

Wudu — step by step

No prayer is accepted without it. This is the order the Prophet ﷺ kept — limb by limb, three times each, nothing wasted.

★ The verse that commands it

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِذَا قُمْتُمْ إِلَى الصَّلَاةِ فَاغْسِلُوا وُجُوهَكُمْ

“O you who have believed, when you rise to perform prayer, wash your faces...” — face, forearms, head, feet, in that order.

Qur'an 5:6

★ Intend it, then start

Wudu begins in the heart: you are washing in order to pray. Then pour water over the hands and wash them three times.

- Most scholars also hold that you say Bismillah first

Sahih al-Bukhari 159 · 164

★ Mouth, then nose

Rinse the mouth. Then draw water into the nose and blow it out — he ﷺ told whoever performs wudu to clean the nose this way.

Sahih al-Bukhari 161 · 164

★ The face · three times

Hairline to chin, ear to ear. ‘Uthman washed each part three times and said he had seen the Prophet ﷺ perform wudu exactly so.

Sahih al-Bukhari 164

★ Forearms to the elbows

Right arm, then left, up to and including the elbows, three times. The verse sets the limit at the elbow, not the wrist.

Qur'an 5:6 · Sahih al-Bukhari 164

★ Wipe the head — do not wash it

Pass wet hands over the head, and wipe the ears with the same wetness. The Qur'an says wipe here, and says wash elsewhere.

Qur'an 5:6 · Sahih al-Bukhari 185

★ Feet to the ankles

Last, each foot up to and including the ankle, three times, working between the toes. Leave no dry patch anywhere.

Qur'an 5:6 · Sahih al-Bukhari 164

★ What breaks it

“The prayer of a person who does Hadath is not accepted till he performs the ablution.” Wind, urine and stool all count.

Sahih al-Bukhari 135

★ What it is worth

Wudu like his ﷺ, then two rak'ah with an undivided mind: past sins forgiven. This ummah will be known on that Day by the marks of wudu.

Sahih al-Bukhari 136 · 164