

GUIDELINES FOR MARRIAGE IN ISLĀM

All marriages require vast stores of patience, kindness, humility, sacrifice, empathy, love, understanding, forgiveness, hard work, and endless prayers! Give it your best – it's well worth the investment!

- ☞ Pray together at every possible opportunity. Pray sincerely for one another; remind each other that the goal, individually and together, is to win Allāh's pleasure.
- ☞ Be ever mindful of the comfort, the health and the feelings of your spouse; smile often.
- ☞ Safeguard the respect and honor of your spouse at all times; careless lapses in speech or action could affect your marriage adversely in the long run.
- ☞ Maintain behavior that is conducive to household peace and tranquility; learn to compromise, show tolerance and how to express yourself – don't expect mind reading skills from your spouse.
- ☞ Act as guardians of one another's property; be content and grateful for all Allāh's bounties - as long as your spouse is providing for all reasonable needs according to his means, do not make excessive demands on him.
- ☞ Whether both spouses are working outside the home or not, each should be fully aware of the household finances.
- ☞ Make your spouse your main confidante, rather than your friends. Mutual trust is crucial in building a secure relationship. Be a good listener; give the most honest advice.
- ☞ Consult one another in all important family matters and handle the outcome graciously, even if you have to agree to disagree. Whatever is best for your marriage and for the family unit is what is most important, not the need to be right.
- ☞ No one likes to feel taken for granted or dismissed. Take time to show appreciation for what your spouse does for the family. Make time for each other, even with hectic schedules.
- ☞ Try not to allow the luxury of familiarity over time make you lazy about your physical appearance in front of your spouse; the effort will not go unnoticed.
- ☞ Always be inclined to overlook the minor shortcomings of your spouse and be generous in forgiving and forgetting- re-examine your own weaknesses first. Aim to resolve conflicts quickly; do not let negativity fester. Once resolved, do not regurgitate past problems.
- ☞ Treat relatives of both sides equally, no matter how different their ways may be to yours; your efforts will strengthen mutual respect and affection.
- ☞ Getting married should *mean* something, primarily that you are willing to do whatever it takes to ensure spending the rest of your lives together. Don't start packing bags at the first sign of discord; view marriage as a lifelong sacred relationship & you'll feel more committed to making it work. Don't let trifles lead to situations where tempers are lost and threats of divorce are pronounced. Put issues

into perspective realistically, and pray; if major conflict still exists, seek confidential professional / spiritual guidance from reliable sources.

- ☞ In essence, dispense with selfishness, and always treat your spouse the way you would like to be treated. Follow this rule & your marriage will have a greater chance for success. Ignore this rule & turmoil or even, God Forbid, permanent failure, could be around the corner.

References / Sources for Marriage and Rishta Na'ata

- ☞ www.alislam.org
- ☞ www.askislam.org
- ☞ www.rishtanata.us
- ☞ Hazrat Amman Jan (ra) - An Inspiration for Us All-Munavara Ghauri
- ☞ Power point of Rishtā Na'ata program, Detroit, MI, April 20, 2014
- ☞ <https://www.alislam.org/library/links/00000137.html> - from Review of Religions, Nov. 1992

ETIQUETTE OF WEDDING CELEBRATIONS

Mehndi

- ☞ Mehndi function can be held if desired but is not obligatory. It should be held in the bride's home and be limited to bride's female relatives and close friends. If the home is very small, permission may be requested to rent a space.
- ☞ Mehndi function should be kept simple and money should not be wasted on:
 - Celebrations held on several days well before the wedding day.
 - Different decorations of stage and bride's seating for each day.
 - A large variety of foods.
 - Printed invitation cards just for Mehndi party.
 - Expensive and excessive clothing for the bride, groom, and other family members.
- ☞ Only female members of groom's family may be invited.
- ☞ The selection of songs to be sung by the bride's friends should be decent and avoid coarse language. The songs should not promote concept of "shirk" (association of someone with Allah) or concepts of other religions.
- ☞ Similar functions in name of 'ronaq' from the groom's side are very strongly discouraged.

- ☞ The bride's family provides the mehndi. The bringing of mehndi by the groom's family is a Hindu custom and should be avoided.
- ☞ Absolutely no dancing is allowed in any function.

Rukhsati (Wedding reception)

- ☞ Purdah must be strictly observed with separate seating areas for men and women.
- ☞ Money should **NOT** be wasted on:
 - Expensive and fancy bridal dresses for the purpose of showing off or to impress others.
 - Expensive wedding invitations, excessive decoration of the house, stage, the bride's seating.
 - Large variety of foods.
- ☞ Playing songs or music is not permitted.
- ☞ Any ring given to groom should not be made of gold.
- ☞ Giving milk to drink to the groom and hiding his shoes to demand money from him should be avoided; this is a Hindu custom.
- ☞ Only a female photographer/videographer is permitted on the women's side when purdah-observing women are present. Men should not come to the women's side for this purpose if non-family women are present.
- ☞ Non-family men are not allowed to videotape at family events.
- ☞ The groom and his male friends/relatives should not be called to the women's side when purdah-observing women are present. An announcement should be made so they can put on their purdah.
- ☞ Women servers only should be used on women's side. This arrangement can be done before hand when the caterer is being selected.
- ☞ At the time of *Rukhsati* (the bride departs with the groom) prayers should be offered instead of songs.
- ☞ The bride should observe purdah when she arrives on women's side and when she leaves with her husband. A large chador can be used for coverage.
- ☞ The Holy Qur'an should never be held over bride's head to have her walk under it at the time of *Rukhsati*.
- ☞ Money should not be wasted on rental of expensive cars or limousines.
- ☞ Showing off the *Jahaiz* (things given to the bride by her parents) should not be practiced.
- ☞ Gifts, money, or any form of *Jahaiz* from bride's family should not be expected or demanded by groom's family.
- ☞ Giving gifts to the groom's family or relatives from bride's family to follow a custom should not be practiced.

Walimah

- ☞ The same guidelines as for wedding reception should be followed.
- ☞ Mixed gatherings are never allowed.
- ☞ It is a Sunnah (practice) of the Holy Prophet (saw) to serve food at the Walimah, but it is not necessary that it should be a lavish feast or on a large scale.
- ☞ The scale of the Walimah should be according to one's own means.
- ☞ The bride's family should not be asked to contribute to the Walimah as it is responsibility of the groom's family.

General Recommendations for Weddings

- ☞ Wedding is a time of happiness thus appropriate celebration is recommended but no ostentation.
- ☞ Prayers should be offered more than anything for the new couple.
- ☞ Taqwa and simplicity should be the top priority. Wastage of money on any occasion for the purpose of showing off or to impress others should be avoided in every event.
- ☞ Bid'at (innovations) from non-Islamic cultures must be avoided. These include:
 - Gift registry
 - Bridal showers
 - Requesting "no boxed" gifts, i.e. requesting monetary gifts only.
 - Father walking bride into women's side or bridegroom receiving bride in women's side when non-family women are present.
 - Bride and groom cutting cake together when non-family women are present.
- ☞ Mixed gatherings are never permitted in any function. Purdah should always be observed.
- ☞ Dancing in any event is not allowed.

[Guidelines taken from the Sermons of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba)]