umar "to sell or to give to someone else".

A young Jewish boy used to serve the Prophet (ﷺ) and he became sick. So the Prophet (ﷺ) went to visit him. **SAHIH**

Anas – Sahih al-Bukhari 1356

So you visit your mother, bring her gifts and speak gently, and you do not join her worship. The site sums this up: “Kindness in dunyā matters, firmness in dīn: the two run on separate rails and neither cancels the other” (deen2u.com/fiqh-of-minorities/). Obedience has one limit. Where a parent orders shirk or a sin you decline, gently, in that one matter, and you obey and serve them in everything that is good (qa-588, deen2u.com/qa/obeying-honoring-non-muslim-parents/).

When and how to tell them

There is no religious obligation to announce your conversion immediately. “Islam doesn’t require public disclosure for your faith to be valid,” and you may take time to choose how, when and to whom (qa-263, deen2u.com/qa/telling-family-right-after-converting/). When disapproval comes, hold your convictions, keep turning up at family dinners, and do not debate religion in the heat of an argument; many families come round once they see your character improve (qa-264, deen2u.com/qa/family-friends-disapprove-of-conversion/).

Praying for them

You may ask Allah to guide a living relative. When the people of Daws refused the call and the Prophet ﷺ was asked to curse them, he prayed for them instead:

O Allah! Give guidance to the people of Daus, and let them embrace Islam SAHIH

Abū Hurayrah – Sahih al-Bukhari 2937

The site permits du‘ā’ for a living non-Muslim’s guidance, health and wellbeing, but not asking forgiveness for one who died upon disbelief (qa-976, deen2u.com/qa/making-dua-for-a-non-muslim/; see Chapter 9).

CHAPTER 7

Festivals, food and the family table

In Malaysia or the UAE a convert can be a minority inside their own family while the country around them is Muslim.

The site's chapter on Muslims living as minorities (deen2u.com/fiqh-of-minorities/) draws three circles around another faith's festival. Written for Muslims in the West, the principle does not depend on the country:

- **What a Muslim does not do:** "take part in the religious substance of another faith's festival — attending the worship service, singing its hymns ... erecting its religious symbols in his own home, or greeting people with words that congratulate the religious claim itself."
- **What a Muslim can do:** "remain kind, present, and gracious around the season — visit his non-Muslim parents on their day off ... exchange ordinary goodwill ... give gifts at a neutral time, and check on elderly non-Muslim relatives precisely when they feel loneliest." Purely civic occasions "are worldly matters, judged by their content, not their calendar date."
- **What fills the gap:** making the two Eids real occasions (deen2u.com/eid/).

Applying the circles at home

The table below is this book's application of those three circles to occasions a convert in Malaysia or the UAE is likely to meet. It is not a ruling by any named scholar. Where your case is not clear, ask.

OCCASION	BEING PRESENT, KINDLY	THE LINE
Chinese New Year	Visiting parents, the family gathering, a reunion meal where the food is permissible for you	Prayers or offerings at an altar, lighting joss sticks for a deity or an ancestor
Deepavali	Visiting, greeting the family with ordinary goodwill, sharing permissible food	Taking part in prayers or offerings to a deity
Christmas	The family meal, time with parents on their day off	Attending the worship service, singing its hymns, celebrating the claim of a divine son
Thaipusam and temple festivals	Checking on the family before and after	Joining the procession or the vows as a participant, since these are the rite itself
Open houses	Visiting friends and neighbours of any faith	The food question only (below)

On greetings the site records a difference. Congratulating a rite of kufr as such is forbidden, and Ibn al-Qayyim transmitted agreement on this; some contemporary scholars permit a neutral courtesy such as “enjoy your holiday”, which the site calls “a genuine difference of opinion among people of knowledge”. All agree that a Muslim may not attend or take part in the religious rite itself (qa-856, deen2u.com/qa/ruling-on-congratulating-non-muslims-on-their-festivals/; also qa-224 and qa-700).

He who copies any people is one of them SAHIH

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Umar – Sunan Abī Dāwūd 4031

لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَلِيَ دِينِ

To you be your Way, and to me mine.

Qur'an 109:6

The family table

الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبُ ط وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حِلٌّ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ لَهُمْ

This day are (all) things good and pure made lawful unto you. The food of the People of the Book is lawful unto you and yours is lawful unto them.

