
The Umrah Guide

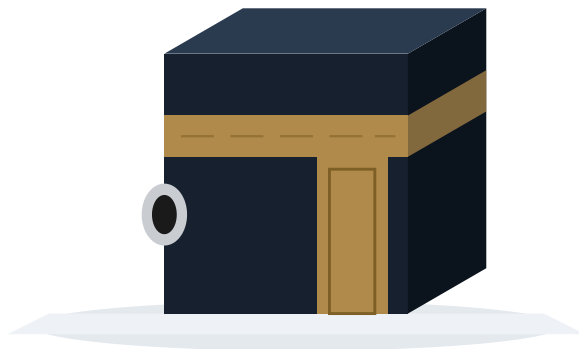
A practical handbook for pilgrims travelling
from Pakistan



Karwan Haram

Travels & Tours · Sargodha, Pakistan · Serving pilgrims since 2021

1 Before you go: documents and visa



The Kaaba, with the Black Stone set in its silver frame at the eastern corner. Your tawaf begins and ends there.

Get your documents together earlier than you think you need to. Almost every delay we see comes from a passport that expires too soon or photographs that do not meet the specification.

- A passport valid for at least six months from your date of travel.
- Recent colour photographs on a plain white background.
- Your CNIC, and the B-Form for any child travelling with you.
- A vaccination record as required at the time of travel.
- Your agency's booking confirmation, with the hotel named on it.

Keep copies

Photograph your passport, visa, ticket and booking confirmation and keep them on your phone and in your email. If a document is lost in Saudi Arabia, a copy makes replacing it far quicker.

The Umrah visa itself is issued electronically. In ordinary months it comes through within a few working days once your file is complete. Close to Ramadan the system is much busier, so submit early.

2 What to pack

Travel light. There is a laundry in or near almost every hotel, and you will want room in your bag for Zamzam, dates and gifts on the way home.

- Two sets of ihram for men, and a belt with a pocket.
- Loose, modest, easy-to-wash clothing for Madinah and the hotel.

- Unscented soap, shampoo and toothpaste for the days in ihram.
- Comfortable sandals you can slip off quickly, and a cloth bag for them.
- Any regular medicine in its original box, with the prescription.
- A small umbrella for shade, and a refillable water bottle.
- A power bank and a universal adapter.

The thing most people forget

Sandals go missing outside the Haram constantly. Carry yours in a cloth bag and take them inside with you. Also write your hotel name and room number on a card and keep it in your pocket.

3 Ihram

Ihram is a state you enter, not only the cloth you wear. You enter it at or before the miqat, and you remain in it until you complete Umrah and cut your hair.

Men wear two unstitched white sheets, one around the waist and one over the shoulder, with the head uncovered. Women wear ordinary modest clothing; there is no special dress, and the face is left uncovered.

While in ihram, do not use perfume or scented products, do not cut hair or nails, do not hunt, and do not engage in marital relations or arguments. If you break a restriction, ask a scholar rather than guessing; a compensation may be due.

Talbiyah

After forming your intention, recite the talbiyah and keep repeating it on the way to Makkah: Labbayk Allahumma labbayk.

4 Your first hours in Saudi Arabia

Most Pakistani groups land at Jeddah. The airport is large, the queues can be long, and the whole thing is much easier if you know the order it happens in.

1 Immigration and fingerprints

Have your passport and visa copy in your hand, not in your suitcase. Your fingerprints and photograph are taken here. It is normal for this to take an hour or more when several flights land together.

2 Baggage and customs

Collect your bags and stay with the group. Do not carry anything for anyone you do not know.

3 Meeting your transport

Your muallim meets the group in the arrivals hall. Makkah is roughly an hour and a half from Jeddah by road.

4 Hotel check-in

Rooms are not always ready the moment you arrive. Leave your luggage, take your room number and the hotel card, and rest a little before you go to the Haram.

5 Your first sight of the Kaaba

Go with your group the first time so you learn the gate you came through. Many people find this the most emotional moment of the journey; take it slowly.

Do not start tired

If you land late at night after a long flight, it is perfectly acceptable to sleep first and perform Umrah in the morning. Doing tawaf and sa'i while exhausted is how people injure themselves and lose days.

