

## Tayammum (dry ablution)

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

**A summarised study of tayammum (dry ablution), its method of performance, permissibility and nullification.**

### Introduction

What should you do in the situation where you have to pray Salaah, yet neither have no water suitable for making Wudoo', nor the time be able to find such water soon enough to pray on time?

What if you are sick and either not able to make Wudoo', or making Wudoo' is detrimental to your health. What is the correct procedure in such a case?

The answer to these common questions is to perform a "dry" ablution, which is called tayammum. Tayammum consists of using clean soil or dust to wipe your face and hands with the intention of preparing oneself to pray, and, as such, substitutes Wudoo' in special circumstances.

The procedure and basic conditions of making tayammum are mentioned in the Qur'aan and Sunnah. The Qur'aan says:

**["And if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you comes from relieving himself, or you have touched women, and you do not find water, then perform tayammum with clean earth. Certainly, Allaah is ever Pardoning and Forgiving."]<sup>1</sup>**

The Prophet, (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*), said:

**"All of the earth has been made a clean place to pray for me and my nation. Whenever a person from my nation wants to pray, he has something with which to purify himself, that is, the earth."<sup>2</sup>**

Tayammum is one of the five blessings from Allaah to Muslims that He did not give to any other prophet before Prophet Muhammad (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*). The Prophet, (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*), said:

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<sup>1</sup> Qur'aan [4:43]

<sup>2</sup> Ahmad

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**“I have been given five things that were not given to anyone before me: ...the earth has been made a place of prayer for me - wherever and whoever of my nation wants to pray, he may pray...”<sup>3</sup>**

### Situations where tayammum is done

Tayammum cannot be made at will or when one feels Wudoo' is inconvenient. There are specific situations where it can be made:

- If you cannot find water or the water is not enough for Wudoo'.  
Before making tayammum, you should try to get appropriate water from any accessible place you can find it. Only if you cannot find good water, or it is too far away, can you make tayammum.  
'Imraan bin Hussain, one of the companions of Prophet Muhammad (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*), said, “We were with the Messenger of Allaah during a journey. When he led the people in prayer, one man stayed apart. He asked him, **“What prevented you from praying?”** He said, ‘I need a purifying bath and there is not sufficient water.’ He said, **‘Use the soil, for it is sufficient.’”<sup>4</sup>**
- Injury or illness.  
You may perform tayammum if you think using water will worsen your disease based on past experience or the doctor’s advice. A person hospitalized who is unable to make Wudoo', may keep a bag with some clean soil to make tayammum.
- If the water is harmful to you because it is too cold and for some reason you cannot heat it up.  
'Amr ibn al-'Aas narrated that he was participating in an expedition. He had a wet dream during an extremely cold night, and was afraid that if he performed ghusl he would die. He prayed the morning prayer with his companions. He then went to the Messenger of Allaah (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*), to ask him about this. The Prophet, (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*), said, **“O 'Amr, did you pray with your companions while you needed a purifying bath?”** 'Amr mentioned the verse, [**“Do not kill yourselves, Allaah is merciful to you”**] to the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*),. The Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*), just smiled and didn't say anything.<sup>5</sup>
- If the water is nearby, but you cannot reach it due to fear.
- If you have water, but you need it for cooking, or are saving it for use later. For example, this may arise while camping. Many of the companions would save their drinking water and performed tayammum.
- If you fear the time for Salaah will be over by the time you get to water.

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<sup>3</sup> Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, Saheeh Muslim

<sup>4</sup> Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, Saheeh Muslim

<sup>5</sup> Ahmad, Aboo Daawood

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### How to perform tayammum

1. You must have the intention of purifying yourself and removing impurity. The intention is in the heart and is not uttered.
2. Say 'Bismillaah' (I begin with the name of Allaah).
3. Gently touch the ground or a dusty surface with the palms of both hands.
4. Blow on the hands and shake off any excess, so as not to make the face dusty.
5. Wipe the palms together, then the face, and then the palms and backs of the hands up to the wrists.

Ammar, the Prophet's companion, said, "We became sexually impure and had no water, so we rolled in the dirt as does an animal and prayed." This was mentioned to the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him*), and he said:

**"This would have been enough for you,"**

...and he struck the earth with his hands, blew in them and then wiped his face and hands with them."<sup>6</sup>

### Soil used for tayammum

It is permissible to do tayammum with anything that is from the earth:

- clean soil or dust
- any dusty surface
- sand
- a wall if it is made of something from earth (rocks or mud bricks), but not if it has a clean painted or wooden surface
- any type of wall with dust on it

### What can you do after making tayammum?

You can basically do anything for which Wudoo' is done like praying Salaah.

### What nullifies tayammum?

Tayammum is invalid if water is present and can be used for Wudoo'. Other than that, everything that nullifies Wudoo' nullifies tayammum:

- Breaking wind.
- Passing urine.
- Passing faeces.
- The release of prostatic fluid or wadi.
- Deep sleep.
- Sexual intercourse or emission of sperm or female orgasmic fluid.

If you pray Salaah after performing tayammum and then find water, you do not have to repeat that Salaah even if time is left for that Salaah.

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<sup>6</sup> Saheeh al-Bukhaaree, Saheeh Muslim