Qur'an 5:5 (part of the verse)

The verse names the People of the Book. How far it reaches to meat from households of other faiths is not set out on the site, so this book does not extend it. For any household, the site's answer on a family kitchen where pork is cooked gives a practical rule. Pork, blood, carrion and anything slaughtered for other than Allah are forbidden. Pots and plates are not permanently impure, and washing them with water makes them clean. Keep your own pan and dishes where that is easy. You may eat vegetarian, seafood or otherwise permissible food your

family prepares, as long as it contains no pork, lard, alcohol or impermissible meat (qa-957, deen2u.com/qa/eating-food-cooked-in-a-non-muslim-family-kitchen/).

Not settled here. Food that has been placed on an altar as an offering, and rites at a parent's funeral, are real questions for converts from Chinese and Indian families. On funerals the site is clear that you do not take part in non-Islamic religious rites (Chapter 9). On food offerings the site has no answer yet. Ask a scholar you trust.

CHAPTER 8

Marriage after the shahada

What happens depends on who has embraced Islam and the other spouse's religion. Take your own case to a scholar and to the authority that registers marriages where you live.

If you are a man and your wife is Christian or Jewish

وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْمُحْصَنَاتُ مِنَ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ
مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ إِذَا آتَيْتُمُوهُنَّ أَجُورَهُنَّ

(Lawful unto you in marriage) are (not only) chaste women who are believers, but chaste women among the People of the Book, revealed before your time,- when ye give them their due dowers

Qur'an 5:5 (part of the verse)

A Muslim man may be married to a chaste woman of the People of the Book, a practising Jew or Christian. The site adds that marrying a righteous Muslim woman is better for his faith and family (qa-701, [qa-701, deen2u.com/qa/can-a-new-muslim-marry-a-non-muslim/](http://deen2u.com/qa/can-a-new-muslim-marry-a-non-muslim/)). If your wife is of another religion, the site says only that a marriage existing at conversion "is a separate ruling handled case by case". It gives no ruling beyond that, and neither does this book.

If you are a woman and your husband has not embraced Islam

فَإِنْ عَلِمْتُمُوهُنَّ مُؤْمِنَاتٍ فَلَا تَرْجِعُوهُنَّ إِلَى الْكُفَّارِ لَا هُنَّ حِلٌّ لَّهُمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحِلُّونَ لَهُنَّ

if ye ascertain that they are Believers, then send them not back to the Unbelievers. They are not lawful (wives) for the Unbelievers, nor are the (Unbelievers) lawful (husbands) for them.

Qur'an 60:10 (part of the verse)

وَلَا تُنْكَحُوا الْمُشْرِكِينَ حَتَّى يُؤْمِنُوا

Nor marry (your girls) to unbelievers until they believe

Qur'an 2:221 (part of the verse)

The site's fullest answer (qa-996, [qa-996, deen2u.com/qa/marriage-when-a-spouse-leaves-or-enters-islam/](http://deen2u.com/qa/marriage-when-a-spouse-leaves-or-enters-islam/)) says that when a wife accepts Islam and her husband does not, "the marriage is suspended and marital relations stop". It then records two positions:

- **The majority:** if he accepts Islam before her iddah ends, the marriage continues on the original contract with no new nikah; once her iddah passes without his Islam, the marriage is dissolved.
- **A number of scholars, among them Ibn Taymiyyah:** the marriage remains valid as long as she has not married another, so if he later embraces Islam they may return to it.

The second view cites the case of the Prophet's daughter Zaynab, whose husband Abu al-ʿĀṣ embraced Islam long after she had. The narrations, with the grades this site's collection carries:

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) restored his daughter Zaynab to Abul'As on the basis of the previous marriage, and he did not do anything afresh. HASAN

Ibn ʿAbbās – Sunan Abī Dāwūd 2240

The Prophet returned his daughter Zainab to Abul-As bin Ar-Rabi after six years in the first marriage without renewing the marriage

SAHIH

Ibn ʿAbbās – Jāmiʿ at-Tirmidhī 1143

the Messenger of Allah returned his daughter to Abul-'As bin Rabi' after two years, on the basis of the first marriage contract SAHIH

Ibn ʿAbbās – Sunan Ibn Mājah 2009

Other narrations say she was returned with a new contract. Both are graded daʿīf in the site's collection, so this book does not rely on them. They are shown so that you know why:

