

Provisions for Hajj

The pilgrimage is (in) the well known months, and whoever intends to perform the pilgrimage therein (let him remember that) there is (to be) no lewdness nor abuse nor angry conversation on the pilgrimage. And whatsoever good you do Allah knows it. ***So make provision for yourselves (here after); for the best provision is to ward off evil (Taqwa).*** Therefore keep your duty unto Me, O men of understanding. (Quran-2-197)

Many of us wonder what we require for Hajj. The greatest of all provisions is Taqwa (Consciousness of Allah Ta'ala). If a man is focussed on Allah Ta'ala then he will rely on Allah Ta'ala for his provisions material and otherwise.

Before Hajj

The requirements before Hajj are very much the same as that for Umrah. Many of the items are available there so there is no need to try and take everything with. As far as clothing goes – you will need about five or six set of clothes that can be easily washed. There are laundries that will wash clothes but they are some times harsh on the clothes so don't take clothes that require special washing or will get easily damaged. The easiest is cotton.

You will probably wash your own underwear so its useful to take – some washing powder, a portable clothes line (available from Hiking stores), and a few hangers. You can give these items to be washed but some people prefer not to.

Bear in mind it is now winter in Saudi and the mornings can be a bit cold so take along a jacket or jersey for the early mornings and evenings.

Medicines are readily available there, except for tranquilizers and sleeping tablets. If you use any of these take an adequate supply in the original packaging. Take a small supply of medications to carry with for the five days of Hajj. To avoid confusion try and take all medication in their original packaging.

Five days of Hajj

This is the part many of us worry about, but Allah Ta'ala makes it very easy. Because you don't have access to your bags and room you will have to take a few essentials with you.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Ihram	For men – choose a thick cloth since it gets cold in Mina and you won't have any other covering. If you are going first to Medina you can buy an Ihram there rather than having to have to carry it from here. Cheaper too. For ladies – you can wear any colour it does not have to be white. White does tend to get dirty easily so a dark colour may be better.

Backpack	This is all you will carry on the Hajj. Make sure it's comfortable on the back if you intend to walk during the Hajj. The ladies must pack their items separately as the tents are separate in Mina, and it's awkward to have to go to the men's tent to get your items. If walking, make the bag as light as possible, we are not accustomed to walking long distances with a backpack.
Toiletries	This is minimal as you are not allowed to use scented items. A bar of unscented soap (Neutrogena fragrance free soap) is useful for washing after meals. Mitchum makes an unscented deodorant. Both available from Clicks. You are allowed to take a shower while Ihram but you may not use scented soap etc.
Small Towel or face cloth	Needed for after Wudhu etc.
Medications	Take along enough medication for the five days. If you are diabetic etc and rely heavily on your medication put an extra supply in a friend's bag just in case your bag gets lost. Useful medication to carry – painkillers, anti-inflammatory (Brufen), Imodium, Stemetil, multivitamins (Supradyn tablets or Dynamisan), Rehydrat solution, cold & flu preparations.
Clothing	You will need to change out of your Ihram on the third day of Hajj. Depending on whether the agent has made provision for your clothes to be available in Mina you may need to carry a set of clothes to change into as well as toiletries to take a shower after shaving your hair. Ladies are permitted to change their clothes during Ihram so they can take an extra set if they wish. But try and keep it to a minimum to avoid the hassle of carrying all this around.
Water Bottle	Very useful to keep water near you so you don't have to leave you place to get water everytime. Also important if you are walking.
Umbrella	Useful if you are walking otherwise most of the time is spent under cover of a tent.
Sunglasses	The sun is very bright when walking and if your eyes are sensitive then this is important. Also, a hard case to store the glasses – sunglasses or prescription specs, to protect them from the bumps etc.
Plastic bank packets	To keep the stones for the Jamarat. Take seven (one extra if you need) packets so you can keep seven stones in each and only use one packet for each Jamarat. This way you will throw the right number of stones, and if you loose a packet only seven stones will be lost not all.
Small Thermal blanket	Muzdalifah and Mina can get cold. In Muzdalifah you have to sleep outdoors so this is necessary. A thick shawl will suffice.
Toilet Paper	There is none provided during Hajj so carry you own.
Small Stool	A three legged fold-up camping stool is handy if you have back or joint problems as there is no where to sit during the five days. Available from Makro (R30) or Cape Union Mart has a sturdier one.
Sandals	The ideal sandal that conforms to Shariah is available from Boundary Bazaar in Kempton park or IG Hoosein. Ladies can wear takkies if they are going to walk (An extra pair of beach tongs is useful for going to the toilet or making Wudhu).
Vaseline	Men - If you are on the heavy side and your thighs touch a lot then a little Vaseline or non scented lubricant will reduce the friction. Especially if you intend to walk and want to avoid the skin becoming