5 Performing Umrah, in order

1 Enter ihram and make the intention

At the miqat, or on the aircraft before crossing it if you are flying directly to Jeddah. Your muallim will tell the group when.

2 Tawaf: seven circuits of the Kaaba

Begin at the Black Stone corner, keep the Kaaba on your left, and complete seven circuits. Men uncover the right shoulder during tawaf. There is no fixed dua for each circuit; ask for whatever you wish in your own words.

3 Pray two rakat near Maqam Ibrahim

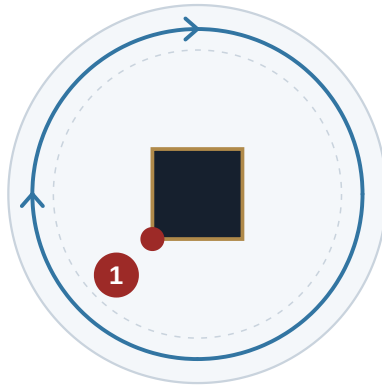
If the area is crowded, pray anywhere in the Masjid. Then drink Zamzam.

4 Sa'i: seven trips between Safa and Marwah

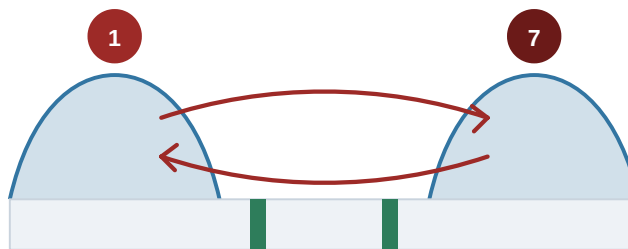
Start at Safa and finish at Marwah. Safa to Marwah counts as one, and Marwah back to Safa as the second, so it ends at Marwah. Wheelchairs and a separate lane are available.

5 Halq or taqsir: cut the hair

Men shave the head or trim it evenly all over. Women cut a fingertip length from the end of their hair. Your Umrah is now complete and the restrictions of ihram are lifted.



Tawaf seen from above. Start at the Black Stone corner, keep the Kaaba on your left, and go round seven times.



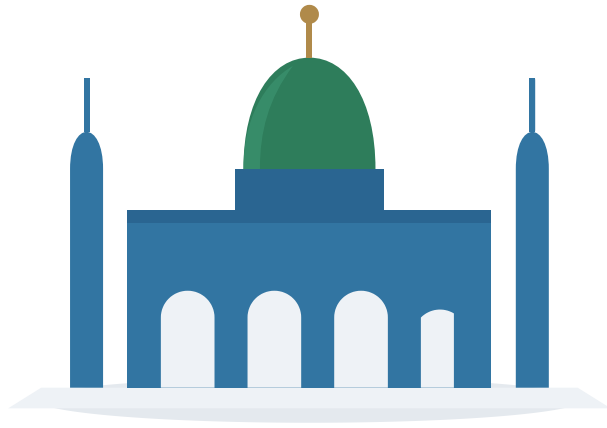
Sa'i runs between Safa and Marwah. Safa to Marwah is one trip, Marwah back to Safa is the second, so the seventh ends at Marwah. The green markers show where men hasten their pace.

If you get separated

Agree a meeting point with your group before you enter, and note the gate number you came through. The Haram is very large and mobile signal is unreliable inside.

6 Madinah and Ziyarat

Madinah is calmer than Makkah and most pilgrims find the days there the most peaceful of the trip. Pray in Masjid an-Nabawi, send salam at the Prophet's resting place, and if you can, pray in the Riyadh-ul-Jannah, for which a Nusuk permit is required.



Masjid an-Nabawi. The Green Dome stands over the Prophet's resting place, peace be upon him.

- Masjid Quba, the first mosque built in Islam.
- Masjid al-Qiblatayn.
- The site of the Battle of Uhud and the martyrs' graves.
- Jannat al-Baqi, beside Masjid an-Nabawi.
- In Makkah: Jabal al-Nour and the Cave of Hira, Mina, Arafat and Muzdalifah.

Download Nusuk before you fly

Permits for the Riyadh-ul-Jannah and some other visits are booked through the Nusuk app and slots go quickly. Install it and register while you still have your home internet connection.