The Messenger of Allah returned his daughter Zainab to Abul-As bin Ar-Rabi with a new dowry and a new wedding DA'IF

ʿAmr ibn Shuʿayb, from his father, from his grandfather – Jāmiʿ at-Tirmidhī 1142

the Messenger of Allah, returned his daughter Zainab to Abul-As bin Rabi', with a new marriage contract DA'IF

'Amr ibn Shu'ayb, from his father, from his grandfather – Sunan Ibn Mājah 2010

The authentic versions differ on the interval, six years in one and two in another, and this book leaves them as they are. What they agree on is the first contract. Under either view the first steps are the same: stop marital relations, keep treating your husband fairly and kindly, and get qualified advice early.

If you read an older, shorter answer on the site that says such a marriage “generally continues”: this chapter follows the fuller, sourced treatment in qa-996 instead.

Marrying after you have become Muslim

A Muslim woman may not marry a non-Muslim man, which the site records as scholarly consensus; a Muslim man may marry a chaste woman of the People of the Book; neither may marry an idolater until they believe (qa-701; Qur'an 5:5, Qur'an 60:10, Qur'an 2:221).

CHAPTER 9

Death, inheritance and the non-Muslim relative

Read this chapter before you need it.

Inheritance

A Muslim cannot be the heir of a disbeliever, nor can a disbeliever be the heir of a Muslim **SAHIH**

Usāmah ibn Zayd – Sahih al-Bukhari 6764

Under the Islamic shares there is no inheritance between a Muslim and a non-Muslim. The site records the four madhabs as holding that there is no inheritance in either direction, and a minority of early scholars as holding that a Muslim may inherit from a non-Muslim relative, though not the reverse. Most scholars, it records, permit you to accept a bequest or gift from non-Muslim relatives, since that is not Islamic inheritance (qa-791, deen2u.com/qa/inheritance-and-wills-with-non-muslim-family/).

For your own estate, your non-Muslim parents and siblings are not your Islamic heirs, but you may leave them something by bequest, up to one third:

"One third?" He said: "Yes, one third, yet even one third is too much. It is better for you to leave your inheritors wealthy than to leave them poor begging others **SAHIH**

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqāṣ – Sahih al-Bukhari 2742

In another version: “One-third, yet even one-third is too much” (Sahih al-Bukhari 2744). Write a will.

Praying for one who has died

مَا كَانَ لِلنَّبِيِّ وَالَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا أَنْ يَسْتَغْفِرُوا لِلْمُشْرِكِينَ وَلَوْ كَانُوا أَوْلَىٰ قُرْبَىٰ مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا تَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُمْ أَصْحَابُ الْجَحِيمِ

It is not fitting, for the Prophet and those who believe, that they should pray for forgiveness for Pagans, even though they be of kin, after it is clear to them that they are companions of the Fire.

Qur'an 9:113

The narration of the death of Abū Ṭālib, the Prophet's uncle, gives the occasion in its own words:

I will keep on asking Allah's forgiveness for you unless I am forbidden (by Allah) to do so. **SAHIH**

al-Musayyab – Sahih al-Bukhari 1360

In the same narration, Allah then revealed the verse above. Even the Prophet ﷺ, grieving for his mother, was given this answer:

I sought permission from my Lord to beg forgiveness for her but it was not granted to me, and I sought permission to visit her grave and it was granted to me so visit the graves, for that makes you mindful of death. **SAHIH**

Abū Hurayrah – Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim – site reader no. 2144

So the du‘ā’ for forgiveness is not made. Visiting the grave is permitted. Grief is not a sin. The site also says: “do not declare a particular person to be in the Fire”. We judge only by what is outward, and the final affair belongs to Allah (qa-792, deen2u.com/qa/praying-for-a-non-muslim-relative-who-died/).

Attending the funeral

You do not take part in non-Islamic religious rites. On simply accompanying the body, or being present at the burial for the sake of family ties, the site says that scholars have differed, and it does not name the positions. Neither does this book. Ask a trustworthy scholar before the day comes (qa-792).

CHAPTER 10

Coming back: a chapter for the returning Muslim

This chapter is for the reader born Muslim who, after months or years without prayer, wants to come back. Much of this book is yours too.