	red and raw. It is also useful to massage the feet after the long walks and prevent blisters.
Canvas sheet	A thin canvass sheet or Hajji mat (available there) is useful to put on the ground in Muzdalifah as you may not find the ideal spot to 'camp'
Sweets / Chevra / Biscuits/ Dried fruit	Good for that extra energy or just to munch on. Many people don't feel like eating full meals during Hajj so this is useful to munch on. Chocolates are great but they melt. Take your favourite biscuits from here as the biscuits and chocolates there are not to our taste. Biltong increases the thirst but is also handy.
Small Pillow	If you are accustomed to using a pillow take a small one with, or an inflatable one.
Folding Cup	For drinking water in Arafaat or along the route.
Hangers	If you wash your clothes in the room this is the easiest way to dry them.
Small Torch	Needed for collecting stones in Muzdalifah. Just to make sure what you collecting is stones.
Moon Bag	This is handy for storing all your essential items – money, SAHUC card, Tasbeeh, Specs, etc while in Ihram (No pockets)
Business Cards	You will meet many people who you would like to remain in contact with. It is amazing the bond that Allah Ta'ala puts in the heart of the Hajjis. This makes it easier to share you contact details.
Large Napkin pins	To pin your Ihram so it doesn't flap open at the most awkward moments.
7 bead Tasbeeh	Make a string with seven beads to count the number of rounds of the Tawaaf. Can get confusing if you don't have a counter.

Books

There is so much to learn on Hajj. But one of the aspects of Hajj is why we are performing it rather than how to perform it. For the how to perform it there are many useful books such as Hajj made easy by Mufti Elias. For the 'Why' two books are highly recommended: Virtues of Hajj by Moulana Zakariya (RA) and Inner dimensions of Worship by Imam Al-Ghazaali (RA). Try to learn as much as possible about the Hajj to make it more meaningful.

Some useful dua books are : Hizbul Azam and Munajaate Maqbool. These are very good to read in English as they cover many of the duas of Nabi (SAW) and also cover many things that we sometimes forget to ask for.

Sabr

Traditionally everyone will tell you to take two bags of Sabr with. But more important is to go with the correct attitude. If you go as the Guest of Allah Ta'ala then what ever happens to you will be from the host and it is impossible to get upset with Allah Ta'ala who has favoured us so much. Also, this is the highest test of a Believer; small obstacles will either make or break our Hajj. Remember the important part of the Aayat above:

Whoever is minded to perform the pilgrimage therein (let him remember that there is (to be) **no lewdness, nor abuse, nor angry conversation** on the pilgrimage.

Shaytaan tried hard to prevent you from going for Hajj and since he failed he will now try and trip you up on this aspect. His favourite passion is to create friction between husband and wife. So avoid his temptation and walk away from a conflict situation even if you are in the right.

The (faithful) slaves of the Beneficent are they who walk upon the earth modestly, and when the foolish ones address them they answer: Salaam; (25-v63)

Other

1. Make two copies of your passports, visas, airline ticket, credit cards and travellers cheques. Keep one copy with a family member at home and give the other copy to someone else in your group. Should your documents get lost you then have copies in Saudi and SA.
2. Assist those who are with you and ask them to make dua for you. Their duas for you are worth more than you can ever ask for. Try not to hurt any one as they can also make dua to your detriment.
3. Take some of you Forex as cash dollars, only \$100 bills. These can be easily cashed at most of the street Money changers avoiding the queues in the banks and sometimes the banks refuse to cash the Traveller's Cheques without the 'right' documentation. Your passport will be taken away from you when you land and only returned to you prior to your departure.
4. ATM cards (BOB, Autocard, etc) – can be used in Saudi with your SA pin number. This is useful to avoid carrying lots cash. There are many ATM's in both the cities and the queues are a lot shorter than the banks. However, Makkah can get very busy and the ATM's queues can take a while. It will also save you the commission of converting to Dollars and then to Riyals as you can get cash Riyals
5. Keep all your unused travel coupons (from the Tanazzul – Hajj Tax) these can be cashed up when you are about to leave. Don't throw them away or give them to the agent.
6. Make sure you get a signed contract from the agent with all the details of your package. Hotel names, number of persons per room. Food included or not. Etc.

Simple guide to Hajj

Day	What to do	Notes
1.	Wear Ihram Leave for Mina Spend the day and night here	Sunnat after sunrise Avoid the talkers
2.	Make Fajr in Mina Leave for Arafat Rest till Zuhr Leave Arafat after Magrib In Muzdalifah make Magrib & Esha together Collect stones Make Fajr Leave for Mina	Wuqoof in Arafat after Zuhr Don't make Magrib in Arafat One Azaan, two Iqamah Will need about 60 (7+21+21) 10 spare Short Wuqoof after Fajr
3	Pelt the Big Shaytaan Make Qurbani Cut hair Change out of Ihraam Go to Makkah only if you going to make Tawaaf	Stop "Labaik" Agent will arrange this. Can wait in Azizia/Mina Must be in this order – pelt, qurbani, cut hair Can be done over the next three nights





	Make Tawaaf & Sa'ee Return to Mina	
4	Stay in Mina Pelt all three Shaytaan after Zawaal	Sunnat to spend these nights in Mina Can go at night also.
5	Pelt the three Shaytaan after Zawaal Preferably leave before Magrib	No major rush. Only have to stay if you are there for the major portion of the night
6	Optional to stay in Mina Pelt after Zawaal	Can pelt after ishraq if needed.