7 Staying well

Makkah is hot for most of the year and the marble around the Haram reflects it back at you. Almost every illness we see in our groups comes from heat, dehydration or exhaustion rather than anything exotic.

- Drink Zamzam and water through the day, before you feel thirsty.
- Walk on the shaded side and rest inside the Haram when it is very hot.
- Carry a small umbrella; it is normal and it works.
- Coughs spread quickly in crowds. A mask is sensible in Ramadan.
- Pharmacies are everywhere, open late, and staff usually speak Urdu or English.
- Tell your muallim early if you feel unwell. Do not wait until you cannot walk.

Blisters

More pilgrims are slowed down by blistered feet than by anything else. Break in your sandals at home before you travel, and carry plasters.

8 Phones, money and staying in touch

- Buy a local SIM at the airport or in the city; data is cheap and makes everything easier.
- WhatsApp calls work normally, so your family at home can reach you.
- Save your hotel name, your muallim's number and your room number in your phone and on paper.
- Card works in most shops; keep some cash in Riyal for taxis and small stalls.
- Exchange rates in the city are usually better than at the airport.
- Photographing inside the Haram is allowed but keep it brief and be considerate.

9 What things cost

Prices below are rough guides in Saudi Riyal so you can plan spending money. They change, and prices inside the Haram area are higher than elsewhere in the city.

- A simple meal at a local restaurant: 15 to 30 SAR.
- Tea or coffee: 5 to 12 SAR.
- A taxi across Makkah: 15 to 40 SAR.
- A local SIM with data: 60 to 120 SAR.
- A prayer mat, dates or gifts: from 20 SAR.
- Barber for halq: 10 to 25 SAR.

Take some cash in Riyal for small purchases and use a card for larger ones. Exchange rates at the airport are usually worse than in the city.

10 Travelling with elderly parents

This is the most common reason families book Umrah, and it is worth planning properly rather than hoping it works out.

- Tell the agency about any medical condition at booking, not at the airport.
- Ask for a hotel genuinely close to the Haram; the walk matters more than the star rating.
- Wheelchairs can be hired at the Haram and assistance booked at the airports.
- Carry medicine in hand luggage, in its original packaging.
- Go to the Haram outside the peak times after Maghrib and Isha if walking is difficult.
- Agree in advance who stays with them at all times.

11 Mistakes we see every season

- Booking on price alone, then finding the hotel is a long walk or a shuttle ride from the Haram.
- Accepting a hotel category instead of a hotel name. Always get the name in writing.
- Paying into someone's personal account with no receipt.
- Packing scented soap and shampoo for the ihram days.
- Doing too much on the first day and being exhausted for the rest of the trip.
- Leaving the Riyadh-ul-Jannah permit until arrival, when slots have gone.

12 Eleven questions to ask any agency

Ask these of us, and of everyone else you are comparing. An agency that answers all eleven without hesitating is usually a safe one.

- What is the exact name of my hotel in Makkah, and in Madinah?
- How far is each hotel from the Haram, in metres or walking minutes?
- Is that hotel written on my booking confirmation?
- How many people will share my room?
- Which airline, and are the flights direct?
- What exactly is not included in this price?
- Is the price fixed once I pay the deposit?
- What happens if I need to cancel or change my dates?
- Which bank account do I pay into, and will I get a receipt?
- Who travels with the group, and do they speak Urdu?
- Can I speak to a family who travelled with you recently?

About Karwan Haram

Karwan Haram Travels & Tours has arranged Umrah from Sargodha since 2021. More than 1,000 pilgrims have travelled with us in over 60 groups, with a departure almost every month. We sell five-star packages only: the hotel is named in your confirmation, its distance from the Haram is written down, and one person from our office stays with you from your first message until you are home.

This guide is free and you are welcome to share it with anyone preparing for Umrah, whether or not they travel with us.

Talk to us

Near Nalka Stop, Opposite Masjid Bilal, N.S.T, Sargodha 40100

Phone and WhatsApp: +92 301 9355901

karwanharam1@gmail.com · karwanharam.com

This guide is general information prepared with care, not a religious ruling. For questions of fiqh, ask a qualified scholar. Visa rules, permits and prices are set by the Saudi and Pakistani authorities and change from time to time; confirm the current position before you travel.