* قُلْ يٰعِبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْغَفُورُ
الرَّحِيمُ

Say: "O my Servants who have transgressed against their souls!
Despair not of the Mercy of Allah: for Allah forgives all sins: for He is
Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.

Qur'an 39:53

*Every son of Adam sins, and the best of the sinners are the
repentant* HASAN

Anas – Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī 2499

The verse addresses those who "have transgressed against their souls", which is to say you, and its instruction is not to despair. Remember too Qur'an 25:70 from Chapter 2: for the one who repents, believes and acts well, the evil deeds are changed into good.

Years of abandoned prayer

Two positions are recorded on the site's page on missed prayers (deen2u.com/missed-prayers/). They are set out here as the site gives them:

- **The four madhhabs and the majority:** the one who deliberately left a prayer until its time was gone has sinned gravely and must repent, and is still commanded to make the prayer up. If the one excused by sleep must make it up, the one who left it deliberately is more deserving of being required to.
- **Held by Ibn Hāzīm, championed by Ibn Taymiyyah,** and favoured by a number of later scholars: the deliberate abandoner cannot validly make up that prayer, because prayer is tied to its time. His duty is sincere repentance and increasing in voluntary prayer.

The page adds what both sides agree on: deliberately abandoning prayer until its time expires is a grave sin, and some scholars count leaving prayer entirely as an act of disbelief. That is a reason to come back today, not next month; how any particular person's past is classified belongs to qualified scholars, not to relatives. The site's answer for the one returning gives the practical advice common to both views: guard today's prayers first, make up what you reasonably can alongside them, and "never let an uncountable backlog become the excuse that keeps you from praying now" (qa-754, deen2u.com/qa/making-up-years-of-missed-prayers/).

إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ وَءَامَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ وَلَا يُظْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا

Except those who repent and believe, and work righteousness: for these will enter the Garden and will not be wronged in the least,-

Qur'an 19:60

"I feel too dirty to pray"

Stopping the prayer until you feel clean enough gets the cure backwards. The prayer is what pulls a person out of sin, not a reward for having already left it (qa-899, deen2u.com/qa/too-sinful-to-pray-should-i-stop-praying/):

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ وَزُلْفًا مِّنَ اللَّيْلِ إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ
الْأَسْيَآتِ ذَلِكَ ذِكْرَىٰ لِلذَّكِّرِينَ

And establish regular prayers at the two ends of the day and at the approaches of the night: For those things, that are good remove those that are evil: Be that the word of remembrance to those who remember (their Lord):

Qur'an 11:114

The site calls the voice that says you are too filthy to approach Allah "Shayṭān's oldest tactic". The answer to it is to pray, seek forgiveness, and keep coming back.

Where to restart

- ① **Pray the next prayer.** Not tomorrow, and not after you have “sorted yourself out”.
- ② **Refresh the basics** without embarrassment: wuḍū’ (deen2u.com/wudu/), ghusl (deen2u.com/ghusl/), the prayer (deen2u.com/new-muslim/).
- ③ **Settle the backlog question once**, with a teacher, using the two positions above.
- ④ **Make tawbah** (deen2u.com/tawbah/), and find one mosque and one friend who prays (Chapter 11).

CHAPTER 11

Doubts, loneliness and slipping up

Intrusive doubts, loneliness and your own mistakes come to nearly everyone in the first year. None of them means you chose wrongly.

Whispers

Satan comes to one of you and says, 'Who created so-and-so?' 'till he says, 'Who has created your Lord?' So, when he inspires such a question, one should seek refuge with Allah and give up such thoughts SAHIH

Abū Hurayrah — Sahih al-Bukhari 3276

وَأَمَّا يَنْزَغَنَّكَ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ نَزْغٌ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ ۖ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ

And if (at any time) an incitement to discord is made to thee by the Evil One, seek refuge in Allah. He is the One Who hears and knows all things.

Qur'an 41:36

Seek refuge, and stop following the chain of the thought. You may also hear a saying that the distress itself is a sign of faith. It is not quoted here, because it could not yet be checked against the site's own collection.

Slipping up

The site answers this one warmly: slipping up is “completely normal, and honestly expected”. When you slip, the response “isn’t self-punishment, it’s a sincere ‘astaghfirullah’ ... and trying again” (qa-266, deen2u.com/qa/making-mistakes-as-a-new-muslim/). One sin does not undo your Islam. Recall “the best of the sinners are the repentant” (Jāmi‘ at-Tirmidhī 2499, graded hasan).