Pelting:

1st day – from Ishraq till night. Don't go at mid-morning. Qurbani will only be done late afternoon so you can even go after Zuhr.

2nd day – from Zawaal till night. Don't go between 12 and 3. Wait and see. If too full or too dangerous go after Magrib even.

3rd day – from Zawaal till night. Wait till late afternoon. Even after Asr and then proceed straight to Makkah

-  Don't harm anyone with your hands, tongue or thoughts.
-  Feed the people in the group and the poor in Mina.
-  Be patient. Very Patient. This is a test – don't fail.
-  Be generous in your wealth and spirit

Umrah made very easy

Simple steps

1. Wear Ihraam
2. Enter Haram through Baab Salaam
3. Make dua when seeing Kaa'ba
4. Make Istiqbaal / Istilaam
5. Make Tawaaf with Raml & Istibah
6. Read 3rd Kalima - at Ruknul Yamani till Hajre Aswat read 'Rabbena a'tina fid Dunya wa...'
7. Complete seven round of Tawaaf
8. Read 2 Rakaat Wajib behind Ma'qame Ebrahim
9. Drink Zam Zam
10. Go to Mount Safaa – make dua
11. Complete seven rounds of Sa'ee
12. Cut / trim hair

Istilaam – kiss Hajre Aswat /action of doing so
Ruknul Yamani – corner before Hajre Aswad
Istibah – place ihram under Right armpit
(Men)

Raml – walk fast not run with brisk steps in

Umrah is an Ibadat – don't make it a strain / pain / ritual.

When you arrive in Makkah settle yourself in the hotel and then have a rest or eat and then make Umrah.

There's no rush, if you are well rested and not hungry you will make a better Umrah.

Remember it's an act of knocking on Allah Ta'ala's door. Beg like a beggar and ask all your needs of both the Worlds.

Cut this block out and keep on you as a reference while making Umrah

Notes to above:

1. Ihraam must be worn at the boundary. Make two rakaats Sunnatul Ihraam at the boundary and then remove hat/Toupee. Make Niyyah of Umrah and recite Talbiyyah (Labaik...)
2. When you see the Kaa'ba for the first time make lots of dua. Duas are accepted at this time, and these special places. Before starting the dua, have a mental (or even a physical) list of your needs and ask for this. Write down the names of those who asked you to make dua for them, and go through the list whenever you have to make dua.
3. The brown line on the marble has been removed so you have to estimate where the Hajre Aswad is by looking at the Kaa'ba; and the light on the Haram wall used to mark the place. Lift both hands and make the action of placing them on the Hajre Aswad and then kiss the palms while reciting 'Bismillahi Allahu Akbar'. This must be done when starting and on every round. Total of eight per tawaaf.
4. While making tawaaf concentrate on the fact that you are walking around Allah Ta'ala's house. And with the attitude of a beggar (remember the 'Vra Kos' that we have here, they beg and nag and plead) beg Allah Ta'ala for all your needs and mostly for His pleasure.
5. Raml & Istibah are Sunnah and should be done. If you can't walk briskly because of the crowds then just make the action and have the intention. Don't hurt people.
6. There are many duas to read but this is Sunnah and is the best. But you can make any dua you wish. Don't just read from some book, make a the dua from the heart.
7. Try not to hurt or bump anyone during Tawaaf. Be careful of the elderly and children. If it's too full rather delay it then try to force your way through the crowds. Tawaaf is an Ibadat not a ritual.
8. If you Wudhu breaks or Salaah starts before you have completed three rounds of Tawaaf then you must restart the Tawaaf. If it happens after three rounds then you can just continue where you left off. The chest or back mustn't face the Kaab'a at any time – if it does then redo the portion of tawaaf where this happened.
9. After completing the Tawaaf have a rest and drink lots of Zam Zam. And make dua at this time too.
10. Start Sa'ee from mount Safah and pause at each end to make dua. Jog (not sprint) between the two green lights
11. When competing the seven rounds of Sa'ee at Marwa walk outside and the barber shops are just there. Cut your hair and make dua for your Umrah to be accepted. Cut ladies hair in the room not out there in the open.

Guidelines

1. If you are taking small children then make very sure that they have a name tag on them with the hotel name and address; and any other essential contact details. This must be around their necks at all times.
2. If you arrange to meet someone then be very specific of where you will meet. Don't just say outside Baab Salaam – say on the right hand side of the door outside the gate etc. Because the crowds can get big and you could be standing at one side of the door and they would be on the other side.
3. It's preferable to make Tawaaf rather than Umrah. So spend more time in this and in Dua
4. Please do remember all the Muslims all over the world especially those who are in difficult circumstances in Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon etc. And please remember the writer.

Courtesy: Sulaiman Ebrahim
solly@iafrica.com