

What is Ramadan?



Ramadan is the **9th month** of the **Islamic calendar**. In this month Muslims **don't eat** anything in between **sunrise** and **sunset**. This is called **fasting**



Fasting is **one** of the **5 Pillars of Islam** called **Sawm**. The **Five Pillars** are the **foundation** for how Muslims **live their lives**.



Fasting shows the **cravings** people have which they need to **control**. It's all about putting the most **important** things first like **Allah** (God).



When Muslims are fasting they **think** about people who **live** like this **all the time**, like the **homeless**. They also try and give more to charity if they are able to.



Time during **Ramadan** should be spent **reflecting** and **praying**. People have to make sure they are being **kind** and **helpful** and all their **time** is spent **wisely**.

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Muslims should carry on as **normal**. Fasting **shouldn't change** what they do every day because that **isn't** the **aim** of fasting.



Within their **day to day** lives, Muslims should try to do **more good deeds** and worship **Allah (God)** more than usual during the month of Ramadan.

How do you fast?



Every day Muslims wake up **before sunrise** to eat the **first meal**. This is usually **light** and **healthy**, like **oats**, and they **drink** lots of **water** to **last** the **whole day**.



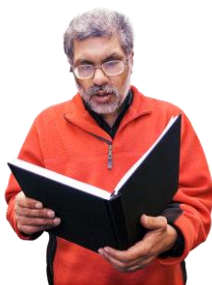
Then when the **sun** comes up they do their **first prayer**. This is called the **Fajr prayer**.



In the **evening** it's time for **Iftar**. This is when Muslims **break their fast**. It will start with something **sweet** like **dates** and then next will be a **big nutritious meal**.



Some families may do the **Maghrib prayer** before **eating** and might **go** to the **Mosque** for this.



Afterwards, it's time for the **whole family** to be **together**. They read the **Qur'an** and **worship**. There are **later prayers** called **Tarawih** which happens **at night** during Ramadan. Some people might go to the **Mosque**.

How do you fast?



In the last ten nights of Ramadan Lailat-ul-Qadr happens. Some Muslims will stay overnight in the Mosque to remember the first revelation of the Qur'an.



Muslims will spend that time **praying** and **asking Allah (God)** for **forgiveness**.



Fasting is **good** for Muslims because it helps them **feel closer** to **Allah (God)**, **Prophet Muhammad** said that all **sins** were **forgiven** for the people who **fast** and it helps people be more **determined** and **courageous**.

Can everyone fast?



Everyone is **allowed** to fast but **some people** don't have to for different **reasons**. It is up to the **person** to decide if they can.



Young children who **haven't** reached **puberty** and the **elderly** don't have to fast. They need the **nutrition** to keep them **healthy**.



People who are **ill** **don't** need to fast because they need to take **medicine**. Some medicines need to be taken with **food** and **water**



People who are **pregnant** need food and water to keep **themselves** and their **babies** **healthy**.



People who are **travelling** or who are **menstruating** don't have to fast but the days they **miss** can be **made up** afterwards.