

Prayer while travelling

The road shortens the prayer; it never cancels it. Four becomes two, two may be joined, and the ground itself is your mosque.



★ The licence is in the Qur'an

وَإِذَا ضَرَبْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَلَيْسَ عَلَيْكُمْ جُنَاحٌ أَنْ تَقْصُرُوا مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ

"And when you travel throughout the land, there is no blame upon you for shortening the prayer."

Qur'an 4:101

★ What he ﷺ actually did

Ibn 'Umar: "I accompanied Allah's Messenger ﷺ and he never offered more than two rak'ah during the journey." Nor did Abu Bakr, 'Umar or 'Uthman.

Sahih al-Bukhari 1102

★ Which prayers shorten

Zuhr, 'Asr and 'Isha' become two rak'ah. Fajr is already two and Maghrib stays three — neither is ever shortened.

Sahih al-Bukhari 1089 · 1090

★ Joining two prayers

Setting out before noon he ﷺ would delay Zuhr to the time of 'Asr, dismount, and pray them together. He joined at Tabuk likewise.

Sahih al-Bukhari 1111 · Sahih Muslim, Kitab Salat al-Musafirin

★ Where the schools differ

Shortening on a journey is agreed. Joining is allowed by the Shafi'i, Maliki and Hanbali schools; the Hanafis restrict it to Hajj.

- Malaysia follows the Shafi'i school, which permits joining

Sahih al-Bukhari 1111 · the positions of the four schools

★ How far is a journey

The schools differ, most setting the minimum at roughly two days of ordinary travel. Follow the ruling in force where you live.

Qur'an 4:101 · the positions of the four schools

★ Praying on the move

He ﷺ prayed the voluntary prayers and Witr on his mount, facing whatever way it turned — but dismounted and faced the qiblah for the obligatory.

Sahih al-Bukhari 400 · 1095 · 1104

★ No water, no direction

فَإِنَّمَا تَوَلَّوْا فَمِنْ وَجْهِ اللَّهِ

Without water, wipe clean earth over face and hands. Unsure of the qiblah, judge your best: "wherever you turn, there is the Face of Allah."

Qur'an 5:6 · 2:115 · Sahih al-Bukhari 343

★ The ground is a mosque

"The earth has been made for me a place of prayer and a means of purification." There is no such excuse as having nowhere to pray.

Sahih al-Bukhari 335 · Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Masajid