

# Five Pillars of Islam

The Five Pillars are the core beliefs and practices of Islam:

1. **Profession of Faith (shahada).** The belief that "There is no god but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God" is central to Islam.
2. **Prayer (salat).** Muslims pray facing Mecca five times a day: at dawn, noon, mid-afternoon, sunset, and after dark. Prayer includes a recitation of the opening chapter (sura) of the Qur'an, and is sometimes performed on a small rug or mat used expressly for this purpose.
3. **Alms (zakat).** In accordance with Islamic law, Muslims donate a fixed portion of their income to community members in need.
4. **Fasting (sawm).** During the daylight hours of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, all healthy adult Muslims are required to abstain from food and drink. Through this temporary deprivation, they renew their awareness of and gratitude for everything God has provided in their lives—including the Qur'an, which was first revealed during this month. During Ramadan they share the hunger and thirst of the needy as a reminder of the religious duty to help those less fortunate.
5. **Pilgrimage (hajj).** Every Muslim whose health and finances permit it must make at least one visit to the holy city of Mecca, in present-day Saudi Arabia.

*Source: <https://www.metmuseum.org/learn/educators/curriculum-resources/art-of-the-islamic-world/unit-one/the-five-pillars-of-islam>*