

Fasting is of the following kinds:

Obligatory – Ramadan. Every sane, accountable Muslim is obligated to fast in Ramadan, but it is invalid for the woman in her period or postpartum bleeding to fast.

Duty – vows, atonement, optional fasts broken

Optional

Forbidden – days of Eid and the 3 days after the Eid of the pilgrimage

How to Fast:

Ramadan enters by observing the hilaal (the appearance of the crescent of the moon) or finishing 30 days of Shaabaan. The Islamic authorities in Muslim countries will announce this, and one must start fasting every day until Ramadan ends by completing 30 days or by observing the hilaal of the next month (called Shawwaal).

One fasts by refraining from eating, drinking and intercourse from the beginning of the obligatory morning prayer until the disk of the sun has disappeared with reference to a flat landscape.

One must make the intention before the time of the morning prayer enters, but in fasting during Ramadan, fasting vowed for a particular day, and optional fasting one may make the intention before half the day has passed.

Those who left fasting in Ramadan (with an excuse) to catch up later are:

The traveler (at least 98 kilometer) who shortens the prayers of 4 subsets

The sick who fears getting more ill from fasting

The pregnant or nursing mother who fears serious harm for herself or the child

The person who is too old and weak to fast. He feeds a poor person two satisfying meals for each day, OR he pays like in sadaqah of breaking fast each day (see below).

The insane that was sane for a part of Ramadan must catch up what he missed, otherwise no.

The one who was unconscious during all Ramadan must catch it up later.

Non-fasters that should meet the conditions for valid fasting during the day:

Those who became Muslims, and Muslims who reached puberty, during the day of Ramadan must refrain from eating the remainder of the day and catch that day up later

The traveler who settled (became a non-traveler) or woman that finished her period during the day refrains from eating in respect (as a duty).

Breaking the fast without an excuse has two categories according to its consequences:

One must make the day up later and make atonement\* (only for Ramadan) if one intentionally:

has intentional intercourse (even anal)

eats or drinks something nutritious or medicine

\* The atonement is to free a slave, or if unable, to fast two consecutive months without interruption (avoiding Ramadan or the days that fasting is forbidden), or if unable, to feed 60 poor Muslims, as in sadaqah of breaking fast, or by feeding each (adult) two satisfying meals.)

One must make the day up later only if one:

Excreted semen due to a touch, rubbing or a kiss

Ate something like a stone or a piece of iron

Put medicine in the anus, ear or nose or a wound that made it reach the brain or the inside the body (such as the bloodstream by taking medicine through an IV).

Ate thinking that the time of fasting had finished, or not entered yet, but then discovered otherwise.

Made oneself throw up more than a mouthful.

Some things that do not break the fast:

Using eye drops or applying oil and the like to the skin

Taking out blood

Vomiting or swallowing vomit involuntarily

One forgot one was fasting and ate, drank or had intercourse

Wet dreams or semen discharge due to looking alone

Kissing, unless one had semen discharge

Involuntarily breathing dust or smoke or swallowing a fly – because they aren't food and one cannot avoid it.

Smelling perfume or flowers. However, smoking does break the fast.

Backbiting (saying something about a Muslim in his absence that he would not like)

Things that it is disliked for the fasting person to do:

Kissing, if one does not trust one's self control

Tasting something then spitting it

Chewing gum (without swallowing)

Cleaning the teeth unless it is with a siwaak

Chewing for a small child, unless there is no other way

During Ramadan one should:

Do a lot of optional worship, such as attending religious lessons of trustworthy teachers, reading Quran, and charity.

Make I'tikaaf - (Staying in the masjid without exiting other than for necessities). Doing this for the last 10 days of Ramadan is an ascertained sunnah.

Pay particular attention to avoiding lies, backbiting Muslims or other sins.

Avoid busying one's heart with matters of this life, and focus on the hereafter.

Sadaqah of Breaking Fast:

It is a duty upon any free Muslim who owns the value of a nisaab (the value of 595 grams of silver or 85 grams of gold) that is not of his basic needs (e.g. clothes, dwelling and furniture in use) and is in excess of his debt. This is even if this nisaab is in things that zakaat is not an obligation in, such as a car one does not need, but is not intended for sale. It becomes a duty at the time of the obligatory morning prayer of Eid. He must pay for himself, his small children and any slaves that are not for trade only. It is allowed for the husband to pay for his wife and older children without their permission, unlike in regular zakaat.

The levels of poverty and wealth:

Very poor: The one that has less than the food he needs for the current day and is not able to work for it. He is allowed to beg.

Poor: The one who does not have the value of a nisaab in excess of what is occupied by his basic needs or debt. He is allowed to take zakaat, but not to beg.

Rich: The one who owns, in excess of his basic needs, the value of a nisaab. He must pay the sadaqah of breaking fast, slaughter for the pilgrimage Eid and cannot take zakaat for himself.

Zakaat can be paid to:

Very poor or poor Muslims in the first two categories above, or the traveler who needs money to get home, or soldiers in jihad/ pilgrims who don't have access to their money, or as salary for those who collect zakaat, or for Muslim slaves who are working to free themselves by contract, or for those who have so much debt as to be considered poor. Some scholars said one can give to new Muslims who are still weak in their religion, others said this was only in the Prophet's time.

It is NOT allowed to pay for:

Building masjids or other charity that does not fit the above categories, such as burials or teaching religion.

One may not pay to a non-Muslim, one's own descendents or ancestors, or the descendents of Hashim (the Prophet's great grandfather).

How to pay:

One makes the intention when giving it or separating it for giving during Ramadan or on Eid.

One must feel sure that the person is one of those that deserve zakaat.

The amount: 2 kg. of wheat, or its flower, or raisins OR 4 kg. of dates or barley, OR the value of these. One is allowed to pay outside ones own home region if people outside are in greater need or they are family or students of the Islamic sciences.