Loneliness

وَأَعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلَا تَفَرَّقُوا

And hold fast, all together, by the rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves

Qur'an 3:103 (part of the verse)

الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

"Those who believe, and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah: for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction.

Qur'an 13:28

Loneliness after conversion is common and usually temporary. Go to the same mosque consistently rather than moving between mosques. Join a new-Muslim class. Be the one who starts the conversation after prayer. Keep the non-Muslim

friendships that are healthy for you, because you do not have to cut everyone off to belong here (qa-272, deen2u.com/qa/coping-with-loneliness-after-converting/).

Who to take your religion from

people will take as their leaders ignorant persons who when consulted will give their verdict without knowledge. So they will go astray and will lead the people astray SAHIH

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ – Sahih al-Bukhari 100

You are not obliged to bind yourself to one madhhab. For a beginner, though, the site advises that it is valid, and usually best, to learn the practical rulings of prayer and purification from one trustworthy scholar or one madhhab-based book, so that your worship is orderly. Stick to recognised, qualified scholars and their students rather than social-media personalities, and do not let the scholars’ differences shake you: “the core of Islam that you must act on is agreed upon” (qa-953, deen2u.com/qa/do-i-have-to-follow-a-madhhab-as-a-new-muslim/).

CHAPTER 12

Twelve things new Muslims are wrongly told

Much of what makes the first year hard is not the religion but what people add to it.

1. **You must change your name.** Only a name whose meaning is contrary to Islam is changed (Sahih al-Bukhari 6192; qa-083). Chapter 5.
2. **You must become Malay, or Arab.** The Qur'ān ranks people by taqwā, not nation (Qur'an 49:13). Chapter 5.
3. **You must be circumcised before your shahada counts.** It is not a condition of your Islam's validity (qa-275). Chapter 5.
4. **You must learn Arabic before you pray.** Pray now. A man who could memorise nothing was given five short phrases (Sunan Abī Dāwūd 832, graded hasan; qa-268). Chapter 4.
5. **You need an imam, witnesses or a mosque.** They are useful, and they are not conditions of validity (qa-585). Chapter 1.
6. **You must cut off your family.** The opposite: refuse the sin, keep the kindness (Qur'an 31:15; Sahih al-Bukhari 2620; qa-588). Chapter 6.
7. **You must confess your past to someone.** What is asked is the testimony, sincerely (Sahih al-Bukhari 1395; Sahih al-Bukhari 41); the past is wiped out (Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim — site reader no. 228). Nothing cited here asks you to recount it to anyone.
8. **You must make up every prayer and fast from before Islam.** You owe nothing for the years before you accepted Islam

(qa-587). Chapter 3. (A returning Muslim's missed prayers are a different question: Chapter 10.)

9. **One sin cancels your Islam.** "Every son of Adam sins, and the best of the sinners are the repentant" (Jāmi' at-Tirmidhī 2499, graded hasan; qa-266). Chapter 11.
10. **You must wear hijab on the first day.** The site's answer allows building up to it at your own pace (qa-269).
11. **You must perform Hajj now.** Hajj is owed by "those who can afford the journey" (Qur'an 3:97), once in a lifetime; if you cannot yet afford it, it is not yet required of you (qa-958).
12. **Your tattoos must come off.** Tattoos from before Islam are not held against you and need not be removed; new ones are another matter (qa-276). Chapter 3.

The rule behind all twelve is the one in Chapter 3: leave what is forbidden, and do what is commanded as far as you can (Sahih al-Bukhari 7288).

Where this book draws from. Qur'ān quotations are verbatim from the site's Qur'ān data (Tanzil Uthmani text; translation of 'Abdullāh Yūsuf 'Alī). Ḥadīth are quoted from the site's own collections: Bukhari in standard numbering; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim by site reader number, only where matched to the narration; the Sunan with the grade each carries. Scholars' positions are named only where a site page records them: the Q&A answers cited by number, and the pages New Muslim, Missed Prayers and Fiqh of Minorities. Where the site records no ruling (conversion procedures, "bin/binti Abdullah", food offerings, the reading of Bukhari 6921), this book says so. It is a guide, not a fatwa.